

**SAINT FRANCIS UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT SCIENCES
MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT SCIENCE PROGRAM**

**PROGRESSION STANDARDS FRESHMAN through JUNIOR YEARS
(Effective: Fall 2018)**

Standard A3.17- The program must define, publish and make readily available to students upon admission academic performance and progression information to include: ... any required academic standards...requirements for progression in...the program.

Progression and continuance in the Saint Francis University Master of Physician Assistant Program is based upon scholastic achievement and personal qualities for the professional practice of medicine as a physician assistant. In addition to academic standards for acceptance into the 3+2 PA Program, students must be able to meet the Program's Technical Standards, with or without accommodations, upon admission. Students must continue to meet the academic progression standards, each of the technical standards and abide by policies and procedures in the Program's General Policy Manual throughout the freshman, sophomore and junior years to progress into the didactic (4th) year of the PA Program.

Progression Standards for Freshman-Junior Years

1. A maximum of two (2) repeated courses are permitted in the total curriculum of the Physician Assistant Program in the freshman-junior year years.
 - a. A student may repeat up to two (2) courses; however, no course may be repeated more than once. A third repeat of the same course will not be calculated into the student's cumulative or major/science QPA for the Physician Assistant Program.
 - b. If a student passes a science course with a "C" or better grade and elects to repeat it to increase the major/science QPA, the repeated course will count toward the total repeated course limit.
 - c. A withdrawal from ANY course, which a student registers for again in a subsequent semester, will count as a repeated course and will count toward the total repeated course limit. A student who withdraws from courses due to an approved Departmental leave of absence will not have any of the courses from that semester count towards the total repeated course limit.
 - d. A course which is a prerequisite course for a more advanced course in the same discipline may NOT be repeated after a more advanced course has been successfully completed.
2. Receipt of a final grade of an "F" in ANY course with the exception of EXAM 301: Writing Competency Exam is a cause for dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program.

Progression Standards for Each Year

Freshman (Year 01 - These requirements pertain to Fall and Spring semester)

In addition to the Progression Standards for Freshman-Junior Years outlined above, all freshman students must maintain the following academic standards to progress into the sophomore year as a Physician Assistant major:

- 1) Obtain a minimum 3.00 cumulative Q.P.A. at the completion of the spring semester of freshman year, and
- 2) Earn a minimum grade of "C" in all science*courses

Upon completion of the fall semester (freshman year), any student with a Q.P.A. below 3.00 will automatically be placed on one semester of Physician Assistant Program Academic Probation. If a student fails to obtain a minimum "C" grade in any science* courses during the freshman year, or at the completion of the spring semester (freshman year) falls below the minimum 3.00 cumulative Q.P.A., the student will be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program.

Sophomore (Year 02 - These requirements pertain to Summer, Fall and Spring semester)

In addition to the Progression Standards for Freshman-Junior Years outlined above, all sophomore students must meet the following academic requirements to progress into the junior year as a Physician Assistant major:

- 1) Maintain a minimum 3.00 cumulative Q.P.A. each semester during the sophomore year, and
- 2) Earn a minimum grade of "B" in all major** courses each semester, and

- 3) Earn a minimum grade of "C" in all science* courses each semester and
- 4) Obtain a minimum 2.666 Q.P.A. ("B-") average in a combined Q.P.A. of BIOL 205/205L and BIOL 206/206L, if taken during the sophomore year and
- 5) Obtain a minimum 3.00 cumulative Q.P.A. for all major** and science* courses by the completion of the spring semester of the sophomore year

If a student fails to obtain a minimum "B" grade in a major** course, minimum "C" grade in a science* course during the sophomore year (including summer), or at the completion of either the fall or spring semester (sophomore year) falls below the minimum 3.00 cumulative Q.P.A., the student will be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program. Additionally, any student who fails to obtain a minimum 2.666 Q.P.A. ("B-") average in a combined Q.P.A. of BIOL 205/205L and BIOL 206/206L, if taken during the sophomore year, will be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program. Upon completion of the spring semester (sophomore year), any student with the major**/science* courses cumulative Q.P.A. below 3.00 will be automatically placed on Physician Assistant Program Academic Probation.

Junior (Year 03 - These requirements pertain to Summer, Fall and Spring semester)

In addition to the Progression Standards for Freshman-Junior Years outlined above, all junior students must maintain the following academic requirements to progress into the didactic year as a Physician Assistant major:

- 1) Obtain a minimum 3.20 cumulative Q.P.A. at the completion of the spring semester of the junior year, and
- 2) Obtain a minimum 3.00 cumulative Q.P.A. for all major** and science* courses by the completion of the spring semester of the junior year, and
- 3) Earn a minimum grade of "B" in all major** courses each semester, and
- 4) Earn a minimum grade of "C" in all science* courses each semester, and
- 5) Obtain a minimum 2.666 Q.P.A. ("B-") average in a combined Q.P.A. of BIOL 205/205L and BIOL 206/206L and
- 6) Provide documentation of 100 hours of health care experience (40 of which must be spent directly shadowing a PA in clinical practice) by the last day of class before final examinations start.

Upon completion of the fall semester (junior year), any student with a cumulative Q.P.A. below 3.20 or the major**/science*courses cumulative Q.P.A. below 3.00 will be automatically placed on one semester of Physician Assistant Program Academic Probation. If a student fails to obtain a minimum "B" grade in a major** course, minimum "C" grade in a science*course during the junior year (including summer), or at the completion of the spring semester (junior year) falls below the minimum 3.20 cumulative Q.P.A. or the major**/science*courses cumulative Q.P.A. is below 3.00, or fails to meet the minimum 2.666 Q.P.A. average ("B-") in a combined Q.P.A. of BIOL 205/205L and BIOL 206/206L, the student will be dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program.

