



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES STUDENT MANUAL

ACADEMIC YEAR 2025-2026

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I. Overview of the Physician Assistant Program

Mission

RIT's Physician Assistant program focuses on graduating highly competent, compassionate, and ethical PAs. We instill the medical knowledge, professionalism, and communication skills needed for effective team-based clinical practice. Our graduates are ready to collaborate in diverse healthcare settings, significantly enhancing patient care for all.

Educational Goals

Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the acquisition and synthesis of core principles pertaining to biomedical and clinical sciences including anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, microbiology, biochemistry, genetics, pharmacology, perioperative principles, preventative medicine and patient education. Medical knowledge also requires an understanding of the evolving nature of science and medicine and the utility of evidence-based medicine to inform clinical practice.

Clinical Decision-Making and Technical Skills

Apply the principles of basic and clinical sciences including the acquisition of foundational core medical knowledge to identify, diagnose, and provide patient-centered care to healthy and ill patients.
Demonstrate clinical (decision-making) and technical (procedural) skills to develop differential diagnosis,

order and interpret laboratory and imaging, diagnose, treat and manage illness and disease; perform competent execution of clinical evidence-based decision-making / basic clinical procedural skills and to assess patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management plan. Prioritization of actions and clinical care decisions based on information available and the patient's beliefs about their care.

Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving Abilities

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is evidence-based, effective, safe, high quality, and equitable delivered in a manner that is patient-centered, compassionate and respectful. PAs are specialists in team-based medicine which includes collaboration with physicians and other healthcare professionals.

Interpersonal/Professional Practice

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information. Physician assistants must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system.

Professional Behaviors

Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Professionalism is demonstrated in the attributes of respecting professional boundaries, personal integrity, emotional intelligence, professional relationships and patient interactions.

(As adapted from the competencies published by the AAPA, NCCPA, PAEA and ARC-PA)

RIT PA Program History

The RIT Department of Allied Health Sciences formed the PA program Advisory Board/Task Force in 1989. This group worked diligently on writing curriculum and establishing structural policies for the program and in November 1991 the initial program proposal was submitted. The Accreditation Review Committee on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) issued a Letter of Review in September 1992 and the program officially began in September 1993 with 54 students. The program was awarded initial accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation Allied Health Educational programs (CAAHEP) in October 1994. The PA program graduated the first class of 17 students in spring 1995.

The Department of Allied Health Sciences was eventually changed to the Department of Medical Sciences in 2003. The Department and program were originally housed in the College of Science (Gosnell) building, and in 2003 as the College continued to grow, the PA program and Department of Medical Sciences were moved to the Louise Slaughter Building. In 2006, the Center for Bioscience and Technology (CBET) was built and became the permanent home for the PA program and Department of Medical Sciences. This building had state-of-the-art classrooms and a specifically designed patient care lab for the PA program. In fall 2011, the College of Health Sciences and Technology (CHST) became the ninth college at RIT, and the PA program became one of seven programs in this new college.

The PA program has remained fully accredited since 1994. Initial accreditation was by the Commission on Accreditation Allied Health Educational programs (CAAHEP) and then by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) from 2001 to present. The PA program remains committed to an ongoing self-assessment process. RIT alumni are practicing in many

different clinical disciplines, geographic settings, and in many states and countries across the globe. In fall 2011, the PA program began the transition to graduate PA education, welcoming the first freshman class into the new five-year BS/MS program. Fall 2013 ushered in the first class in the new professional phase (year 3) of the BS/MS program. This new curriculum was taught in the new semester model as the university officially began semester conversion.

The CHST's Clinical Health Sciences Center opened in fall 2015 as the PA program moved into the Slaughter Building and the state-of-the-art Patient Care Lab and Simulation Center. This was the first year that all five years of the BS/MS degree program were fully enrolled. In May 2016, RIT graduated the first class of BS/MS degree physician assistants.

Program Accreditation

RIT's Physician Assistant (PA) program officially began in September 1993 with 54 students. RIT has graduated over 8000 alumni who are practicing in many different clinical disciplines, geographic settings, and in many states and countries across the globe. The PA program has remained accredited since 1994. Initial accreditation was by the Commission on Accreditation Allied Health Educational programs (CAAHEP) and then by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) from 2001 to present. Based on the most recent review in June/September 2019, the ARC-PA granted continuation of accreditation. Details described by the Commission in their following statement:

*The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) has granted **Accreditation-Continued** status to the **Rochester Institute of Technology Physician Assistant program** sponsored by **Rochester Institute of Technology**. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards.*

*Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be **September 2027**. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.*

Alumni Surveys

The PA program is held, by accreditation standards, to intermittently survey program alumni. Specific issues addressed revolve around the strengths and weaknesses of the educational experience provided to students. Surveys are conducted and analyzed anonymously and reported in aggregate form only.

Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE)

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) administers the national board examination for PAs. Certification is required in many states to practice. In addition, a practicing PA must retake the national board examination every ten years, as well as complete 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years.

PA Program Faculty and Staff

Program Director

The Program Director is responsible for the daily and long-range operation of the PA program. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Responsible for the overall program organization, administration, planning, development, and continuous review and analysis,
- Serve as the principal academic advisor for a given class year of PA students
- Serve in areas of recruitment and retention, and pre-application advisement
- Serve as the program Representative: Department/College/University /and medical community
- Explore and develop new program curricular offerings
- Oversee coordination all program content / evaluation (academic & clinical courses)
- Teach select courses within the program
- Oversee supervision: direct or indirect supervision of the program faculty and staff, Medical Director, Medical Education Consultant, adjunct faculty, guest lecturers and all students
- Chair of the PA program Faculty Board
- Chair of the PA program Admissions Committee

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Associate Director – Principal Program Faculty

The Associate Director is responsible for overseeing the clinical internship (rotations) experience in the PA program. All aspects of the learning process taking place at all clinical sites are under the guidance of the Associate Director. The Associate Director also assists the Program Director in the overall administration of the program. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provide teaching and medical education to the students
- Provide rotation assignments to students
- Assist in the evaluation of the total clinical internship experience
- Explore and develop new clinical sites
- Create and maintain all clinical documentation
- Maintain site visits and communication with the clinical preceptors and PA students.
- Participate in program meetings; recruitment, admission, and graduation events, PA Admissions Board, and PA Faculty Board
- Serve as the principal academic advisor for a given class year of PA students

TBD

Academic Coordinator – Principal Program Faculty

The Academic Coordinator is responsible for the coordination and evaluation of all curricular aspects of the program. This is done in compliance with the Institute and the Accreditation Review Commission on

Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). Responsibilities of the Academic Coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinate all curricular aspects of program, including ongoing curriculum development, facilitating scheduling of lectures/classes/curriculum and adjunct faculty within professional phase of program.
- Participate in the classroom, teaching and instruction of the (undergraduate and graduate) PA students.
- Facilitate and oversee new course development for BS/MS program.
- Provide evaluation and outcome analysis of students, curriculum, remediation, etc. as related to ongoing accreditation and program review and collaborate.
- Participate in program meetings; recruitment, admission, and graduation events, PA Admissions Board, and PA Faculty Board.
- Assist the Program Director with budget planning, preparation of grants, accreditation reports as they relate to the management of the curriculum.
- Serve as the principal academic advisor for a given class year of PA students

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Principal Program Faculty

Members of the program principal faculty are responsible for ongoing teaching in various disciplines and courses within the PA program. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Participate in the classroom and clinical teaching and instruction of PA students.
- Create semester schedules, examinations, and comprehensive examinations
- Provide remediation and assistance to students
- Coordinate reading and posting materials for course sequences.
- Recruit and schedule all guest lecturers within course sequences.
- Participate in program meetings; recruitment, admission, and graduation events, PA Admissions Board, and PA Faculty Board
- Serve as the principal academic advisor for a given class year of PA students

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Clinical Coordinator

As a member of the principal program faculty, the Clinical Coordinator is responsible for the clinical internship (rotations) experience in the PA program. Responsibilities of the Clinical Coordinator include, but are not limited to:

- Explore and develop new clinical sites
- Create and maintain all clinical documentation
- Provide rotation assignments to students
- Maintain site visits and regular communication with clinical preceptors and students
- Assist in the evaluation of the total clinical internship experience
- Provide clinical teaching and medical education to the students
- Provide remediation and assistance to students
- Coordinate reading and posting materials for course sequences
- Participate in program meetings; recruitment, admission, and graduation events, PA Admissions Board, and PA Faculty Board
- Serve as the principal academic advisor for a given class year of PA students

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Medical Education Consultant –Lecturer

The Medical Education Consultant is a physician with significant experience in medical education and clinical expertise and who has worked extensively with physician assistants. This physician is located at one of the major affiliates and acts as an educator/advisor for the program. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Serve as a consultant and resource to the program faculty, initiating and presenting new teaching pedagogies and assessment of curricular effectiveness.
- Facilitate curriculum and teaching of the Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) to PA students
- Participate in various teaching blocks throughout the professional phase of the program.
- Serve as a member of the PA program Advisory and Faculty Boards and Admissions Committees.
- Serve as a liaison to the medical community.

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Medical Director

The Medical Director is a physician with significant experience in medical education and clinical expertise and who has worked extensively with physician assistants. This physician is located at one of the major affiliates and acts as an advisor for the program. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to:

- Provides support to the Program Director to ensure that both didactic and supervised clinical instruction meets current practice standards.
- Provides some teaching and medical education to students.
- Serves as a member of the PA program Advisory and Faculty Boards, and Admissions Committees.
- Serves as a liaison to the medical community.
- Serves as a resource for program faculty and students.

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II. Introduction

Introduction

The role of the Physician Assistant (PA) demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, the ability to relate with people of diverse backgrounds and cultures, as well as the ability to react in emergencies in a calm, efficient, and professional manner. An attitude of professionalism including respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality, and a commitment to the patient's welfare are essential attributes. This PA program manual is designed to encourage attitudes and behaviors appropriate to academic life and subsequent practice as a PA.

Obtaining the skills and knowledge to practice as a Physician Assistant is a complex process. A carefully planned course of study has been developed to provide a balance of didactic and clinical knowledge. A significant component of the educational process is the socialization of the student to the character, performance, and role of a provider of medical care. The evaluation of the student's adaptation to this role depends on the experienced judgment of individual faculty members. It is important to recognize that these subjective judgments may transcend or be independent of traditional paper and pencil tests and other similar objective measures of academic performance.

Many opportunities, in the form of evaluations, are provided for measurement of progress by both faculty and student. In addition to a fully staffed Academic Success Center individual instruction and tutoring may be provided in certain instances. Every effort is made to provide a complete learning environment. Although a variety of experiences, learning situations and tools are provided by the program, the single greatest factor, motivation, is essentially up to the student. This manual is to be your guide for completion of the Physician Assistant program at RIT. Guidelines on attendance, attire, academic and clinical requirements and expectations, professional behavior, and other related items are presented.

Do not hesitate to call on the program faculty and staff if you don't find the information you need. **You will be required to read this manual and sign a statement verifying that fact before the beginning of each academic year of the PA program. Your signature will indicate that you have read, understood, and agree to abide by the guidelines presented.** A copy of the signature page will be placed in your permanent student folder. The faculty and staff of the Physician Assistant program welcome you and wish you well in your studies.

