



# University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook

Education is a continuously evolving process. To keep pace with this process, the University of Dubuque (UD) reserves the right to make changes in policies, rules, and regulations published in this handbook without obligation or prior notice. The policies, rules, and regulations within the Student Handbook apply to all UD MSPAS students.

The University of Dubuque does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, disability, sexual orientation, or age. Persons having inquiries may contact the Director of Human Resources, University of Dubuque, Smith Hall, 2000 University Avenue, Dubuque, Iowa 52001-5099.

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## Section I: Overview

### Preamble

This Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook is maintained by the University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) program. The policies and procedures herein apply to all MSPAS students and should serve as a guide throughout student academic, clinical, and extracurricular life. Whenever participating in University of Dubuque (UD) and/or MSPAS-sponsored program events on and off campus, MSPAS students must abide by the policies and guidelines in this UD Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook and the policies of the UD Student Handbook, which can be found online at <http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

The basic premise for these student guidelines is the understanding that individual rights are accompanied by responsibilities. By enrolling in the MSPAS program, students become members of the larger UD community and, thus, acquire rights in and responsibilities to the entire University community.

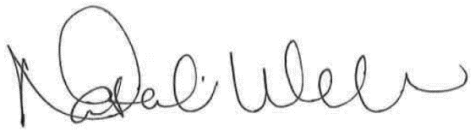
All policies and procedures described in this Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Student Handbook and the UD Student Handbook are subject to revision at any time and without notice. Such revisions are applicable to all MSPAS students. The policies and information contained herein take effect after notification to students. Students are informed of significant changes and updates at the time that such revisions are made and posted online. Once notified, students are subject to any changes in policy. Questions regarding the content of this handbook should be directed to the MSPAS program office.

## Message from the Program Director

The University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program is built on a foundation of academic excellence, compassionate care and a desire to serve. In the dynamic world of medicine, a central theme remains constant: the need for health care. It is in this intrinsic need the role of the physician assistant (PA) has emerged and excelled. For over 50 years, PAs have been practicing in interdisciplinary teams setting the stage for what is now considered the standard of care. Our vision here at the University of Dubuque is on service to rural and underserved areas as we understand the integral role PAs fulfill in this setting.

You are now starting a new role in medicine as you have successfully entered a highly competitive and sought-after career that will challenge you in unique ways every day but will likely be one of the most rewarding experiences you'll encounter in life. As you progress through the program, do not lose sight of our mission and vision as these will be the rock that you can stand on throughout your career and, ultimately, what transforms health care in underserved areas.

Congratulations on your journey to get you here and welcome to the PA program. Buckle up and enjoy the ride.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Natalie Weber".

Natalie Weber, PA-C, MSPAS  
Program Director and Assistant Professor  
Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

## Message from the Vice President for Academic Affairs

For over 160 years, the University of Dubuque has provided graduate and undergraduate students with an education that meets the needs of the region and world. The Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program continues this proud tradition, addressing the critical need for health care professionals of competence and compassion.

You have chosen an important and challenging course of study. The University has a strong tradition of community encouragement and support. Know that we are here to help you along the way: a faculty and staff of experienced medical professionals to help you develop the necessary habits of mind and patterns of action, a network of health care providers to mentor you in the delivery of high quality health care, and a campus community to support and encourage you in this demanding journey.

As you pursue physician assistant studies at the University of Dubuque, I challenge you to take advantage of all the resources at your disposal. And then, pay it forward: use your education in service to others. Welcome and blessings to you in your studies at UD.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark D. Ward". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and "W".

Mark D. Ward, Ph.D.  
Vice President for Academic Affairs and Dean of the Faculty



## MSPAS Vision, Mission, Goals and Values

### Vision

The Vision of the program is to prepare students to become primary care Physician Assistants oriented toward service to rural and underserved populations.

### Mission

The Mission of the University of Dubuque Physician Assistant Program is to prepare Master's level primary care Physician Assistants who will practice with physicians and other members of the health care team. The program is committed to developing practitioners who are educated in all aspects of healthcare including geriatrics, health promotion and disease prevention, and public health practice. Special emphasis is placed on training clinicians who will provide primary healthcare to rural and underserved populations. This is in keeping with the commitment of the University of Dubuque to instill:

- Excellence in academic inquiry and professional preparation
- Stewardship of all God's human and natural resources
- Zeal for life-long learning and service

### Goals

- Prepare competent and skilled PAs who pass the PANCE examination
- Prepare our graduates for careers as compassionate, capable and caring PA-Cs
- Maintain instructional quality by ongoing self-assessment and corrective action

The program will assess progress towards these goals on an annual basis with internal reports covering enrollment, exam scores, student and faculty evaluations, and a graduate survey. Benchmarks for each of these reports will be established and adjustments/modifications will be made as needed.