Any junior student who does not provide documentation of 100 hours of health care experience by the end of spring semester (junior year) will be delayed in entering the didactic year by at least one year.

Dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program, during the freshman through junior years, may also result from any of the Causes for Disciplinary Action as listed in the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences Policy Manual (General Information - Personal Policies - Section F).

A student dismissed from the Physician Assistant Program as a freshman, sophomore or junior will need to contact the Office of Advising and Retention to be assigned another major. No seat in the didactic year of the Physician Assistant Program is guaranteed for students who do not meet the minimum progression standards.

All core, science*, introductory physician assistant major**, prerequisite, and professional elective courses must be satisfactorily completed before the student is allowed to progress into the didactic year.

* Science courses: Chemistry 121, Chemistry 122, Biology 111/111 lab, Biology 205/205 lab, Biology 206/206 lab, Biology 214/214 lab

** Major courses: PA 200, PA 201, PA 202, PA 301, PA 302, and PA 303

Prerequisite courses: Psychology 101 and three credits in Mathematics (at least MATH 110 or higher) or any Statistics course

STUDENT TECHNICAL STANDARDS

GENERAL AREA: SECTION A: ADMINISTRATION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

OBJECTIVE: *OPERATIONS, STANDARD A3.15e*

"The program must define, publish and make readily available to ... students admission related information to include: any required technical standards for enrollment."

GENERAL AREA: INTRODUCTION from the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education

Physician assistants are academically and clinically prepared to practice medicine with the direction and responsible supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. The physician-PA team relationship is fundamental to the PA profession and enhances the delivery of high quality health care. Within the physician-PA relationship, PAs make clinical decisions and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive and health maintenance services. The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. PA practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research and administrative activities.

Functions performed by physician assistants include, as a minimum, the following general categories of services: Evaluation, Monitoring, Therapeutic, Patient Education, and Referral

To provide the services listed above in a compassionate, competent and efficient manner, students in the PA Program will need to be capable of performing the following techniques on their own or with reasonable adaptations:

General Characteristics: The role of the physician assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills and the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner.

The student needs to:

- have an attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patient's welfare
- have the mental capacity and physical abilities to assimilate large amounts of complex information and apply that information in an interpreted fashion to solve clinical problems and formulate therapeutic and diagnostic plans in an accurate and efficient manner
- remain calm and reasoned in a high stress environment and respond quickly and appropriately in emergencies

History Taking: Initially approaching a patient of any age group in any setting to elicit an accurate, detailed history (appropriate to the situation) and record that data in an acceptable fashion.

The student needs to:

- be able to speak fluent English to relate to most patient situations
- have the ability to adjust his/her level of communication to the patient's level of understanding
- demonstrate interactive verbal and written communication skills

Physical Examination: Perform a complete or partial physical examination of a patient of any age, gender or condition in any setting.

The student needs to possess:

- adequate auditory acuity to accurately use a stethoscope, tuning forks, etc.
- adequate visual acuity for inspection techniques and the use of an ophthalmoscope
- adequate depth perception for surgical/technical procedures, and the accurate use of an oto-ophthalmoscope and microscope
- keen tactile sensation for palpation techniques

Diagnostic Skills: Identify, perform, order, and/or interpret, at least to the point of recognizing deviations from the norm, common laboratory, radiologic, cardiographic, and other routine diagnostic procedures used to identify pathophysiologic processes.

The student needs to possess:

- accurate visual and auditory acuity for the interpretation of diagnostic procedures
- the ability to reason a patient's problem in an orderly fashion
- competency in the integration of didactic skills, as demonstrated by written and practical examinations
- ability to record diagnostic and other findings accurately, efficiently and clearly

Therapeutic Skills: Performing routine procedures such as injections, immunizations, suturing and wound care, managing simple conditions produced by infection or trauma, assisting in the management of more complex illness and injury, and taking initiative in performing evaluation and therapeutic procedures in response to life-threatening situations.

The student needs to demonstrate:

- flexibility, dexterity and strength of his/her extremities for use in surgical/technical procedures
- degree of coordination in motor skills is needed to respond to emergency situations quickly and appropriately

PROGRAM BACKGROUND CHECK AND CLEARANCES POLICY

Please be aware that various background checks/clearances will be required to be completed at the start of the fourth (didactic) year. **A positive hit or report on the background check or clearances will be forwarded to the SFU legal counsel for review and recommendations.** A positive report and/or failure to complete the process in a timely manner may delay your progression in the PA Program and prevent or delay clinical experiences and/or graduation.

I have read, understand and agree to abide by the Freshman through Junior Years Progression Standards. I understand it is the University's prerogative to make changes as needed to Progression Standards so the current Progression Standards in place for the didactic and clinical year may change prior to my matriculation into that phase of the PA Program.

I have also read and understand the Technical Standards for enrollment and continuation as a PA major. I attest that I am currently able to meet all of the above technical standards. I am aware that should there be any change in my status that may affect my ability to perform any of the above tasks; I am mandated to notify the MPAS Program Director in writing as soon as possible. If a student or the Program identifies any concerns with ability to meet the Program's Technical Standards, the student will be referred to the Office of Disability. The student may be required to complete appropriate academic and/or medical evaluation to determine if reasonable accommodations can be made to assure student compliance with the identified technical standard(s). Inability to meet any of the above technical standards, with or without accommodations, may delay progression in the PA Program or be a cause for dismissal from the major.

Implemented: Fall 2018