THE PROGRAM MANUAL IS TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH:

The RIT Institute Policies and Procedures Manual

<http://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/policies/student>

The RIT Undergraduate Bulletin

https://www.rit.edu/kosovo/sites/rit.edu.kosovo/files/2025-07/Undergraduate_Bulletin2025-2026.pdf

Expectations for the Student of the RIT PA Program

Students enrolled in the PA program are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and in a professional manner at all times. The criteria for evaluating appropriate performance include, but are not limited to, demonstrating professional competencies and skills; adhering to the PA program's policies and procedures; displaying sensitivities to patient and to community needs; demonstrating ability to professionally relate to peers, instructors, and other members of the health care team; maintaining regular and punctual attendance in classes and professional settings; and maintaining professional physical appearance. These requirements for performance have been established to protect the rights of patients and communities, to foster the team concept in the delivery of health care, and to create a productive educational environment. Should a student be unable or unwilling to demonstrate this, the student will be in violation of the program academic standards. Violation of any of these standards may be cause for dismissal from the program; therefore, compliance with the following academic standards is essential:

- A.** The student will review all course and program objectives and will dedicate themselves to achieving the knowledge and skills set forth in these objectives during their course of study.
- B.** The student shall assume the health and safety of the patient as their primary responsibility.
- C.** If there is any question or concern regarding a clinical activity, the student should discuss the issue(s) with the individual assigned to supervise them, the preceptor, or the program clinical coordinators.
- D.** The student shall state truthfully and accurately the details of their interactions with patients, health professionals, and other individuals.
- E.** The student shall deliver health care services to patients without regard to race, age, sex, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability or health, marital status, veteran status, socioeconomic status, political persuasion, or national origin.
- F.** The student shall have ongoing communication with the student's preceptor as assigned to safeguard and enhance the care of the patient and to ensure the development of the student's clinical skills. Students are not to assume primary or sole responsibility for patient care. No student shall see, treat, or discharge any patient without discussing the patient with the responsible clinical supervisor.
- G.** The student shall conduct themselves in a professional manner relating to patients, faculty, and professional staff. The student furthermore shall refuse to participate in, or conceal any, illegal or unethical practice or procedures.

- H. The student shall hold all privileged patient information in confidence, following HIPAA guidelines, unless they are required to release such information by law or the release of such information becomes necessary to protect the welfare of the patient or the community.
- I. The student shall perform only those procedures authorized by the clinical affiliate, service, preceptors, and the program.
- J. The student shall not display obstructive, inappropriate, or disruptive behaviors towards another student, faculty member, clinical staff member, or especially, a patient. The student must be appropriately responsive to the requests of their instructors, faculty, and patient population.
- K. The student shall observe the specific rules and regulations of the clinical site. ☐

Expected Functions/Tasks for Graduates of the RIT PA Program

Graduates will demonstrate proficiency at performing the following skills, tasks and procedures when working with patients across the lifespan and socioeconomic backgrounds with varying degrees of medical acuity, in a wide variety of medical settings. These settings include, but are not limited to, inpatient and ambulatory settings in urban, suburban and rural communities:

- I. Demonstrate ability to properly triage patients with potentially life-threatening injuries or illnesses and the ability to initiate appropriate care
- II. Demonstrate good interpersonal communication skills and the ability to develop an appropriate and professional rapport with patients, families and other healthcare workers
- III. Obtain a comprehensive history, eliciting information pertinent to the development of a diagnosis. Each history will contain the following elements: A) Chief complaint B) History of present illness C) Past medical history D) Family history E) Social history and F) Review of systems
- IV. Perform a comprehensive physical examination
- V. Obtain a problem focused history when appropriate
- VI. Perform a problem focused physical examination when appropriate
- VII. Differentiate between normal and abnormal physical exam findings
- VIII. Order and interpret appropriate laboratory and diagnostic studies
- IX. Critically analyze history, physical examination and diagnostic study findings, formulate an accurate assessment and demonstrate medical decision-making skills in the formulation of a treatment plan
- X. Organize and document all patient data in written form to ensure the establishment of an accurate record compliant with all medical/legal standards
- XI. Deliver concise oral presentations (using either bullet or formal format) which accurately summarize pertinent patient data
- XII. Discuss the risks, benefits, associated with various diagnostic studies, treatment referrals and medication choices
- XIII. Discuss and demonstrate proficiency in the use of evidence-based medicine in medical decision making
- XIV. Determine when additional intervention is needed and facilitate medical referrals and/or access to health providers (i.e. physician specialist, physical therapy, social work, hospice care, psychotherapy, etc.)
- XV. Educate and instruct the patient regarding symptoms, physical examination findings, assessment and treatment plan recommendations, including verification that the patient clearly understands all discharge instructions

- XVI. Counsel patients regarding normal development and aging patterns as well as health maintenance, disease prevention, screening techniques, immunizations, and the risks/benefits of various lifestyle choices.
- XVII. Demonstrate the ability to follow Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) standards in clinical practice.
- XVIII. Demonstrate knowledge of NY State guidelines regarding the recognition of child abuse and the physician assistant's role as a mandated reporter
- XIX. Maintain BLS/ACLS certification during the clinical component of the student's education
- XX. Demonstrate professional integrity, honesty, dependability, respect for self and others, compassion, and an ability to protect patient confidentiality and trust.
- XXI. Demonstrate commitment to the ideals of life-long learning, professional excellence, teamwork, and tolerance for diversity and community service.
- XXII. Recognize and comply with the accepted standards within the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability (HIPAA) Act of 1996.
- XXIII. Perform the following medical procedures with proper supervision:
 - a. Perform a pelvic exam including proper speculum and PAP smear
 - b. Demonstrate proper breast exam technique 3 Updated 7/2024
 - c. Demonstrate proper testicular exam technique
 - d. Test visual acuity using a Snellen chart
 - e. Demonstrate proper venipuncture technique
 - f. Demonstrate proper arterial puncture technique
 - g. Obtain a throat culture
 - h. Perform injections (i.e. subcutaneous, intradermal, intravenous and intramuscular)
 - i. Interpret an electrocardiogram to ACLS standards
 - j. Demonstrate proper foley catheter insertion technique
 - k. Demonstrate the ability to use aseptic technique and the ability to establish a sterile field
 - l. Demonstrate proper wound care including skin closure using various techniques
 - m. Apply splints using proper materials and techniques
 - n. Demonstrate competency in the interpretation of plain radiographs

Employment

The Rochester Institute of Technology does not state or imply that graduation from the PA program will ensure employment. However, the PA program, in conjunction with the RIT Office of Career Services is available to provide employment assistance for graduates. This includes providing assistance to all students in preparing for interviews, writing curriculum vitae and cover letters, and navigating the job negotiation process. Job postings received by the PA program are sent out electronically. In addition, RIT offers many job fairs and online job resourcing and posts.

III. Academic Policy

Overview

PA program Academic Policies & Procedures adhere to those of the Rochester Institute of Technology Educational Policies and Procedures, D5.0 Academic Actions, Section II: Academic Probation and Suspension,

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d051><https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d051>; however, additional requirements apply as detailed below:

- A. Any student whose term grade point average (GPA) falls below 3.0 or whose cumulative GPA falls below 3.0 (BS/MS program), will be placed on academic probation. Note that at the beginning of the 5th year students begin graduate studies, and the graduate GPA does NOT include the GPA from undergraduate studies.
- B. Any student who has been placed on academic probation (based on term or cumulative GPA below 3.0) for more than 2 semesters will be dismissed from the program. At the discretion of the Student Progress Committee, it may be determined whether the student is eligible for removal from probation.
- C. For qualifications for academic suspension from RIT, please refer to: [D05.1 Academic Actions and Recognitions | University Policies | RIT](#)
- D. Students enrolled in the RIT PA program are expected to demonstrate high standards of professional behavior and professional conduct in all academic and clinical environments. Misconduct, dishonesty or behavior inconsistent with PA professional standards will be reviewed by the PA Student Progress Committee and may result in probation (regardless of cumulative/term GPA) and/or dismissal from the program.

A student may initiate a formal appeal of an academic decision (probation, deceleration or dismissal from program) within 14 calendar days of receipt of the decision. The student must submit a written appeal to the PA Program Director which includes a full description of the academic decision and the basis for the student's appeal for reconsideration, a statement of the remedy the student is seeking, and any supporting documents as needed. The grounds for appeal will be limited to: determining whether RIT's and the PA program's policies were followed, determining whether the outcome is substantially disproportionate to the severity of the violation and/or conduct of the student, or considering new information that was not known at the time of the academic decision. Each case will be reviewed by the PA program Faculty and presented to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences and Technology who will provide a final decision.

Academic Dishonesty

The PA program does not tolerate any form of academic dishonesty. Any act of improperly representing another person's work as one's own is construed as an act of academic dishonesty. These acts include, but are not limited to, plagiarism in any form or use of information and materials not authorized by the instructor during an examination. The serious nature of this event is deemed extremely consequential within the PA program. Physician Assistants practice medicine in stressful situations and patients' lives and well-being depend on a PA's judgment, knowledge base, and honesty. Cheating by any means and/or academic misconduct will not be tolerated in the program.

Sharing or disseminating protected materials, such as quizzes/exams, written papers or assignments, C-Print, or verbally sharing exam material in the form of questions, answers, or content is considered a violation of academic policy and the Honor Code. If a student is found guilty of some form of academic dishonesty, the student could be given a failing grade for that piece of work and/or the course. Any such actions may lead to disciplinary action and be grounds for automatic dismissal from the PA program. The RIT Student Academic Integrity Policy can be found at:

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d080>.

Honor Code

Students in the Rochester Institute of Technology Physician Assistant program are expected to meet the highest standards of personal, ethical, and moral conduct. These standards require personal integrity, a commitment to honesty without compromise, as well as truth without equivocation.

Students will only submit original and individual work without any inappropriate assistance, or without proper reference to original authors or assistants, which includes (but is not limited to) submission of work which is not one's own, submission of work from other classes one has taken, use of non-allowed information in exams whether electronic or physical, and sharing of content of exams with others who have not yet taken the exam. During the professional phase of the program, the Attestation of Academic Honesty statement will appear on every exam and will require attestation by each student. A copy of the statement is listed below:

Attestation of Academic Honesty

By signing below, I **attest** that I have **personally and individually** (unless work was a group paper or group project) **completed the work**. I have created the materials or answered the questions **on my own** **without assistance** from any third party and **without using any means**, (including but not limited to, electronic devices, physical aides [such as "cheat sheet" or papers], or recollection of persons who may have already completed the exam, etc.), **which would give me, or anyone else, an unfair advantage**.

Name PA-S Signature Date

Degree Requirements

Candidates for degrees in Physician Assistant must satisfy the following requirements:

1. The student must have made full payment or satisfactory adjustment of all financial obligations to RIT.
2. The student must have successfully completed a minimum of 181 semester credit hours for the BS/MS.
3. The student must have a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 in both the undergraduate AND graduate components of the program.
4. Each student must complete 2 wellness courses. This requirement is normally met within the first two years at RIT and may be transferred. Students may qualify for one of the exceptions to the physical education policy as described in the RIT Official Bulletin.
5. Each student must complete all university required Writing Intensive (WI) courses.
6. The student must have successfully completed all general education curriculum.
7. The student must have successfully completed all course requirements described in the program curriculum.

Advanced Placement

In the pre-professional phase, Advanced Placement (AP) credit for general education courses is evaluated and approved by the Academic Advisor. AP credit for Calculus, Statistics, and university electives, is awarded, as applicable within the College of Health Sciences and Technology. AP credit is not accepted for Biology and Chemistry. AP or credit for experiential learning is not awarded for courses in the professional phase (years 3, 4, 5) of the program.

Transfer Credit

Once matriculated into the pre-professional phase, students are permitted to take a limited number of courses at another institution during the summer, pending university/college/program approval. It is important that students take core science courses at RIT to ensure a consistent educational experience. Students are not permitted to skip class years (i.e. first to third year) once matriculated in the PA program.