### Values

Our conduct, ideals, and ethics are based on:

- Integrity
- Diversity
- Competence
- Compassion
- Scholarship

## History and Accreditation Statement

The planning for the MSPAS program began with senior administration and University trustees in October of 2011. The development process unfolded in five overlapping phases:

- Initial Program Exploration (Primary time period: October 2011– February 2012)
- Entering the ARC-PA Accreditation Process (Primary time period: February 2012 – May 2013)
- Identifying Key Leadership (Primary time period: January 2013 – January 2015)
- Gathering Evidence for the Feasibility Study (Primary time period: September 2013 – March 2015)
- Writing and Reviewing the Feasibility Study (Primary time period: January 2015 – March 2015)

The program is based on the physician education model and is a 27-month, 98-credit hour program. The initial 15 months will focus on didactic education, including approximately 2000 classroom hours in the basic and clinical sciences. The final 12 months will consist of approximately 2,000 hours of supervised clinical experience.

Unique features of the program include the development of interdisciplinary activities, a rural medicine clinical rotation, and the use of specialists in clinical practice to teach various topics during the didactic phase.

## Section II: Student Affairs

### MSPAS Program Office Information

Address:	Phone:
University of Dubuque	(563) 589-3662
Linda Chlapaty Hall, Suite 120	Fax:
2000 University Avenue	(563) 589-3650
Dubuque, Iowa 52001	

### Professional Staff

**Program Director:** Serves as chief administrative officer of the MSPAS program. Oversees development and implementation of the MSPAS program vision and strategies, as well as organizational and fiscal management, and review of MSPAS accreditation.

**Medical Director:** Serves as interim director in absence of the Program Director. Supports the program director in ensuring full and effective implementation of current practice standards in academic and clinical instruction and curriculum, fulfilling the MSPAS program mission, and evaluating student performance.

**Academic Director:** Oversees academic curriculum development, implementation and evaluation.

**Clinical Education Director:** Oversees clinical curriculum development, implementation, and evaluation.

**Clinical Placement Director:** Oversees clinical sites including hospitals, clinics, and private practices. Develops affiliation agreements to ensure sufficient availability of clinical sites and preceptors.

**Admission Director:** Oversees a comprehensive admissions and recruitment process. Maintains MSPAS student records. Coordinates all marketing and special events.

**Program Coordinator:** Supports students, faculty and staff of the MSPAS program. Serves as the immediate contact with the accrediting body under the direction of the Program Director. Maintains Program Director's schedule. Coordinates out-going communication. Liaison with other University departments.

**Program Specialist:** Provides support to academic and clinical education teams. Point person for program's software – Moodle and Exxat. Oversees laboratory assistance and maintenance, simulation and equipment care, supply management, curriculum mapping, and survey distribution. Assists clinical education team with site development and student profiles.

## Financial Counseling and Financial Aid

MSPAS students may seek financial counseling and aid through the UD Financial Aid Office or through the Financial Aid website <http://www.dbq.edu/admission/financialaid/>. Financial aid is offered in the form of loans and grants, and may come from a variety of sources.

Additionally, MSPAS students are encouraged to apply for other grants and scholarships offered by sources outside the University, such as the Physician Assistant Foundation, the National Health Service Corps Program, the Physician Assistants in Orthopedic Surgery, and the Iowa Physician Assistant Society. More information is available on funding sources through the American Academy of Physician Assistants' (AAPS) website. Grants are also available for veterans at <http://www.dbq.edu/veterans/>.

## Academic and Career Counseling

Upon entrance to the MSPAS program, each MSPAS student is assigned a faculty advisor who provides academic advising. Faculty advisors monitor student academic progress and success and provide guidance in navigating course work, clinical rotations, and career opportunities. Students are expected to meet with their assigned advisor regularly. Students experiencing academic difficulty should meet with their advisor to create a plan for tutoring and/or other academic assistance.