Institute and Program Writing Policy

PA students must demonstrate writing skills needed for successful entry into medicine. Several courses within the curriculum are designated as Writing-Intensive (WI) and these writing requirements must be completed prior to graduation. Students are expected to demonstrate writing proficiency in using appropriate English grammar and construction, organization, and scientific / medical language. Requirements include, but are not limited to: WI courses within progression through the program

curriculum; e.g. First Year Writing course (or equivalent), Clinical Research Methods, and Graduate Project I.

Grading Policy

The grading policy for courses in the pre-professional years is at the discretion of the instructor. The grading policy for the professional phase courses is as follows:

93.00 – 100.00	A
90.00 – 92.99	A-
87.00 – 89.99	B+
83.00 – 86.99	B
80.00 – 82.99	B-
77.00 – 79.99	C+
73.00 – 76.99	C
70.00 – 72.99	C-
60.00 – 69.99	D
0.00 – 59.99	F

GPA Equivalency Table

Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.0 Scale
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3
D	65-66	1.0
E/F	Below 65	0.0

Students are required to maintain ALL OF THE FOLLOWING:

- A 3.00 grade point average (GPA) per semester, and a cumulative GPA of 3.00 in both the undergraduate and graduate portions of the program.
- Undergraduate course (year 3 and 4 of the program) grades must achieve a minimum grade of C- and compliance with all recommended remediation requirements.
- Graduate course (year 5 of the program) grades must be \geq C for successful course completion at the graduate level. C- is not acceptable for graduate work.

Remediation and Reassessment Policy

Students are expected to perform at an academic level that demonstrates professional competency.

Students who do not achieve a passing score of at least 70% on any exam, or clinical competency, are required to formally remediate to progress in the course and/or program. Students who earn < 75% on

any exam or clinical competency must complete a remediation plan to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the assessed content areas. Formal remediation involves the student making arrangements to meet with the course instructor and/or designated remediation faculty to review specific areas of deficiency, test-taking strategies and/or study skills, and is likely to require additional assignments. A student is limited to a maximum of 8 examination remediations and reassessments for failures during the professional didactic phase of the program (year 3 and 4). Students are also required to meet all term and cumulative GPA requirements regardless of exam failures or reassessment attempts. For further clarification please refer to grading policy on page 19.

After remediation has been completed, the faculty member and the student will schedule a reassessment (and/or repeat clinical rotation in year 5; see page 40) at a mutually agreed upon time to assure competency. Successful completion (70% or higher) of the reassessment is required for continued progression in the PA program. If a student fails (<70%) any reassessment, the student will appear before the PA Student Progress Committee and be subject to academic actions including referrals for additional support and/or academic probation. Only the initial examination score will be used in the calculation of the final course grade.

If a student fails three or more examinations in any course(s) throughout the didactic phase of the program, the student will appear before the PA Student Progress Committee and be subject to academic actions including referrals for additional support and academic warning. The Student Progress Committee will determine academic actions by the student's overall performance and previous need for remediation.

Any further exam failures beyond 3 may require a remediation plan that includes a written 2+ paragraph essay explaining why the correct answer was correct and why the answer chosen was incorrect for each exam question answered in error. Note: the specific exam question will not be shared, but the content of the question, correct and chosen answer will be provided.

If a student fails 9 examinations in any combination of course(s) throughout the didactic phase of the program, this will result in deceleration and/or dismissal from the PA program, based on the recommendations of the Student Progress Committee, in conjunction with the program faculty and Program Director.

If it is determined that the student should be dismissed from the PA program, the student will be offered a change of program into any RIT program for which they are qualified and/or accepted.

The example below illustrates the outcome of repeated examination failures and/or failure to maintain a term or cumulative GPA ≥ 3.0

The occurrence of any combination of 3 Academic Warnings and / or Probations will result in Deceleration or Dismissal from the program, based on the recommendations of the work of the Student Progress Committee, in conjunction with the program faculty and Program Director.

Outcome of cumulative exam failures that occur during the didactic phase of the professional program (Years 3 & 4)

3 exam failures	1 st Academic Warning
6 exam failures	2 nd Academic Warning
9 exam failures	Automatic course failure of the course associated with the 9 th exam failure.

	Deceleration or Dismissal from the program based on the recommendation of the Student Progress Committee
Upon any occurrence of the above, you will be notified in writing via email with an academic warning letter that requires you to meet with the Student Progress committee to identify the underlying cause of this performance.	
You must also concurrently maintain a Term and Cumulative GPA ≥ 3.0	

Outcome of failure to maintain an End of Term and Cumulative GPA of ≥ 3.0

Term and/or Cumulative GPA < 3.0	1 st Academic Probation
Term and/or Cumulative GPA < 3.0	2 nd Academic Probation
Term and/or Cumulative GPA < 3.0	Deceleration or Dismissal from the program based on the recommendation of the Student Progress Committee
Upon any occurrence of the above, you will be notified in writing via email with an academic probation letter that requires you to meet with the Student Progress committee to identify the underlying cause of this performance.	
You must also concurrently maintain a total exam failure rate of < 9 throughout the didactic phase of the professional program.	

A course grade of $< C-$ in the didactic phase of the program is an automatic failure with a consequence of deceleration or dismissal from the program based on the recommendation of the Student Progress Committee

A course grade of $< C$ in the clinical rotation phase of the program is an automatic failure with a consequence of deceleration or dismissal from the program based on the recommendation of the Student Progress Committee.

Please see clinical rotation grading policy on page 38 for specifics pertaining to graduate level courses.

Academic Advisement

Academic advisement and mentoring are extremely important within the PA program. Academic advisement is provided at the college level for all pre-professional PA students by a CHST academic advisor who meets regularly with students to provide guidance on course selection, scheduling, and facilitate tutoring services, when needed. In addition, all PA students are also advised by a PA program faculty member to provide guidance, support, and mentoring through the program. Students are required to meet with their assigned PA faculty advisor at least once in each academic term.

Academic Resources

Academic student services are provided in many areas across campus and are available to all RIT students. All RIT students have access to all these services and offerings. (See the University Support Services section of this manual for more information.)

Starfish Academic Alert System

The PA program participates in the RIT Starfish academic alert system, which is designed to promote student success through communication between students, instructors, and advisors. When faculty are concerned about a student's academic performance, an academic alert may be raised to notify the student as well as their advisor(s). If you receive an academic alert email, it is your responsibility to contact your assigned faculty and academic advisor as soon as possible to discuss the issue, its potential impact on your success in this course, and identify resources to help move you forward. For more information about the Starfish system, visit www.rit.edu/starfish.

IV. Professionalism Policy

Professionalism

Professionalism is a critical component of physician assistants and students are expected to maintain and will be evaluated on professionalism throughout the program.

Professional behavior is defined as a form of etiquette based upon respectful and courteous conduct. It is a combination of attitude, appearance, and manners. It includes the way you speak, look, act, and make decisions. Qualities include, **but are not limited to:**

- **Honesty** (choosing not to lie, steal, cheat, or deceive)
- **Respect** (positive interactions towards others to convey a sense of admiration for good or valuable qualities)
- **Communication** (speaking clearly in a manner others can understand, listening, avoiding gossip, and being careful of language and tone in written communications, avoiding swearing)
- **Time management** (not being late to class/meetings/clinical rotations, arriving early enough to get settled and prepared, knowing what your schedule is for the day and adhering to it)
- **Integrity** (acting ethically and always doing the right thing, remaining impartial and avoiding personal bias and intolerances with others)
- **Safety** (understand company safety policies and report hazards immediately)
- **Attire** (following dress code standards and guidelines, avoiding clothing that is provocative or includes offensive language or pictures)
- **Accountability** (taking responsibility for your work and actions, do what needs to be done, be honest if things go wrong, seek help early when needed)
- **Teamwork** (set aside differences to work well with others)
- **Commitment** (dedication and a positive action to your role to inspire others)

All breaches of professionalism will have consequences, scaled to the seriousness of the offense ranging from verbal/written warning to dismissal from the PA program. Serious or repeated breaches of professionalism may result in dismissal from the PA program or from RIT, as per RIT policy.

<https://www.rit.edu/policies/d080>

Criteria for Dismissal

- One egregious or more than two other occurrences of professional misconduct, behavior and/or attitude inconsistent with the PA profession or in violation of Professional Code of Conduct Policies

- Violation of any of the PA program student expectations may be cause for dismissal from the program including misconduct, dishonesty or behavior inconsistent with PA professional standards.
- Course failure and/or a third academic probation or warning
- Violation of any GPA requirements as noted throughout this policies and procedures manual
- Recurrent breaches of the Class Attendance policy, defined as 3 professionalism warnings in the didactic phase of the program. Any unexcused absence or chronic tardiness (3 occurrences) will result in a professionalism warning.
- Unexcused absences from clinical rotations constitute a serious breach of professionalism. Any unexcused absence will result in a score of 0% for the professional component of the rotation grade and the student will make up all time missed. Any unexcused absence will result in a professionalism warning. Recurrent breaches of professionalism, defined as 3 professionalism warnings, may be grounds for dismissal from the program.
- The occurrence of any combination of 3 Academic Warnings and / or Probations will result in Deceleration or Dismissal from the program, based on the recommendations of the work of the Student Progress Committee, in conjunction with the program faculty and Program Director.
- Failure to successfully complete and/or pass more than two rotations is grounds for dismissal from the program.

Class Attendance

It is expected that PA students will attend all scheduled classes, on time, for the entire duration of the class. Repetitive tardiness or early departure will not meet this expectation. Attendance is mandatory for all classes in the professional phase of the program. Students are expected to arrive to class fully prepared to participate in the course. Each course provides breaks, as applicable, and students should refrain from leaving class for restroom usage, phone calls, going to get breakfast, etc. outside of the class breaks, unless absolutely necessary. Students coming and going during the class lecture are distracting for other students and the lecturer as well. Professional judgment is necessary for these interruptions.

Preplanned excused absences must be requested and approved by the course instructor and the program director in advance. Students must notify the course instructor and the program director as soon as possible when student will not be in class due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances. Excused absences include illness, personal or family emergency; religious observances, participation in team NCAA events, situations pre-approved by the program faculty, or valid unforeseen circumstances, as determined by program faculty e.g. inclement weather. Excused absences may be required to be made up at a time that is determined by the course instructor.

Tardiness will be noted by the course director, and the student will be notified of the event via email. 3 episodes of tardiness will result in a professionalism warning. Any unexcused absence will result in a professionalism warning. The student's course grade may be lowered one letter grade if 2 professionalism warnings are given for failure to abide by the Class Attendance policy. Recurrent breaches of the Class Attendance policy, defined as 3 professionalism warnings in the didactic phase of the program, may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

PA Student Employment and Co-Curricular Activities

PA students may work in other campus and community jobs during the first two years of their education. They may also apply for credit earning teaching experience (TA) positions that are defined and competitively available at the beginning of each semester. Most find that balancing academics, co-curricular activities, and working 8-10 hours/week may be possible. PA students are not permitted to work for the PA program. Attention must always remain focused on the academic expectations of the PA program which include attendance, academic preparation and performance to maintain a minimum term and cumulative GPA of 3.0 throughout the program. Given the rigorous program of study, students in the professional phase of the program will meet with their academic advisor to discuss their participation in outside employment and co-curricular activities.

Fifth year students in the clinical phase of the program are not permitted to work outside of their clinical rotations.

Patient Care/Shadowing Experiences

Once accepted into the RIT PA program, PA students are not permitted to engage in indirect/direct patient care outside of the program course requirements as malpractice and liability insurance coverage only extends to those activities directly associated with the PA program. The program also does not permit shadowing including direct/indirect care of patients. Shadowing that includes observation of workflow/office space/hospital can be appropriate as long as **no patient care is involved**. If a student is employed in a patient care role (i.e. emergency medical technician, patient care technician, scribe), this is acceptable when functioning in that respective role.

Reimbursement

PA students cannot receive any monetary reimbursement for their work on clinical rotations, either from RIT or the clinical affiliate. Clinical rotations are a significant component of a student's clinical education; therefore, students are responsible for paying full time tuition for the clinical year. Likewise, students may not receive a stipend based on production and/or quality of work as a PA student. Exceptions are that on rare occasions, clinical affiliates may offer reduced cost or free housing to PA students

Substance Abuse

In accordance with [university policy D18.1](#), alcohol and other drugs may not be illegally used, possessed, manufactured or distributed. Being under the influence of any mind-altering substance while participating in the care of patients will not be tolerated and is grounds for dismissal from the PA program.

Smoking/Vaping

PA students are not permitted to smoke or vape on the grounds of any healthcare facility. PA students who ignore these restrictions will be removed from the affiliate, with appropriate hours deducted from clinical time. Repeated offenses may result in dismissal from the program.

Program Progression

Matriculation

Students are matriculated into one of the first three years upon their acceptance into the PA program. Students must meet all program academic and professional requirements, policies, and standards to progress into the next year of the program. If a student is deemed ineligible to progress into the next year of study (including the clinical year), deceleration in, or dismissal from, the program will be at the discretion of the PA program faculty board based on academic standards, performance, and individual circumstances.

Physical Exam Competency Examinations

A physical competency examination will be given to each student in the fall semester of the fourth year. The student will be given a clinical scenario and must complete an appropriate physical examination in a timely fashion. Each student must successfully complete the Physical Competency Examination to continue in the program.

Didactic Competency Examinations

A standardized, computerized competency examination will be given to students during the fourth year of the program. The Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) is a nationally recognized competency examination for PA students. This standardized examination provides excellent feedback to students and faculty regarding comprehensive knowledge bases and problem-solving abilities of the students. The content and approach simulate the computer-based Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE). Many students have found this to be excellent preparation for the national boards. The cost for each student is currently \$45.00.

Prerequisites for Entrance to Clinical Rotations

1. Grade Point Average - No student will be admitted to clinical rotations without at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA. Students must demonstrate a 3.0 cumulative GPA prior to entering clinical rotations, in the absence of any extenuating circumstances.
2. Students must complete all first- through fourth-year coursework before beginning clinical rotations. Entry into clinical rotations without fulfilling these requirements is only permitted with Program Director approval. Students are responsible for meeting all program and RIT requirements. If unable to begin clinical rotations, continuation is subject to space availability as determined by the Program Director.
3. Completion of Pre-Rotation Requirements & Health Status Update (See Clinical Year Section for further detail).

Annual Graduate Awards and Coating Ceremony

Each spring, the PA program conducts a formal ceremony celebrating graduating fifth year students and those fourth-year students who are about to embark on their clinical rotations. The Graduate Awards acknowledge the special accomplishments of individual students with the Coating Ceremony highlighting the event. The presentation of the ceremonial white coat is symbolic to those entering the medical profession. The wearing of the White Coat is representative of the honor, dignity, humanity, compassion, and ethical responsibility that a medical professional undertakes upon entering the field.

Graduating students and students beginning their clinical rotations are presented with appropriate length white coats at the conclusion of the ceremony. This event culminates the end of the academic year, and all program students are invited to attend this ceremony to celebrate the journeys and accomplishments of fellow PA students. Occasionally, students have a member of their immediate family in the medical profession. Graduating students may be presented their white coat by a member of their immediate family (father, mother, child, sibling, spouse, significant other) in conjunction with the Program Director at this ceremony, upon request. These requests will be limited to immediate family members who are physicians (MD, DO, MBBS, MBBCh, or equivalent), physician assistants, or nurse practitioners. Student recommendations are always at the discretion of program faculty.

V. Student Status (Deceleration, Leaves of Absence, Withdrawal)

Deceleration in the Course of Study

If a student is granted deceleration, all courses within the semester(s) will need to be repeated at the discretion of the PA program faculty board. Previous work cannot be reused.

Unlike undergraduate coursework, if a graduate level course is repeated for any reason, the final grades for both the first attempt and succeeding attempts of the course are both utilized in the calculation of the cumulative GPA. Repeat graduate level courses therefore can affect term and cumulative GPA.

Leave of Absence

If a student needs time away from their studies, they may request a Leave of Absence (LOA). While students are on LOA, they retain their student status and upon return to the university, complete all curriculum and program requirements that were in place at the time they left their program of study. Academic suspension or disciplinary suspension override a leave of absence. The student must submit the LOA request in writing to the academic advisor and Program Director. The student then needs to initiate the appropriate formal paperwork for a leave of absence from the PA program.

Decisions concerning matriculation dates and special conditions pertaining to these leaves are the decision of the PA Program Director.

Any student who is granted a leave of absence is subject to changing standards within the curriculum that may necessitate additional courses and/or additional time to complete the degree requirements. In all cases of leave of absence, the student is required to complete the full curriculum to be eligible to earn a degree as a PA. Upon return from a medical leave of absence (including mental and/or behavioral health leave) in the professional phase of the program, students are required to submit a statement of medical clearance by their physician. This statement of medical clearance is necessary to ensure the safety of the student as well as classmates and instructors.

University Withdrawal

Students who complete a university withdrawal will no longer be students at the university. If at a later time they want to continue their studies, they will need to re-apply (through Admissions) to the university. If accepted, they will be put on the most recent curriculum and program requirements of the degree.

VI. Program Resources and Additional Information

PA Program SharePoint Bulletin Board

The PA program maintains a SharePoint Bulletin Board for all PA students and is an excellent resource for professional information and for general communication within the PA program; Physician Assistant Student Association (PASA) news, continuing medical education events, and employment opportunities. Students are encouraged to publish study sessions, announcements, meetings, and social events through their class designee. All related and current scholarship information can also be found here.

Adjunct Faculty and Guest Lecturers

Adjunct faculty and guest lecturers for the PA program are highly qualified physicians, physician assistants, and other health care professionals who have been asked to lecture on specific topics. The PA program is quite fortunate to have the expertise and the time commitment of these individuals, so students are expected to be prompt, courteous, and attentive during their sessions. No student may substitute or function as instructional faculty while enrolled within the program.

Big Sib/Little Sib Mentoring Program

The Big Sib / Little Sib Mentoring program has been a long-standing tradition within the RIT PA program. All new incoming PA students are assigned an upper classman who has volunteered to mentor them throughout the program. This mentor program provides new students opportunities to meet upper classmen and become acclimated to life as a college student in a PA program. Study groups are encouraged and insights regarding various courses, electives, study aides and guides, textbooks, references, and websites are to be readily shared among all students. However, sharing or disseminating protected materials, such as quizzes/exams, written papers or assignments, C-Print, or verbally sharing exam material in the form of questions, answers, or content is considered a violation of academic policy and the RIT Honor Code and may be grounds for dismissal from the PA program.

Medical Equipment

Students must purchase the required medical equipment by the start of their third year, including a stethoscope. Optional items include tuning forks, a blood pressure cuff, an otoscope, and ophthalmoscope. Equipment must be brought to class in good working order. The PA program partners with medical suppliers to keep costs low while ensuring quality. Though our lab is fully equipped, students may choose to buy their own gear for practice outside lab hours or future use in clinical settings. Total costs typically range from \$800 to \$1,500 and represent a one-time investment for long-term use.

Health Insurance

RIT requires health insurance for all full-time undergraduate students upon registration. Students have the option of receiving health insurance coverage from the on-campus Student Health Services. A student not desiring this particular health insurance needs to contact Student Health Office (585-475-

2255) for a waiver. Information on specific benefits under this policy may be obtained by visiting the Student Health Office. PA students must provide the PA program with proof of health insurance prior to the beginning of the clinical rotations. The students' name needs to appear on the insurance card or be listed as a dependent on parents' policy.

Professional Malpractice and General Liability Insurance

RIT provides student malpractice and general liability insurance to all students in the PA program. This insurance covers clinical activities that are within the program. This insurance does not cover outside extracurricular activities or health care work on the part of the student, (e.g. BP screenings at local malls, EMS work, job shadowing or volunteer activities).

Hepatitis B Vaccine

While RIT cannot mandate the Hepatitis B vaccine, it is required by our healthcare affiliates starting in Year 4. Students without proof of immunity or necessary vaccines will be unable to participate in required clinical coursework, which may prevent program completion. Infection Control/Blood Borne Pathogens

Instruction in the areas of infection control, blood borne pathogens, and sepsis awareness is provided during the orientation into the professional phase to third year students. The University of Rochester, in collaboration with other teaching hospitals in the community, has developed a syllabus and self-study program with a post-test component, which has met the Department of Health and State Education Department requirements. New York State Certification is provided upon completion.

Patient Confidentiality / HIPAA

Students must be aware of federal and state laws protecting confidential medical information. Instruction of patient confidentiality and the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) is provided during the professional phase of the program. Students are provided with didactic sessions and a post-test. It is illegal for students to use or disclose confidential medical information outside the scope of your duties within the hospital or office settings. Guidelines for use of this information include, but are not limited to:

- You may use this information as necessary to care for your patients.
- You may share this information, with patient authorization, with other health care providers for care and treatment purposes.
- Do NOT photocopy patient information
- Access the minimum amount of information necessary to care for your patient or carry out an assignment.
- Do not record patient names, dates of birth, address, phone number, social security number, etc., on assignments.
- You may only access confidential information of patients for whom you are caring.
- Be aware of your surroundings when discussing confidential information. It is inappropriate to discuss patients in elevators, cafeteria, etc.

Hospital Practice and Pre Rotation Health Clearance/Immunization Requirements

Prior to the start of your Hospital Practice course in the fall of your fourth year and again prior to clinical rotations beginning in May of the fifth year, the list of requirements and immunizations below must be completed by the student. These policies are based on New York State Department of Health recommendations, current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for health professionals and requirements of our health care affiliates. No student will be permitted to enter any health care setting without the health status update in place and compliance with any hospital/clinical policy mandates. Immunizations, titers and tuberculosis screening results are maintained and released with written permission of the student. A history and physical examination (including various blood work, titers, TB testing, and current immunizations) are required prior to the start of clinical rotations. TB testing is also required prior to the start of the fourth year. Students must arrange for these examinations several months in advance of the deadline. Costs may range from \$300.00 – \$600.00 depending on insurance coverage.

Although the PA program cannot mandate each student obtain valuable vaccinations for admittance to the program, including COVID, flu, Hepatitis B, it is strongly recommended. **Lack of these vaccinations may preclude students from most clinical training sites.** Costs of vaccinations vary dependent upon health insurance coverage.

- ☐ Sign and return Authorization for Release of Student Health Information form
- ☐ Sign and return Patient Confidentiality Statement form
- ☐ Sign and return Declaration of Freedom from Addiction form
- ☐ Complete operating room scrub training (class arranged by program)
- ☐ Copy of BLS & ACLS certification cards to PA Staff Assistant as soon as copy received (class will be arranged by program)
- ☐ Complete Blood-borne pathogen education (class arranged by program).
- ☐ Complete HIPAA training requirements
- ☐ Complete electronic medical record (EMR) training as required by each individual clinical affiliate
- ☐ Provide proof of medical insurance coverage to PA Staff Assistant (card or letter stating the student is covered with student name appearing on it)
- ☐ Obtain and provide documentation of health clearance. (Have history and physical performed in the date range to be provided by the program so that it will be valid for the entire rotation year).
- ☐ Provide documentation for the following immunizations and/or titers:
 - Tuberculin Skin Test (PPD) or Serologic Test for Tuberculosis either T-SPOT or QuantiFERON-TB Gold). Obtain TB test in spring of the fourth year (date to be provided by the program) so that it is current throughout the clinical year. (PPD will need to be read 48-72 hours after its placement.) *If positive, please provide documentation of CXR or completion of treatment.
 - Tdap immunization
 - Varicella (Chickenpox) Immunity (immunization dates or titer result)
 - Rubella (German Measles) Immunity (immunization dates or titer result)
 - Rubeola (Measles) Immunity (immunization dates or titer result)
 - Hepatitis B vaccine (immunization dates AND hBsAb Titer and hBsAg Titer. If antibody titer is negative, evidence of booster is required)
 - Mumps Immunity (immunization dates or titer result)
 - Seasonal Influenza: Most clinical affiliates require students to have the influenza vaccine during the winter months. It is strongly suggested for all students, regardless of site

requirement, that you consider this protective immunization. Students who cannot provide proof of vaccination may be required to wear a mask during flu season for all encounters at the site.