## Section III: MSPAS Program Overview

### Graduate Outcomes

Upon completion of the program, graduates will be able to:

1. Recognize the major principles of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology, and microbiology;
2. Apply the principles of anatomy, physiology, and pharmacology to determine etiology, pathophysiology, prevention, and treatment of critical human disorders;
3. Communicate effectively with patients, families, and health service providers; counsel patients, their families, and their caregivers regarding disease treatment and care;
4. Formulate and accurately document complete medical history and physical examination;
5. Recognize and propose initial therapy for acute life-threatening situations and management plans for chronic disease;
6. Classify the need for and ability to order and understand appropriate diagnostic tests;
7. Correctly perform basic procedural skills with attention to patient comfort;
8. Attain and manage patient information from the medical record;
9. Use evidence-based medicine to provide quality health care to individuals and populations;
10. Apply quality scientific research methods;
11. Collaborate and discuss the role of the integrated patient care model with regard to physician assistants;
12. Identify and abide by the systems-level processes that support continuous quality improvement and patient safety, and use standard precautions in the health care setting;
13. Apply professional behavior attitudes for the care of patients, self, and others in accordance with American Academy of Physician Assistants' Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession;
14. Deliver appropriate patient-centered counseling techniques to improve rational utilization of health care resources, prevention, and patient satisfaction; and
15. Interact effectively as part of interdisciplinary teams to address health care needs of patients.

### Physician Assistant Competencies

The MSPAS program has adopted and integrated into its curriculum the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants (NCCPA) 2012 revised guidelines defining physician assistant competencies. These competencies encompass the skills, knowledge, education, and attitudes that PAs should acquire through training and subsequent careers. The following listing and description of competencies is taken in full from the NCCPA "Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession," which can be found at <https://www.aapa.org/career-central/employer-tools/employing-a-pa/competencies-physician-assistant-profession/>.

## Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Physician assistants must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In addition, physician assistants are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Physician assistants are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

- evidence-based medicine;
- scientific principles related to patient care;
- etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology of medical conditions;
- signs and symptoms of medical and surgical conditions;
- appropriate diagnostic studies;
- management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and other treatment modalities;
- interventions for prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance;
- screening methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual; and
- history and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses.

## Interpersonal & Communication Skills

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, caregivers, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the health care system. Physician assistants are expected to:

- create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients;
- use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information;
- adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction;
- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group;
- demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety; and
- accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

## Patient Care

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician assistants must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable.

Physician assistants are expected to:

- work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care;
- demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families;
- obtain essential and accurate information about their patients;
- make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and informed clinical judgment;
- develop and implement patient management plans;
- counsel and educate patients and their families;
- perform medical and surgical procedures essential to their area of practice;
- provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance; and
- use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.

## Professionalism

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. Physician assistants must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PAs practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency or mental illness. Physician assistants must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Physician assistants are expected to demonstrate:

- understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant;
- professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers;
- respect, compassion, and integrity;
- accountability to patients, society, and the profession;
- commitment to excellence and on-going professional development;
- commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices;
- sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and abilities;
- self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative;
- healthy behaviors and life balance; and
- commitment to the education of students and other health care professionals.

## Practice-based Learning & Improvement

Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which physician assistants engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-improvement. Physician assistants must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices. Physician assistants are expected to:

- analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team;
- locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health;
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness;
- utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education; and
- recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others.

## Systems-based Practice

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which health care is delivered. Physician assistants must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient. PAs should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part. Physician assistants are expected to:

- effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems;
- understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care and use the systems effectively;
- practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care;
- advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities;
- partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of health care and patient outcomes;
- accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care;
- apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care;
- recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to health care disparities; and



- apply the concepts of population health to patient care information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-improvement.

## Program Curriculum

The MSPAS program is a 27-month curriculum. The first 15 months are dedicated to didactic education; the final 12 months of the program are dedicated to supervised clinical rotations. Clinical rotations are 4 weeks in length and are principally located at health care sites across Iowa, Illinois, and Wisconsin.

The didactic phase of the program is based on a broad curriculum. Students take courses on the University of Dubuque campus covering topics of physiology, pharmacology, anatomy, clinical medicine, and clinical skills. Students should focus on their academic/didactic work during this phase and should not concentrate on clinical rotations before the final semester of the didactic year.

The clinical phase of the program allows students to integrate their knowledge and skills into health care practice. Students may not begin clinical rotations until successful completion of all didactic phase course work and end-of-didactic phase requirements; approval through a background check (cost borne by the student); documentation of immunization and titers; and training in Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS), and Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS). Students may be required to submit to additional background checks and training required by individual rotation sites. Failure to complete the above requirements may delay the start of clinical rotations and may ultimately delay a student's graduation. The Iowa Board of Medicine will not license anyone with a criminal record, and local hospitals will not allow students with a criminal record to participate in clinical rotations.

Core clinical rotations are in family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry/behavioral health, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, and emergency medicine. In addition, there are 2 selective core rotations in rural medicine and an internal medicine subspecialty. Two (2) elective rotations complete the set of 11 required rotations. Rotation sites may vary in schedule, expectations, and assignments. During the clinical phase of the program, the course schedule/calendar may differ from that of the general UD academic calendar. Students will be subject to rotation-specific schedules.