- COVID-19: consistent with current CDC guidelines (some sites may require specific documentation regarding COVID-19 vaccination status and require vaccination).
- Retain copies of all the above documentation to be presented at each rotation.

All of the above tasks must be completed and paperwork received by the PA program staff assistant by the designated required dates. It is the responsibility of the student to complete these requirements on time. Failure to adhere to the deadlines may cause delay in the start of the student's rotations and students will not be permitted to embark on rotations without all completed requirements.

Student Health Records

The PA program understands and acknowledges the value of compliance with the HIPAA standards. In accordance with HIPAA compliance, all student health records are confidential and are not accessible by, or reviewed by, program faculty and staff except for the Certificate of Health form, immunization records, titers, and tuberculosis screening results.

In accordance with New York State regulations, PA students are required to have a medical provider complete and sign the Certificate of Health Statement prior to the start of clinical rotations certifying that they do **not have any physical or mental conditions, or substance dependencies, that could interfere with their ability to safely and effectively perform program duties or pose a risk to themselves or others.** These documents are maintained and released with written permission of the student.

Fit Testing

Fit testing (for appropriate respirator mask fitting) will be available to 5th year professional phase students and will be required prior to starting clinical rotations. Scheduling will be arranged by the program. Fit testing assesses the ability of a provider to use a respirator mask device that protects from inhaling harmful substances. Student fit testing is typically done without charge, or in unusual circumstances will cost approximately \$60. Students in some clinical training disciplines may be required to purchase personal protective masks for a nominal cost prior to beginning clinical rotations.

Criminal Background Checks

In accordance with various state laws and regulations, most of our clinical affiliates require PA students to undergo a criminal background check prior to beginning a clinical rotation. A PA student may not be allowed to participate in a clinical rotation(s), by the clinical affiliates, based on the results of a criminal background check. As a PA professional advances in their healthcare career, s/he can expect regular criminal background checks and credential verification as part of the participation, hiring, and employment process. The RIT PA program requires that all PA students have an initial criminal background check prior to entering the professional phase of the program (year 3) and once again prior to the start of clinical rotations (end of year 4). The cost to each student is currently \$136.00 plus a service fee of \$2.99 for these screenings.

VII. Expectations for Clinical Rotations

Clinical Rotations Overview

Clinical rotations are designed to be the bridge between your classroom learning and real-world medical practice. They're all about helping you develop essential hands-on clinical knowledge and skills, while also allowing us to evaluate your clinical and professional readiness to become a Physician Assistant.

Your Role in Clinical Rotations

This is your chance to build on everything you learned in your pre-clinical years. During these rotations, you're not just expected to meet your preceptor's immediate clinical expectations. It's crucial that you also actively pursue and achieve all the rotation's knowledge and skill objectives, no matter the specific clinical setting or patient cases you encounter.

We put a lot of effort into planning these rotations to create a learning environment where you can gain the high-level competencies needed to practice as a PA. You'll be placed in busy hospitals and office-practices, which offer a wide range of services. It's your responsibility to take the initiative to explore and learn as much as you possibly can throughout this vital year.

For each rotation, the program will assign you a preceptor, typically a physician or an experienced PA, who will guide your educational experience. You're expected to fully participate in all clinically and professionally relevant activities at your assigned practice site.

Important Reminders

Please remember that **we are guests at these affiliate sites**, and they have the right to remove a student at any time. If you have any questions or concerns about your responsibilities, find yourself unable to meet the expectations outlined in your rotation syllabi (including required patient encounters), or have any other issues during your rotation, please **alert the program faculty immediately**.

The RIT Physician Assistant (PA) program is incredibly fortunate to have robust support from the local and neighboring medical communities. This strong backing is crucial because it provides students with access to a wide array of clinical sites, offering diverse and invaluable experiences essential for their professional development.

To ensure every student gains a comprehensive understanding across various medical disciplines, program faculty meticulously handle all rotation assignments. This centralized assignment process is vital for guaranteeing that students are exposed to a broad spectrum of clinical settings and patient populations. However, it's important to understand that while we strive for convenience, the program cannot guarantee clinical assignments within the immediate Rochester area or other desired locations. This is because securing the most beneficial and diverse clinical experiences for all students often requires utilizing sites that may be further afield. A small number (<5%) of assigned sites are located more than 90 miles from the RIT main campus.

For "recall days" when students are assigned > 90 miles from the RIT main campus and need to return to campus for assessments, accommodations are made to facilitate their return.

- Students are released from one (1) full clinical rotation day to allow them to travel back to campus and prepare for their scheduled assessment. This accommodation is provided

to ensure students can adequately prepare for their evaluations without compromising their clinical learning schedule.

Ultimately, the responsibility and cost for housing, travel, and food rests with the students. Students are not reimbursed for expenses incurred during their time on clinical rotation. Fifth year students are considered full time during this clinical training year and are responsible for tuition costs. Students may not be paid / compensated or rewarded in-kind during their time on clinical rotations.

Students on clinical rotations are expected to be prompt and exhibit timeliness in all clinical activities. Students must demonstrate an understanding of responsibilities, expectations, capabilities and activities appropriate to PA practice. Students must understand limitations and adhere to guidelines of PA clinical practice in all settings and activities. All students must develop professional and cooperative working relationships with other healthcare professionals, while maintaining OSHA standards of blood borne pathogens and infection control including possible exposures i.e., radiation and needle stick injuries. PA students are to practice universal precautions at all times. Students are expected to follow the policies of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in all clinical settings and activities.

Drug Testing

In accordance with various state laws and regulations, some clinical affiliates may require PA students to undergo drug testing prior to beginning a clinical rotation. These additional authorizations and their associated fees must be completed by the student at the students' expense. A PA student may not be allowed to participate in a clinical rotation(s) by the clinical affiliates based on the results of this drug testing. If the student is found to have a positive test, in breach of professionalism, they will appear before the PA program faculty board and be subject to disciplinary actions including deceleration and/or dismissal from the PA program.

Electronic Data System

The PA program utilizes a web-based database system (E*Value) which is used by students on clinical rotations. Students are expected to log all patient encounters, procedures and duty hours. This system provides students and the PA program with useful statistics regarding clinical experiences acquired during the clinical year.

Clinical Rotation Schedule

During the clinical phase of the program, students will complete 10 clinical rotations, Graduate Project I and II, and Professional Practice I, II and III, and final program assessments required for graduation. Clinical rotations are composed of eight required core and two elective rotations and begin in May of the fourth year. Every student is given their assigned rotation schedule, arranged by the program, for the clinical year at Clinical Orientation Day. The clinical year calendar does not follow the university Academic Calendar. A limited number of RIT holidays are granted to students, to include Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving break, Winter holiday break, Juneteenth, and Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Clinical Rotation Assignments

In the fifth year of the program, students complete ten clinical rotations, which may require that the student be away from the Rochester area. Sometimes these clinical sites are within driving distance, but at other times, the student will need to reside near the clinical site for the 5 weeks of the rotation. Students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. The PA program coordinates

and assigns all clinical sites and preceptors for all clinical rotations. All rotation assignments are solely at the discretion of the PA program and are subject to change without prior notice as required. To minimize possible conflicts of interest, students should not request, or be assigned to, clinical rotations with a family member or friend as the preceptor. It is imperative that students register for each clinical rotation and other professional courses in the summer, fall, and spring terms. Failure to do so may result in the student being pulled from the rotation and/or loss of financial aid.

Student-Requested Clinical Rotation Sites

Physician Assistant students may submit a request for a specific clinical rotation site during the pre-clinical rotation planning meeting in the Fall preceding clinical rotations. This may include sites located outside the Rochester area or closer to their hometown, or a specific rotation experience or preceptor within the Rochester area. These requests are considered **optional**.

While the program will make a reasonable effort to accommodate such requests, approval and placement at the requested site are **not guaranteed**. All clinical rotation assignments are ultimately determined by the program based on availability, accreditation standards, and educational objectives.

1. The student *should* initiate contact with the proposed clinical site or preceptor to determine their willingness to host a rotation.
2. The student *must* collect and submit the following information to the clinical coordinators:
 - Clinician's full name and credentials
 - Contact phone number
 - Email address
3. After the initial outreach, the student *will have no further involvement* in the placement process. The clinical coordinators will manage all subsequent communication, agreements, and scheduling, including notification to the student.

Note:

All clinical sites and preceptors must meet the program's accreditation and educational standards. The program reserves the right to decline any site that does not meet these requirements.

Clinical Year Expenses

During the clinical rotation year, students may be assigned to rotational sites that are not in driving distance from Rochester. Networking with upper classmen and graduates of the program may provide helpful insights into housing in these areas. Housing, travel, and food expenses are the sole responsibility of each student. The clinical rotations provide an extensive educational opportunity and therefore PA students are considered full-time students during this clinical year. Students on clinical rotations are responsible for full graduate tuition.

Clinical Rotation Student Expectations

Students on clinical rotations are expected to be prompt and exhibit timeliness in all clinical and all academic activities. Students must demonstrate an understanding of responsibilities, expectations, capabilities and activities of the PA. Students must understand limitations and adhere to guidelines of PA clinical practice in all settings and activities. All students must develop professional and cooperative working relationships with other healthcare professionals, while maintaining OSHA standards of blood borne pathogens and infection control including possible exposures i.e., needle stick injuries. PA students are to always practice universal precautions. Students are expected to follow the policies of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) in all clinical settings and activities.

Behavior at the Clinical Site

It is imperative that PA students use great caution and diplomacy when interacting with faculty, staff, fellow medical learners, patients and their families, clinical preceptors, and/or other healthcare personnel. A PA student who is, in the judgment of the program faculty, acting in an unprofessional manner will have their conduct reviewed by the PA Student Progress Committee. Unprofessional conduct may result in remediation, deceleration and/or dismissal.

A clinical year student who is, in the judgment of the clinical preceptor and/or program faculty, acting in an unprofessional manner may be immediately dismissed from that clinical site. The dismissed student is not to return to the clinical site until informed by the clinical coordinator to do so. The clinical preceptor will notify the clinical coordinators as to the nature of the student behavior and reason(s) for dismissing the student from the clinical rotation. If, after investigation, the clinical coordinator determines the student's behavior was inappropriate, the student will then appear before the PA Student Progress Committee for breach of professionalism. All breaches of professionalism will have consequences, scaled to the seriousness of the offense ranging from verbal/written warning to dismissal from the PA program.

Personal Cell Phones/ Electronic Devices

Advances in electronic technology continue to expand educational and personal opportunities. To uphold patient safety, maintain professionalism, and ensure compliance with healthcare regulations, this policy outlines appropriate cell phone use by PA students in clinical settings.

1. General Expectations

- Cell phones must be **silenced or turned off** during clinical hours unless explicitly permitted by the clinical preceptor.
- Personal use of cell phones (calls, texts, social media, etc.) is **prohibited** during patient care activities and while on the clinical floor.

2. Professional Use

- Use of medical reference apps or clinical tools on mobile devices is allowed **only with preceptor approval** and must not interfere with patient care.
- Students must ensure that any use of mobile devices is **discreet, brief, and clinically relevant**.

3. HIPAA and Patient Privacy

- **Absolutely no photos, videos, or audio recordings** may be taken in clinical settings, including of patients, staff, or medical records.
- Students must **never transmit patient information** via text, email, or any unsecured platform.
- Any breach of patient confidentiality may result in **immediate removal from the clinical site** and potential disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

4. Emergency Use

- In the event of a personal emergency, students must **notify their preceptor** before stepping away to use their phone.

- Emergency use should be **brief and conducted in a private area**, away from patient care zones.

5. Site-Specific Policies

- Students are required to **follow the cell phone policy of each clinical site**. If the site's policy is more restrictive, it takes precedence.
- Failure to comply with site-specific rules may result in **disciplinary action or removal from the rotation and potentially the program**.

6. Enforcement and Accountability

- Violations of this policy may result in:
 - Verbal or written warnings
 - Removal from the clinical site
 - Referral to the Student Progress Committee
 - Dismissal from the program

Social Media

This policy outlines expectations for social media use by Physician Assistant (PA) students during clinical rotations. It is designed to protect patient privacy, maintain professional standards, and ensure compliance with HIPAA and institutional guidelines.

1. Patient Privacy and Confidentiality

- Students must not post any patient-related information on social media, even if identifiers are removed.
- Prohibited content includes, but is not limited to:
 - Patient names, ages, diagnoses, or clinical scenarios
 - Photos, videos, or audio recordings from clinical environments
 - Any content that could potentially identify a patient or clinical site
- All social media activity must comply with HIPAA regulations and the privacy policies of the clinical site.

2. Professionalism and Online Conduct

- Students are expected to maintain professionalism in all online interactions.
- The following behaviors are strictly prohibited:
 - Posting derogatory or disrespectful comments about patients, staff, or clinical sites
 - Sharing inappropriate or offensive content related to healthcare
 - Engaging in online behavior that could damage the reputation of the PA program or affiliated institutions

3. Representation of Clinical Sites and the PA Program

- Students must not use the name, logo, or identifiable features of clinical sites or the PA program without written permission.

- Social media posts must not imply endorsement or official representation of any clinical site or the PA program

4. Use of Social Media During Clinical Hours

- Personal social media use is prohibited during clinical hours, except during scheduled breaks and in non-patient care areas.
- Students must adhere to the social media and mobile device policies of each clinical site.

5. Consequences of Policy Violations

- Violations of this policy may result in:
 - Verbal or written warnings
 - Removal from the clinical site
 - Referral to the Student Progress Committee
 - Dismissal from the program

Attendance at the Clinical Site

Attendance is mandatory. Students are to contact their assigned preceptor to arrange a designated meeting time and place with the clinical preceptor two weeks prior to the start of your first day at the rotation. Students are expected to work the hours, shifts, and days as scheduled by the preceptor. Students are not to influence and/or dictate work schedules with the preceptor. The student may work additional shifts with other health care providers, when instructed by the preceptor.

Students on rotations do not receive any time off outside of the holidays as noted in the Clinical Rotation Schedule section. Attendance is mandatory and expected in order to fulfill educational and professional obligations. It is expected that PA students will attend all scheduled rotation shifts.

Excused absences include illness, personal or family emergencies, religious observances or situations pre-approved by the program faculty, or valid unforeseen circumstances, as determined by program faculty e.g. inclement weather.

In the case of any absences, the student must immediately notify the preceptor and RIT clinical coordinators. It is mandatory that both the clinical preceptor and the program be notified. Additionally, the student must log their hours for the day as “absent” and complete an Absentee Form via the E*Value® logging system within 24 hours of the missed time for any absences. If this procedure is not followed, the absence will be considered unexcused. Unexcused absences from clinical rotations constitute a breach of professionalism and will not be tolerated. A score of 0% will be given for the professional component of the rotation grade and the student will be mandated to make up time missed. Any unexcused absence will result in a professionalism warning. The student's course grade may be lowered one letter grade if 2 professionalism warnings are given. Recurrent breaches, defined as 3 professionalism warnings, may be grounds for dismissal from the program. See inclement weather policy under the University Policy section below.

Preplanned absences, including interviews, must be requested and approved by the clinical coordinators in advance. Excused absences would include medical illness (greater than two days requires a healthcare provider clearance to return to rotations), appointments/situations pre-approved by the program

faculty, or valid unforeseen circumstances, as determined by the program faculty. The program will notify the preceptor of all pre-approved absences. The student should work with their preceptor to make up any missed time, if the preceptor and site can accommodate.

The student is permitted two days off from their clinical year for the purpose of interviewing. The expectation is that interviews occur outside of student's scheduled clinical time. If the interview is unable to be scheduled outside of clinical time, the program will review the extenuating circumstances for approval. If deemed appropriate, the clinical coordinators will request this time off with the student's preceptor. The student should work with their preceptor to make up any missed time, if the preceptor and site can accommodate.

Absences may be required to be made up. Make-up time must be cleared and coordinated with the clinical preceptor and the program clinical coordinators prior to the scheduled make-up date. Make-up time should be completed during the rotation in which the absenteeism occurred, if possible. This time may be made-up during weekends, when not otherwise scheduled to work, or as directed by program faculty. If this is not possible, the make-up time must be completed during scheduled vacations, or after completion of the clinical rotation year. Certification of the BS/MS degree may be delayed until all rotation requirements (and make-up time) is completed.

Any absence exceeding two days may require the student to repeat the rotation at the end of the clinical year, pending review by the Student Progress Committee. Patterns of absenteeism will be considered a breach of professionalism and may result in disciplinary action, ranging from a warning to dismissal from the PA program, depending on the severity of the offense.

Dress Attire at the Clinical Site

Students should maintain a neat and clean appearance, and dress in attire that is generally accepted as professional by the patient population serving. Appropriate dress includes wearing ID badge, cleaned and pressed short white lab coat, professional closed-toed footwear, dress slacks, dresses or skirts, and blouses/shirts that are appropriate length to ensure adequate coverage during patient care activities. Students must adhere to additional site requirements. Hair and facial hair must be clean and neatly groomed. False nails represent a safety and infection hazard and are not permitted to be longer than ¼ inch. Gum-chewing is not permitted at any time in a patient care setting. For the health and consideration of patients, healthcare staff/personnel; fragrances, including perfume, colognes and perfumed lotions are not permitted at the clinical sites. Non-compliance with the dress code constitutes unprofessional behavior. See section above regarding professionalism.

Student Identification and Documentation

All PA students must be clearly identified as PA Students during ALL clinical experiences. The PA program provides all students in the professional phase with student identification badges which are to be always worn while at the clinical site. Clinical affiliates may require students to wear their institution's identification (ID) badge in addition to the students' RIT ID badge. If an ID badge should become lost or stolen, immediate notification to the program and affiliates as well as replacement (and cost) of that badge is the student's responsibility.

Physician Assistant students must accurately represent their role and credentials at all times during clinical rotations. **Students are not licensed or certified to practice as Physician Assistants** and must

never present themselves as such to patients, staff, or the public. Students must clearly identify themselves as **PA students** in all verbal and written communications. Use of titles such as “PA,” “Physician Assistant,” or any designation implying licensure or independent practice is **strictly prohibited**. Students must wear program-approved identification and attire that clearly designates their student status.

Misrepresentation of a student’s role is considered a serious breach of professionalism and may result in:

- Immediate removal from the clinical site
- Referral to the Student Progress Committee
- Disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal from the PA program

Emergency Treatment/ Infectious and Environmental Hazards

Injuries sustained at the clinical site/affiliate during training hours must be reported immediately to the clinical preceptor and the PA program clinical coordinators, no matter how small the injury may seem. An Injury/Incident Report Form must be completed (via E*Value®). RIT requires students to maintain health insurance coverage as long as they are enrolled at the Institute. Affiliates provide emergency care for students who become ill or injured while at the site. Students are responsible for payment of all charges.

Clinical Rotation Grading Policy

Component	% of Grade	Comments
Preceptor Evaluation	50 %	
Rotation Exam	25 %	During elective rotations, the exam component of the grade is omitted, and a formal case presentation during Recall Day will make up this component.
Logging/Professionalism	10%	A final grade for a clinical rotation will not be awarded until all logging for the rotation is completed.
Write-Ups	10% (if you have a site visit) 15% (if you do not have a site visit)	Two per rotation- (one H&P and one progress note)
Site Visit Case Presentation	5%	If you do not have a site visit, this component of the grade is omitted, and the write-up comprises 15% of the total grade

Each individual rotation must be successfully passed with a minimum preceptor grade of 70% on each competency. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.0 (BS/MS degree) to graduate from the PA program. To successfully complete every rotation, including all elective rotations. Students also must successfully complete the following components:

Daily logging of patients using E*Value®	The expectation is for daily logging	Due by Saturday at midnight in weeks 1-4, and Wed on week 5.
Required Rotational Write-ups (two per rotation) H&P is due in Week 1 Progress Note is due in Week 3	Submitted to the MyCourses drop box	Submitted by: Saturday at midnight at the end of Week 1 & Week 3
Student Site Evaluations (at the conclusion of each rotation)		Via E*Value
Case Presentation	during site visit (when applicable)	Students need to be fully prepared for oral/formally written case presentation
Updating Clinical Procedures	The expectation is for logging of procedures throughout the rotation, to be printed and signed by the preceptor.	Expected submission at the end of each rotation on recall day

Preceptor Grade

The preceptor grade will constitute 50% of the rotation grade. If a student is on an elective rotation, a formal case presentation will take the place of the rotation exam. It is the student's responsibility to initiate discussion with the preceptor for both the Mid and Final Evaluations for every rotation. It is also the student's responsibility to obtain feedback throughout the entire rotation.

If working with more than one preceptor, only one cumulative evaluation form is accepted from the main preceptor (assigned by the PA program) or their designee. Final Evaluations (via E*Value®) evaluate students on the following areas:

Medical Knowledge	Patient Care	Interpersonal & Communication Skills
Practice-Based Learning & Improvement	Systems-Based Practice	Professionalism

The grading scale for each evaluation category will be as follows:

100% 90% 80% 70% 0%

The grading scale for discipline specific procedures are as follows:

While under preceptor supervision:

- 4- Can competently perform skill independently
- 3 – Can competently perform skill with minimal guidance
- 2 – Cannot competently perform skill
- 1 – No opportunity to perform skill

Students must demonstrate competency in each required discipline specific procedure.

If any student receives a score of <70% by the preceptor in any area of the Final Evaluation of any rotation, the student will appear before the PA Student Progress Committee to review the case. The Student Progress Committee has the authority to:

- Warn student, and/or recommend any remedial activities
- Have student successfully repeat the rotation at the conclusion of the year, prior to receipt of degree
- Recommend a student's dismissal from the program

If a student fails a rotation (final grade < C), the student is required to repeat the rotation at the end of the year, prior to receiving the awarded degree. The student is responsible for all extra tuition costs incurred. **Failure to successfully complete and/or pass more than two rotations is grounds for dismissal from the program.**

End of Rotation™ Examinations

End of Rotations™ (EOR) examinations, for each of the eight core rotations, will be given on the Recall Day of that rotation. These examinations comprise 25% of the rotation grade. Each exam must be successfully passed with a minimum of 70% score to successfully complete the rotation. Students will be allowed one retake of the failed EOR examination to successfully complete the rotation.

If a student does not pass a rotation examination with a minimum score of 75%, the student will participate in a faculty developed remediation process as described in the Remediation section of this manual.