MSPAS students will be instructed and clinically supervised by physicians, certified physician assistants, and nurse practitioners. While resident physicians may participate in the didactic and clinical education components, they will not be the primary source of instruction/supervision.

In accordance with federal regulations and policies of the Higher Learning Commission, UD is committed to "teaching out" all students enrolled in its accredited educational programs. In the unlikely event of loss of accreditation or closure of the MSPAS Program, current matriculated students will be allowed to complete the program, with no new students being admitted. Should circumstances preclude the continuation of the MSPAS Program (e.g., closure of the campus due

to natural disaster), UD will facilitate students in enrolling in accredited programs at other institutions where they can complete their PA education.

### Experiential Learning

The MSPAS program does not give credit for prior student experience working in the field.

### Transfer Credit

The MSPAS program does not accept transfer credit from other Physician Assistant programs.

## Section IV: Policies and Regulations

### Health Policies

The University of Dubuque and the MSPAS program are committed to protecting the health and well-being of all students, faculty, staff, patients, and the public. Once students have successfully been admitted to the MSPAS program, they are provided with a checklist of the mandated requirements that include physical examination, antibody titers, immunizations, drug screening, and background checks. Students are given deadlines to submit the requirement checklist prior to the commencement of classes in order to comply with matriculation standards. All students are required to have proof of current health insurance coverage and should consider current long-term disability insurance as well.

These mandated procedures/tests are required annually for continued enrollment in the program. Students who do not meet the mandated requirements are not allowed to register for classes or participate in a clinical setting. Student immunization forms will be kept by the MSPAS office. Student health records are kept by the student's healthcare provider. All immunization forms must carry the original signature of a physician or a licensed medical practitioner and the license number or office stamp with address. These will be released as required to clinical sites with written permission from the student.

Students are required to have an updated physical examination within 60 days of starting the clinical phase. Students who fail to comply with program requirements are not eligible to attend clinical rotations until all requirements are met. Exceptions to this policy may be granted in the event of valid medical contraindications, or if the student is in the process of receiving the complete vaccine series (e.g., hepatitis B, varicella) in a compliant manner. MSPAS students may be required to have additional vaccines, drug testing, and/or other medical tests prior to starting classes and/or clinical rotations, as required by MSPAS program and all affiliated clinical educational sites. Additional periodic evaluations or tests may be required as indicated, or if exposure to an infectious patient or pathogen occurs.

The MSPAS program developed its policy and immunization guidelines based on the guidelines issued by our affiliated clinical education sites and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html> that apply to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students attending any public or private university in the State of Iowa, specifically those involved in health care.

### Immunizations

#### Measles, Mumps, and Rubella

State of Iowa pre-matriculation immunization requirements include documentation of measles, mumps, and rubella immunity for all students prior to registration for classes. As a prerequisite to matriculation or registration, the State of Iowa requires all students

born after 1956 to present documented proof of immunity to measles, mumps, and rubella. Consistent with Department of Health guidelines, acceptable proof of immunity constitutes documentation of two vaccinations of measles, mumps, and rubella or a blood antibody titer verifying immunity.

Students who cannot prove immunity must begin the 2 shot MMR vaccination series prior to the start of the program.

#### Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis

Based on the guidelines published by CDC, matriculating students who have not had a tetanus booster within the past ten years must receive the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap) vaccine and are required to keep this current.

- A single dose of Tdap must be given for adults aged 19 through 64 years who have not received a dose of Tdap previously.
- Tetanus/diphtheria (Td) booster is not accepted.

#### Hepatitis B

Students must show documented proof of vaccination and immunity to Hepatitis B, as described below. Students must document hepatitis B titer status.

- If the titer is positive, no further action is necessary
- If the titer is negative, the following steps are required:
  - Begin required three dose hepatitis B series immediately. Proof of receipt of at least the first dose of hepatitis B vaccine is required prior to the first day of classes. The remainder of the three-dose series must be completed 8 weeks prior to beginning the clinical phase
  - Repeat titer 6 weeks after completing the 3-dose series. This must be completed prior to beginning the clinical phase.
    - If the hepatitis B surface antibody titer is negative, the student is considered a non-responder
- Students who continue to have a negative hepatitis B surface antibody titer receive individual counseling on how best to protect themselves and prevent hepatitis B infection and special procedures to follow should a needle stick injury occur.

#### Chickenpox (varicella)

Proof of positive (immune) varicella antibody titer is required. If immunity is not shown, completion of the 2-shot series 4-8 weeks apart is required and documentation must be submitted.

#### Influenza

Students are required to receive the seasonal flu vaccine annually in November.