Only the initial examination score will be calculated as 25% of the final rotation grade. If a student fails (< 70%) the Make-Up Examination, the highest possible grade for the course that can be awarded is a C- regardless of calculated overall course grade. Graduate course grades must be a ≥ C to for successful course completion at the graduate level. As a C- course grade is not considered successful completion, the student will be required to repeat the rotation at the conclusion of the year. The student is responsible for all extra tuition costs incurred. **Failure to successfully complete and/or pass more than two rotations is grounds for dismissal from the program.**

All students will be given the opportunity to retest a maximum of two separate EOR examinations (NOT to include the retest). If either of the retests are not successful, then a student has met criteria for course failure. After the second failed INITIAL EOR, students will be referred to the Student Progress Committee and may be placed in a category for dismissal.

Daily Documentation on Rotations

The program utilizes an electronic logging/monitoring system (E*Value®) for all students on clinical rotations. Students will be responsible for inputting data about duty hours, procedures, types and numbers of patients, conferences and scholarly discussions with preceptors that have comprised each day of that rotation. This electronic system captures information that students record, providing documentation/evidence of various activities completed on any given rotation.

Daily logging of patients accounts for 10% of the final rotation grade. Daily (E*Value®) logging is strongly recommended at the end of each working day. All logging for a given week must be accurate and must be submitted to E*Value® by that Saturday by 11:59 pm. A formal email warning will be issued the first-time logging is late, incomplete, or inaccurate. Further logging infractions will result in a 0% given for the

professionalism component of that rotation block. A 3rd infraction will result in a professionalism warning and mandate that the student appear before the PA program Student Progress Committee for breach of professionalism. All breaches of professionalism will have consequences, scaled to the seriousness of the offense ranging from verbal/written warning to dismissal from the PA program.

Clinical Procedural Documentation

Logging clinical procedures is important to the student and the PA program for documenting the numbers and varieties of clinical procedures that the student has either observed or performed. E*Value® provides a mechanism for recording these tasks. Students are encouraged to meticulously document clinical procedures as this information may be necessary for future credentialing and licensing. Students will need to have a qualified health care provider who witnessed the procedure sign off on the procedure for verification.

Rotation Write-Ups

One complete history & physical write-up and one progress note write-up are required per rotation. These should be clearly labeled with the Rotation # and Week #, e.g.; (Rotation #3 Week #2 -Surgery). All patient information such as name, hospital identification number, social security number, and/or date of birth should be omitted from the document which is turned into the program via myCourses. Late or incomplete write-ups will reduce a student's maximum percentage from 7.5% to 0% for that specific assessment. A formal warning will be issued the first time a write-up is late and a 0% given. Further late assignments will mandate the student appear before the PA Program Student Progress Committee for breach of professionalism. All breaches of professionalism will have consequences, scaled to the seriousness of the offense ranging from verbal/written warning to dismissal from the PA program.

Student Site and Preceptor Evaluations

At the completion of every clinical rotation, each student must complete a Student Site Evaluation and Preceptor Evaluation (via E*Value®). This data provides the program with valuable information about the student's opinion of the clinical site, preceptor, and overall educational experience provided at the site. Students are asked to thoughtfully reflect their opinions and provide constructive, professionally written, feedback to the program. This data may be provided to the clinical affiliate in anonymous and aggregate form only.

Site Visits

Students on clinical rotations will have site visits, performed by the clinical coordinators and/or other members of the program faculty, on a frequent basis throughout the clinical year. The rotation site visits may be conducted in person or via zoom at the discretion of the clinical coordinators. Students will be notified, in advance, of the site visit date. It is the student's responsibility to notify the clinical preceptors, in advance, of the upcoming site visit.

Students are also asked to inform the clinical coordinators of their physical location for the day of the site visitation. This should be communicated during the first week of their clinical rotation. It is the student's responsibility to be completely prepared for the site visit. This is important in ensuring quality time spent with program faculty during the site visitation.

Oral Case Presentation

When students have a site visit by a PA faculty member, each student must be prepared to orally present their submitted H&P. Students must also provide the typed, complete patient history & physical exam write-up at the time of their site visit. Presentations will be evaluated by program faculty. Failure to be adequately prepared to present an oral case presentation will result in a grade of 0% for the presentation.

Failure to be prepared for a site visit on more than one occasion throughout the senior year will require the student appearing before the PA Program Student Progress Committee. The committee has the authority to:

- Warn student, and/or recommend any remedial activities
- Have student successfully repeat the rotation at the conclusion of the year, prior to receipt of degree
- Have student dismissed from the program

Recall Days

On the concluding Thursday and Friday of each rotation, students will be required to participate in clinical lectures, case presentations, formal literature/topic review sessions, interprofessional education sessions and EOR examination. The location of Recall Days may be in person on campus or virtual. Attendance at these classes is **mandatory** and tardiness is unacceptable. Any unexcused absence, as determined by the program faculty, may result in a zero for the professionalism component of Professional Practice. Breaches of attendance will result in professionalism warnings as previously outlined.

Summative Evaluation

All fifth year PA students must demonstrate that each has the knowledge, professionalism, interpersonal and patient care skills required for entry into the PA profession. This evaluation, facilitated by program faculty, will be done within four months prior to graduation from the program. This summative evaluation will comprise assessments in the following areas: interpersonal skills, professional behaviors, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, clinical technical skills, and medical knowledge. Interpersonal skills, professional behaviors and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities are assessed during simulated patient scenarios. The clinical technical skills are assessed in practical format. Medical knowledge is assessed using a standardized, computer-based, summative written examination (End of Curriculum exam) provided by the PA Education Association (PAEA). The cost for each student is currently \$99.00.

Successful completion of each assessment component is defined as achieving a “pass” for pass/fail components. A “pass” for the End of Curriculum exam is defined as achieving a 1450 (Satisfactory Medical Knowledge) or above. If students do not successfully complete any of the components of the summative evaluation, remediation and re-assessment will be initiated. A student will be provided remediation and re-assessment up to two additional attempts. If a student does not successfully complete all components in the summative evaluation, the student will appear before the PA Program Student Progress Committee to determine an appropriate remediation plan. The summative evaluation is not incorporated into a specific course; and therefore, a final grade is not rendered. Successful completion of each component is required to graduate from the PA program.

VIII. University Policy and Procedures

Discrimination and Harassment

RIT Title IX Statement

RIT is committed to providing a safe learning environment, free of harassment and discrimination as articulated in our university policies located on our governance website. RIT's policies require faculty to share information about incidents of gender based discrimination and harassment with RIT's Title IX coordinator or deputy coordinators when incidents are stated to them directly. The information you provide to a non-confidential resource which includes faculty will be relayed only as necessary for the Title IX Coordinator to investigate and/or seek resolution. Even RIT Offices and employees who cannot guarantee confidentiality will maintain your privacy to the greatest extent possible.

If an individual discloses information during a public awareness event, a protest, or advocacy event, RIT is not obligated to investigate based on this public disclosure. RIT may however use this information to further educate faculty, staff and students about prevention efforts and available resources.

If you would like to report an incident of gender based discrimination or harassment directly you may do so by using the online Sexual Harassment, Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct Reporting or anonymously by using the Compliance and Ethics Hotline. If you have a concern related to gender-based discrimination and/or harassment and prefer to have a confidential discussion, assistance is available from any of RIT's confidential resources (listed below).

RIT Counseling and Psychological Services 585-475-2261 (V) 585-475-6897 (TTY) www.rit.edu/counseling

RIT Student Health Center 585-475-2255 (V) www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studenthealth

RIT Ombuds Office 585-475-7357 585-475-6424 585-286-4677 (VP) www.rit.edu/ombuds/contact-us

NTID Counseling and Academic Advising 585-475-6400 www.rit.edu/ntid/deafplus/counselorsadvisors

Spirituality and Religious Life 585-475-5932 email SRL@rit.edu: www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/religion

Statement on Diversity, Inclusion and Respect

RIT has developed <https://www.rit.edu/policies/p050> for all community members. RIT is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where all faculty, staff, and students can thrive both professionally and personally. Through equitable policies and practices, RIT upholds its values of diversity and fairness while ensuring compliance with federal, state, and local laws.

Academic Grievance

The College of Health Sciences and Technology follows the Institute procedures in a case where a student believes that a faculty member has improperly evaluated the student's work or has infringed upon the student's academic freedom, or in case any member of the academic community believes that a particular student has performed an act of academic or behavioral dishonesty or misconduct. Any

student who feels that they have not been treated properly in any way needs to attempt to correct the situation with the individual(s) directly involved first. It is sincerely hoped that you will never be involved in this procedure; but if you are, the program Director or Department Head will familiarize you with the specifics of this policy.

Student Conduct Process

Information regarding the Student Conduct Process for the university can be found at:

<https://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studentconduct/>.

Withdrawal and Refund Policy

Information regarding the withdrawal and refund policy for the university can be found at:

<https://www.rit.edu/academicaffairs/policiesmanual/d060> .

Emergency Closing Procedures

Because of the large resident student population and to minimize interruptions to the academic calendar, every effort is made to keep the university open. The capacity of Facilities Management Services to meet an emergency is the major factor considered. In the case of severe weather conditions, the safety of the faculty, staff and students will also be a major factor considered. The following procedure will be implemented in the case of an emergency closing of the university or cancellation of classes.

Please note that cancellation of classes differs from the closing of the university. When conditions warrant the cancellation of classes, an effective time of cancellation will be determined. This situation will affect classes only and not work or rotation schedules. Should a student be unable to safely attend their clinical rotation due to weather conditions, the student must follow the "Attendance at the Clinical Site" policy. An emergency closing of the university, on the other hand, means that only designated personnel will be asked to remain or to report to work. The RIT University Closing Procedure can be found at: <https://www.rit.edu/publicsafety/process-complete-or-partial-closing-university>

IX. University Support Services

Academic Support Services

Academic student services are provided in many areas across campus and are available to all RIT students. The Wallace Center has become the physical and intellectual heart of the university and has since added the University Writing Commons and the Innovative Learning Institute (ILI).

Student Academic Support offers a wide range of programs and services to support student success including the Academic Success Center, College Restoration Program, Disability Services Office, English Language Center, Higher Education Opportunity Program, Spectrum Support Program. University-wide Resources for Students www.rit.edu/myrit <https://www.rit.edu/academic-support>

The Academic Success Center offers Academic Coaching, which is a free service that introduces students to more effective learning and study strategies. Students work 1:1 with a Student Support Specialist to enhance time management and study habits as well as learn of important resources on campus. Academic Coaching utilizes an individualized approach helping students identify academic strengths and

strategies that aid in learning. Students can find out more at <https://www.rit.edu/academicsuccesscenter/>.

Disability Services Office

The RIT Disability Services Office is committed to providing equal access to programs, services and physical facilities to students with disabilities. The highly qualified staff strive to foster an environment where all students are welcomed, valued and respected. Hours vary throughout the academic term and can be located on the web site: <http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/>.

Academic Accommodations

RIT is committed to providing academic accommodations to students with disabilities. If you would like to request academic accommodations such as testing modifications due to a disability, please contact the Disability Services Office. Contact information for the DSO and information about how to request accommodations can be found at www.rit.edu/dso. After you receive academic accommodation approval, it is imperative that you contact me as early as possible so that we can work out whatever arrangement is necessary.

Student Health

The RIT Student Health provides health care, support and education for students. Professional staff are available to render care for acute and chronic illnesses, and to help students learn to prevent illness and maintain good health as good health is an important component of a successful college experiences. All RIT students are provided with a free subscription to Student Health 101, an e-zine designed specifically for college students. Monthly issues include wellness information aimed at helping students make better decisions and to provide a better understanding of the wellness challenges students face in college face today. Students are encouraged to seek prompt medical attention whenever illness or sicknesses arise. Please call 475-2255 for hours of operation and information on complete services. The Student Health Center can be reached at 475-2255; <http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/studenthealth/>.