#### Meningococcal

Highly recommended for anyone with a risk factor (medical, occupational, lifestyle, or other indication), according to the Iowa Department of Public Health. We recommend discussing your meningococcal vaccine status with your health-care provider. This recommendation may be pre-empted by the clinic and hospital policies of the clinical rotation sites.

#### Polio (IPV)

Proof of vaccination must be provided. Students should consult with their healthcare provider.

#### Screening for Tuberculosis (TB)

Students are required to have an annual Interferon-Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) to document absence of TB infection.

- If the blood test is negative, students must repeat the IGRA annually
- If the blood test is positive, students must follow up with their healthcare provider and submit documentation of chest x-ray results and tuberculosis questionnaire

#### Health Insurance

MSPAS students are required to possess current and adequate medical insurance to cover emergencies and common medical problems that might occur during their educational training period. The cost of medical insurance is borne by the student.

Students should be prepared to show proof of health insurance. The policy must provide continuous coverage for the entire period the insured is enrolled as a MSPAS student and must be renewable. The policy must provide in-network and out-of-network coverage for providers, hospital, diagnostic, and therapeutic coverage in local facilities for both emergency and nonemergency outpatient and inpatient services.

#### Disability Insurance

All MSPAS students are encouraged to enroll in a disability insurance plan to cover injuries that might result in chronic disability during their educational training period.

#### Liability Insurance

Each MSPAS student is covered for professional liability under a professional liability insurance plan with The Travelers Indemnity Company (Cottingham & Butler, producer). Students can contact the MSPAS Program Director or Clinical Education Director to learn more about this program. MSPAS students rotating at a clinical site must maintain the role of a student; they are prohibited from assuming any responsibilities outside those clearly defined and agreed upon for a student.

Students should be appropriately and routinely supervised by the preceptor of record and must perform duties within the scope of the agreed-upon clinical experience. Remaining within the scope of agreed-upon student duties and responsibilities is vital to preserving the professional liability coverage provided by the University and is important in protecting the student, University of Dubuque and the clinical site in the case of legal action sought by a patient.

Students are prohibited from participation in any patient care activity outside of the formal rotation assignment, even in the case that an occasion for participation is presented by the clinical site as a potential employer. Though these opportunities may be attractive and are seemingly benign, they must be avoided, as MSPAS program's liability coverage does not cover the student in these circumstances.

MSPAS students working in paid positions in a different health-care-related capacity at any time during their physician assistant education are not permitted to assume the role of MSPAS student while on duty as a paid employee. Liability insurance will not cover any student assuming the role of a MSPAS student outside an assigned clinical rotation.

## Criminal Background Checks

Criminal background checks are required prior to enrolling in classes in the MSPAS program. The initial background checks will be completed through Certified Background via CASPA ([www.certifiedbackground.com](http://www.certifiedbackground.com)), with the cost borne by the student. Additional background checks may be required prior to participation in clinical rotations, and are performed by the state upon submission of application for licensure. Findings in background checks may affect a student's admission, ability to participate in clinical rotations, and eligibility to complete the program. During a student's tenure at UD, if the student is arrested, charged, or convicted of a felony or misdemeanor, he/she must disclose such an event to the Program Director. The Program Director will determine appropriate action. Failure to disclose this information may result in disciplinary action, up to and including expulsion from the program.

## Substance Use Policy

The goal of the MSPAS Substance Use Policy is to ensure safety throughout the program and to prepare students for physician assistant standards. Four objectives accompany this goal:

1. Contribute to the education of the MSPAS student regarding substance abuse.
2. Aid the MSPAS student in finding medical assistance and counseling for substance abuse related violations.
3. Facilitate compliance with physician assistant accreditation and regulations.
4. Protect the health and safety of all students and patients.

As a condition of receiving funds or any other financial assistance under any federal program, institutions of higher education shall certify that they have developed and implemented an Alcohol and Drug-Free Workplace and Campus Policy.

Drug testing is required prior to enrolling in classes in the MSPAS program. The initial drug test will be completed through Certified Background via CASPA, with the cost borne by the student. Additional drug testing may be required prior to participation in clinical rotations with the cost borne by the student. Findings in drug tests may affect a student's admission, ability to participate in clinical rotations, and eligibility to complete the program.

This substance abuse policy is in effect during the enrollment in the program. Violations of the policy accrue during the entire academic career of the MSPAS student while attending UD. The University of Dubuque retains the option to test for other substances at the discretion of the Program Director. If a MSPAS student knowingly or unknowingly takes a banned substance and tests positive, the student is subject to the consequences listed below.

### Violations

If an MSPAS student abuses over-the-counter and/or prescription drugs, alcohol, mind altering, and/or performance enhancing substances illegally, the student's status in the MSPAS program may be jeopardized. Illegal consumption includes any action that violates federal and/or state law, or University regulations. If the student receives a citation for drugs, alcohol or illegal substances and is found guilty, pleads no contest, receives a deferred judgment, or is convicted, sanctions will be imposed. (Citations include, but are not limited to open containers of alcohol, providing alcohol to minors, illegal possession of drugs, driving or operating a motor vehicle under the influence of drugs and/or alcohol.)

The following sanctions are proposed to ensure consistency and fairness. The primary principle is that any MSPAS student with a substance abuse problem needs to receive appropriate treatment and counseling. The sanctions imposed on the MSPAS student with regard to participation in MSPAS courses or clinical rotations should be consistent with the goals of the individualized counseling program. This protocol attempts to balance treatment and sanctions, recognizing that the medical fitness of an MSPAS student and the safety of others are of paramount concern.

### First Violation

Following a first violation, the MSPAS student will confer with the Program Director to discuss the situation. Based on the discussion, the MSPAS student may not be able to continue in his/her didactic or clinical education. Depending on the severity of the violation, the Program Director may dismiss a student immediately.

The student will attend mandatory counseling or educational sessions on campus as determined by the Program Director. Failure to complete the counseling or educational sessions will be construed as a further violation of the policy and will result in dismissal from the MSPAS program.

After the first violation, MSPAS students will be subject to the MSPAS Program random drug testing, as the standard of reasonable suspicion will have been established.

### Second Violation

A second violation will result in the immediate removal of the MSPAS student from the program. The MSPAS student may seek reinstatement by submitting a formal request detailing the reasons why he or she seeks reinstatement. This formal request may include the reason and circumstances surrounding the violations, ways in which the student is seeking to address the pattern of drug and alcohol abuse, etc. The request for reinstatement must be filed within one month of the MSPAS student being suspended or dismissed from the program.

### Reasonable Suspicion

Reasonable suspicion is defined as a good faith belief, at the time of making the decision to test, that the information relied upon is accurate and there is reason to suspect that an MSPAS student has used illegal or performance enhancing substances.

Students whose behavior rises to a formal level of concern regarding substance use will immediately be removed from any patient care area, given an unexcused absence, issued a Document of Concern (Appendix D) which will become a permanent part of their record, and undergo immediate review by the Student Evaluation Committee (SEC).

### Alcohol

High-risk drinking undermines the academic mission of MSPAS and jeopardizes a MSPAS student's professional aspirations. This policy is created to respond to the very serious public health problem by acting proactively in a comprehensive effort to ensure the safety and well-being of the MSPAS community. To view the MSPAS program's alcohol policy, refer to the UD Student Handbook

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

### Tobacco and Smoke-Restricted Campus

UD is a smoke restricted university. According to the National Toxicology Program, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the International Agency for Research on Cancer, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, second-hand smoke contains at least 250 chemicals known to be deleterious to the health of nonsmokers who inhale it. To view MSPAS program's policy regarding smoking, refer to the UD Student Handbook.



## Medication

All MSPAS Program students are subject to UD MSPAS and clinical site policies regarding prescription drug use in the workplace.

Any student may bring non-opioid prescribed drugs to class or a clinical site and take during work hours only if the medication has been prescribed by an authorized prescriber (such as a dentist), and only if the drug is taken in accordance with the prescriber's directions. Opioid prescription medications have the potential to cause impairment, increase the risk of workplace incidents, errors and injury even when taken as prescribed. All prescription drugs must be kept in the original container in which they were received from the pharmacy or other dispenser.

A student may possess and take an over-the counter drug during clinical hours only if the drug is used for its intended purpose and in accordance with the package directions, and/or any supplemental directions of the student's provider, and the use of the drug does not render the student "otherwise unqualified" to meet program safety and learning objectives.

## Communicable Diseases and Exposures

All students with communicable diseases or conditions are not permitted to engage in patient care until such conditions have been resolved as documented by a provider. This restriction is necessary to protect the health and safety of patients, clinical personnel, and UD MSPAS faculty/staff. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following medical conditions:

- Active chickenpox, measles, German measles, herpes zoster (shingles), acute hepatitis, and tuberculosis
- Oral herpes with draining lesions
- Group A streptococcal disease (i.e., strep throat) until 24 hours after treatment has been received
- Draining or infected skin lesions (e.g., Methicillin Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus or MRSA)
- Hepatitis B or C
- HIV/AIDS

A student who has a communicable disease or is unsure whether he/she should participate in patient care should seek medical care by a private medical provider. All students with a communicable disease must receive written medical clearance from a licensed provider and must submit to the MSPAS Program Director prior to initiation of, or return to, clinical care activities. A case-by-case evaluation of each infected student shall be done by his/her medical provider to determine his/her ability to perform the duties required of the clinical rotation. Based on the recommendations of his/her provider, it is the responsibility of each infected MSPAS student to notify the MSPAS program office if unable to perform clinical work; appropriate documentation is required. All such notifications are kept strictly confidential.