Counseling Center

University life can be one of excitement and self-discovery. At the same time, it can generate academic, emotional, personal, social, and even financial concerns. Although not uncommon, at times these concerns can make it difficult to succeed or function while at school. Counseling is an excellent way to address such issues, to learn more about yourself and others, to develop new life skills, and to explore and gain insight, understanding and acceptance. RIT's Counseling Center is structured to provide confidential, short term, time-limited counseling. The duration of treatment varies according to students' needs, but counselors work to provide relatively brief treatment in order to facilitate adjustment, successful functioning, problem resolution, and symptom relief as soon as possible. The Counseling Center is located at 2100 August Center, second floor and regular hours for the Counseling Center are 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, and 8:30 a.m. - 7:00 p.m. Wednesday. During finals weeks, break weeks, and summer quarter hours are 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday. Phone: 475-2261. The Counseling Center is available to respond to crises and critical incidents affecting the RIT community. In an emergency, please call RIT Public safety at 475-3333. If the emergency is life-threatening, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room. <http://www.rit.edu/studentaffairs/counseling/>.

Public Safety

Ensuring the safety and security of the RIT community and its environment requires a well-trained and fully committed professional team sensitive to the diverse needs in our community. Public Safety provides a wide variety of security services and prevention programs to the campus community. We encourage everyone to take responsibility for their safety by staying informed of these services and reporting suspicious activity. Although each individual is ultimately responsible for his or her own personal safety, learning and practicing basic safety precautions can enhance one's well-being. In responding to the needs and challenges in our community we encourage a comprehensive approach that embraces collaborative partnerships working in harmony to ensure safety on our campus. Public safety can be contacted at (585) 475-3333 in cases of emergency. Further information can be found on their website: <http://www.rit.edu/fa/publicsafety/>.

RIT Libraries

RIT Libraries offers a wide array of valuable resources to all students, including printed medical textbooks and online subscription services, such as UpToDate. The library does not allow any special privileges for students on clinical rotations; therefore, any fines accrued must be paid in a timely period. This means that if you take a book out for a research project at the beginning of the semester, and you did not return it until the end of the semester because you were "too busy", "on-call", or "forgot" and could not make it to the library, you alone are responsible for the fine expense. Degrees are not awarded until all unpaid balances/fines are paid in full. <https://www.rit.edu/library/>

Transportation and Parking

During the professional phase of the program, the student can expect to be off campus a portion of the time. The student is responsible for transportation during these years. Because of this, a vehicle is recommended for the professional phase of the program, and certainly during the fifth year. Parking fees may be incurred as students begin clinical training in hospitals. Car-pooling is recommended, when applicable. Additionally, the student is responsible for parking costs for on-campus activities during the clinical year. RIT parking rates are subject to change and can be viewed at: <https://www.rit.edu/parking/>

Information Technology

All students must be proficient with various forms of basic computer software and technologies. Students needing assistance in these areas are referred to the RIT Service Center.

X. Summary of Costs

These calculations are current estimates but are subject to change. These figures will focus mainly on the professional phase of the program, since these are the years of additional general expenses.

Equipment/Supplies:

Diagnostic Instruments and supplies in which total costs range approximately from \$800 - \$1,200.

Textbooks:

An effort is made to select textbooks which are lower in cost and that also have utility and benefits well beyond the specific course and/or program. Costs are approximately \$2,000.

Living Expenses:

These costs vary according to the needs of the individual student. Suitable living on the RIT campus (dorms, apartments, etc.) is generally available for average housing fees. Refer to the Undergraduate Bulletin and online at <http://www.rit.edu> for more information.

Blood-Borne Pathogen/Sepsis Awareness Certificate:

Successful completion of this online course and certificate is required for the orientation session to the professional phase (third year). Currently the cost is \$15.

BLS / ACLS Classes:

Prior to the start of clinical rotations, students are required to take Basic Life Support (BLS) and Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification courses. These certifications will remain current throughout the duration of the clinical rotation year. The program arranges these classes for all fourth-year students. The total cost is \$235. The cost of these courses is subject to change annually per vendor pricing.

Health Status Update/Physical Examination:

Students are financially responsible for all items necessary for a Complete Health Status Update; e.g., cost of rubella & varicella titers, immunizations, tuberculosis screening, and a history & physical examination. These costs typically range from \$300- \$600, depending on the services needed.

Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screening:

The RIT PA program requires that all PA students have an initial criminal background check prior to entering the professional phase of the program (year 3) and once again prior to the start of clinical rotations (end of year 4). The cost to each student for these screenings is \$136 plus a processing fee of \$2.99.

FIT Testing:

Prior to clinical rotations students are required to undergo FIT testing which tests the actual size and provider's ability to use a respirator mask device that protects healthcare workers from inhaling harmful substances. There is TYPICALLY no cost to the student, but this is subject to change and may be approximately \$60.

PACKRAT Exam™:

A written competency examination will be given to students in the fourth year of the program. The Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) is a nationally recognized competency examination for PA students. This standardized examination provides excellent feedback to students and faculty regarding comprehensive knowledge bases and problem-solving abilities of the students. The cost to each student is currently \$45.

End of Rotation™ Exams: A written exam will be given to students at the completion of each core rotation. The End of Rotation Exam™ is a computerized, standardized exam assessing the medical knowledge of the student. The cost is currently \$35 per exam.

End of Curriculum™ Exam: A written summative exam will be given to students as part of the Summative Evaluation. The End of Curriculum™ exam is a computerized, standardized exam assessing medical knowledge of the student. The cost is currently \$99 per exam.

Clinical Affiliate Registration/Subscription: Beginning May 2021, each student on clinical rotations will be required to pay ~ \$60 as a registration/subscription fee for the administrative services rendered by the clinical affiliate. This fee will cover the ten clinical rotations required.

Optional Costs:

Student memberships to the following professional organizations are highly encouraged by the program:

- Rochester Regional PA Association (RRPAA): \$10 annually
- New York State Society of PAs (NYSSPA): \$75 valid for the duration of your student enrollment
- American Academy of PAs: (AAPA): \$75 valid for the duration of your student enrollment

XI. Technical Standards for Candidates and Students for the Physician Assistant Program

All candidates and students for the Physician Assistant (PA) program must possess certain capabilities and skills, with or without reasonable accommodation. These include the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. They must have functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, and equilibrium. Their exteroceptive (touch, pain, temperature) and proprioceptive (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) senses must be sufficiently intact to enable them to carry out all activities required for a complete PA education. Candidates must have motor function capabilities to meet the demands of PA education and the demands of total patient care. The candidate for the PA program must possess the following capabilities and skills:

- I. **Observation:** The ability to observe is required for demonstrations, visual presentations in lectures and laboratories, laboratory evidence and microbiological cultures, microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissue in normal and pathologic states. Candidates and students must be able to observe patients accurately and completely, both at a distance and closely. This ability requires functional vision and somatic sensation and is enhanced by a sense of smell.
- II. **Communication:** Candidates and students should be able to speak intelligibly, to hear sufficiently and to observe patients closely in order to elicit and transmit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive non-verbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients including not only speech, but reading and writing. Communication in oral and written form with the health care team must be effective and efficient.
- III. **Motor & Sensory Functions:** Candidates and students should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation and percussion, as well as carry out diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should have motor function sufficient to execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and sensation.
- IV. **Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** Problem solving is a critical skill demanded of PAs and this requires all these abilities. Candidates and students must also be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and the spatial relationships of structures.

- V. Behavioral and Social Skills: Candidates and students must have the emotional health to fully use their intellectual ability, exercise good judgment, and complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.

The practice of medicine requires physician assistant candidates and students be able to develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and colleagues. To provide high quality patient care, physician assistant candidates and students must possess characteristics of adaptability, flexibility, and be able to function in the face of uncertainty. The healthcare environment requires candidates and students be able to tolerate physical and emotional stress and continue to function effectively and efficiently. He/she must have a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values. Candidates and students must possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems.

Candidates for admission to the PA program are encouraged to ask questions about the program's technical standards for clarification and to determine whether they can meet the requirements with or without reasonable accommodation. Any information and inquiries about disabilities are handled in a confidential manner, to the extent possible within the accommodation process, and should be directed to the RIT Disability Services Office.

The Physician Assistant program faculty recognizes its responsibility to present candidates and students for the PA degree that have the knowledge and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of high quality patient care. The responsibility for these technical standards is primarily placed on the PA Program Interview Committee to select entering PA students who will be the candidates for the PA degree.

<https://medschool.duke.edu/education/health-professions-education-programs/physician-assistant-program/admissions/duke-school>

XII. Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession

* Reprinted with permission from The American Academy of Physician Assistants

The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) recognizes its responsibility to aid the profession in maintaining high standards in the provision of quality and accessible health care services. The following principles delineate the standards governing the conduct of physician assistants in their professional interactions with patients, colleagues, other health professionals and the general public.

Realizing that no code can encompass all ethical responsibilities of the physician assistant, this enumeration of obligations in the Code of Ethics is not comprehensive and does not constitute a denial of the existence of other obligations, equally imperative, though not specifically mentioned.

Statement of Values of the PA Profession (updated 2024)

[aapa.org/download/56983/?tmstv=1707772453](https://www.aapa.org/download/56983/?tmstv=1707772453)

- PAs hold as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all human beings.
- PAs uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, nonmaleficence, and justice.

- PAs recognize and promote the value of diversity.
- PAs treat equally all persons who seek their care.
- PAs hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
- PAs assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their medical practice.
- PAs actively seek to expand their knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine. PAs assess their personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve their practice of medicine.
- PAs work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
- PAs use their knowledge and experience to contribute to a healthy community and the improvement of public health.
- PAs respect their professional relationship with all members of the healthcare team.
- PAs share and expand clinical and professional knowledge with PAs and PA students.

AGREE and ABIDE FORM

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGY

POLICY AND PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES

This manual outlines policies and procedures for students enrolled in the Rochester Institute of Technology Physician Assistant (PA) program. Students should familiarize themselves with all content and initiate a discussion with the Program Director with any questions or concerns that may arise. Ultimately it is the student's responsibility to seek answers to any questions or concerns regarding the following material. This manual may be periodically updated or amended. Should this occur, the student will be notified. This student agreement form must be signed and returned to the program Staff Assistant as soon as possible.

STUDENT AGREEMENT

I have read the policies, rules, and regulations for the Rochester Institute of Technology Physician Assistant program contained in the 2025-2026 Physician Assistant Program Student Policies and Procedures Manual.

I agree to abide and follow procedures and guidelines outlined by the University and the PA program, including the PA program and RIT Honor Code and the PA program Technical Standards.

I understand that ethical conduct is one of the most important attributes of a competent healthcare professional. I further understand that sharing or disseminating protected materials, such as quizzes/exams, written papers or assignments, C-print, or verbally sharing exam material in the form of questions, answers, or content is considered a violation of academic policy, the PA Honor Code, and may deprive my future patients of the quality health care they deserve.

During examinations, assessments and/or assignments; I will not use any outside source of information, including but not limited to, books, computers, tablets, websites, calculators, journals, or help from another person via phone or in person, unless approved, in advance, by the instructor.

I understand if a student is found guilty of some form of academic dishonesty, the student could be given a failing grade for that piece of work and/or the course. Any such actions may lead to disciplinary action and be grounds for automatic dismissal from the PA program.

It is the responsibility of each student to schedule meetings with their academic advisor at least once during each academic term. Students are strongly encouraged to seek counsel from program faculty in any situation regarding academic struggle or difficulty. Meetings with academic advisors will enable the student to avoid unnecessary course work and/or delays in completion of the program.

Student Name (Printed)

Class Year

Student Signature

Date Signed