## HIV, Hepatitis B and C

The University strives to provide the MSPAS community programs and services that focus on support, education, and prevention of HIV/AIDS. MSPAS students who believe they may be at risk for HIV, hepatitis B or hepatitis C infection have an obligation to be tested. While the testing decision should be voluntary for the individual, there may be instances in which testing could be required. Education, training, and confidentiality safeguards can be used to encourage those who believe they might be at risk to be tested. Pre- and post-test counseling will be available at the testing site. The MSPAS program encourages participation in wellness courses that cover prevention and transmission of sexually transmitted infections such as HIV.

MSPAS students who know they are infected with HIV, hepatitis B, hepatitis C, or other infectious disease will be urged to voluntarily inform a designated official in the school who will provide information and referral on health care and counseling, and begin a process to assess the need for necessary modifications/accommodation in clinical education or job functions.

Clinical settings which pose additional risk to the personal health of infected students will be identified and such persons will be advised of those risks and urged to consult their health care provider to assess the significance of the risks to their own health.

Modifications of clinical activity of infected students will take into account the nature of the clinical activity, the technical expertise of the infected person, the risks posed by HIV carriage, functional disabilities and the transmissibility of simultaneously carried infectious agents.

## Infectious and Environmental Hazards

MSPAS students who may become infected are not excluded from enrollment or restricted in their access to University services or facilities, unless individual medical evaluation establishes that such exclusion or restrictions are necessary for the welfare of the individual and/or other members of the University community.

Students infected with bloodborne or other pathogens shall not, solely because of such infection, be excluded from participation in any phase of University life, including educational opportunities, employment, and extracurricular activities, except as otherwise required by applicable federal, state, or local law, or unless their health condition presents a direct threat to the health and safety of themselves or others. Students infected with airborne pathogens are excluded from participation in such activities during the infectious stage of their disease.

## Biosafety, Bloodborne Pathogen, and Needle Stick Injuries

The MSPAS program follows the MSPAS Student Handbook guidelines regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while on campus and the institutional policies of its clinical affiliates regarding exposure to infectious and environmental hazards while at clinical sites. The MSPAS program is diligent in educating students about precautionary infection control measures for airborne and bloodborne pathogens prior to students' first contact with patients and first contact with human tissue, blood products, and body fluids. Ultimately, each student is responsible for his/her health and safety in the clinical/educational setting; therefore, it is the goal of the MSPAS program that all students learn appropriate policies and procedures to follow in the event that they are injured or potentially exposed to bloodborne pathogens or other communicable diseases.

All MSPAS students are required to review OSHA guidelines. MSPAS students should seek an orientation to the bloodborne pathogens policy of the clinical affiliate prior to commencing laboratory and/or patient care activities. MSPAS students should understand site-specific policies prior to their work at each site and should follow the established protocols at that site for immediate care and treatment after exposure.

Guidelines are available online at <https://www.osha.gov/> to protect students from the risk of occupational infection with HIV, hepatitis B, or other bloodborne pathogens, and to implement the United States Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) Standard 29 CFR Section 1910.1030 Bloodborne Pathogens.

The MSPAS program has addressed methods of prevention, procedures for care and treatment after exposure and/or injury (including definition of financial responsibility), and effect on student learning activities as follows:

1. All exposure incidents are regarded as serious and must be reported and documented immediately to the clinical site as well as the MSPAS Program Director.
2. First aid shall be immediately administered for all types of injuries, including cuts and burns; exposed areas must be thoroughly washed with soap and water.
3. MSPAS students must first contact their instructor or attending preceptor and report the incident including the source and if appropriate, patient diagnosis. This information is necessary to assist in determining the potential severity of the exposure.
4. The instructor or attending preceptor shall attempt to obtain witness reports of the incident and attempt to determine the nature of the exposure(s) and any associated biohazardous risks, including documentation of routes of exposure(s).
5. If possible, source material of the exposure should be retained and secured in a safe manner.

6. If the instructor or attending preceptor determines that the incident constitutes an occupational exposure to biohazardous materials, then he/she immediately will begin documentation of the incident. Students are required to complete all site-specific incident forms. The student will facilitate completion of the Student Exposure Incident Report Form (Appendix F) and/or the Student Accident Report Form (Appendix G) as appropriate with the instructor or attending preceptor within 24 hours.
7. All exposures must be reported to the MSPAS program office. If the MSPAS Program Director is not immediately present, the student will contact a MSPAS faculty member. All information related to student exposure shall be regarded as confidential.
8. Documentation of the incident shall include the activity in which the student was engaged at the time of exposure, the extent to which appropriate work practices and protective equipment were used, and a description of the source of exposure.
9. On-campus injuries: The student is directed to UD Office of Medical Services (OMS) during normal business hours for appropriate follow up. If the incident occurs after working hours, or requires emergency care, then the student will be directed to the nearest emergency department for proper evaluation.
10. Off-campus injuries: The student is directed to seek care at the hospital's emergency department (according to the clinical affiliation agreement), or referred to the closest outpatient clinic.
11. Students are responsible for all charges associated with the diagnostic and therapeutic services associated with needle stick and other types of injuries, including filing health insurance claims. The student assumes responsibility for all charges that are not covered by his/her health insurance plan. A student may request financial assistance from the UD MSPAS program by discussing the situation with the Program Director.
12. MSPAS students may receive follow up care and treatment for injury or exposure at the clinical site where the injury occurred, with the OMS or with their primary care provider.

Students who know, or who have reasonable basis for believing, that they are infected with bloodborne or airborne pathogens are ethically obligated to report exposures and expected to seek medical care. Students are excused from clinical activities in order to seek medical care for bloodborne or airborne pathogen exposure. Should an infected student expose a patient, he/she is ethically obligated to report this as well.

If a student's exposure results in the contraction of a disease or disability, the student is allowed to continue in the program with as little disruption as safely possible depending on the circumstances. The student's specific medical circumstances are evaluated confidentially on a case-by-case basis. In some cases, students may be unable to participate fully in university life or meet MSPAS technical standards because of their

illness. As applicable, cases will be reported to the appropriate Public Health Department having jurisdiction over the agency/institution where the exposure occurred.

## Ethical Considerations Relative to the Care of Patients with Contagious Diseases

All students are professionally and ethically obligated to provide patient care with compassion and respect for human dignity. No student may ethically refuse to treat a patient solely because the patient is at risk of spreading, or has, an infectious disease.

## Academic Policies

### Textbooks

Required textbooks are specified in class syllabi. Students may access some online textbooks through the UD Library, in which case the purchase of a hard text is optional.

### Required Medical Equipment and Supplies

The following is a list of the required equipment:

- Ophthalmoscope
- Otoscope with disposable otoscope speculums
- Stethoscope
- Sphygmomanometer with adult cuff (blood pressure cuff)
- Tuning forks 128 and 512 HZ
- Reflex hammer
- Hand-held Snellen chart (i.e., pocket eye chart)
- Pen light
- Ruler
- Tape measure
- Paper clips
- Cotton balls
- Equipment bag
- PA scrubs
- White lab coat with UD MSPAS logo
- UD MSPAS ID
- Laptop computer. Minimum requirements as follows:
  - Processor: 2 GHz Dual Core/Duo or better
  - RAM: 4GB
  - Hard Drive: 256 GB or higher
  - Internet Capabilities: 802.11b/g Wireless NIC
  - Fully-Patched Operating Systems: minimum Microsoft Windows 7 or higher OR \*macOS 10.12 Sierra or higher [Certain additional plug-ins may be required, i.e. Adobe Flash, if older operating system]
  - \*\*Ability to read/write Microsoft Office Suite documents [Students will be turning in assignments as Microsoft file formats (i.e. .ppt, .pptx, .doc, .docx, etc.)]

- Ability to read PDFs
- Current, Installed, Up-to-date Protection: Antiviral and Antispyware Software/Malware Protection
- Standard Media Player and Video Capabilities: (common sound and video player capabilities; speakers/headphones; internal or external webcam; internal or external microphone) [Students will be watching instructional videos from professors and may conference in during clinical rotations]
- Modern, standards-compliant Web browser: Firefox, Chrome, or Safari [These are browsers compatible with different software the program will use with students]
- Standard “run time” environment for Java programs
- Privacy Screen Cover [There are a variety of options available. We recommend finding one compatible with your laptop whether that be temporary or self-adhesive. This is required for testing security.]

Devices That Are Not Acceptable as primary devices:

- Dedicated Tablets running Windows RT or Android operating system
- Chromebook
- iPad
- \*Mac is not supported by our Technology helps desk
- \*\*Microsoft Office 2016 may be downloaded for free through your UD email. If you need additional instructions please contact the Help Desk at [helpdesk@dbq.edu](mailto:helpdesk@dbq.edu).

## Attendance

MSPAS students are expected to be present, prepared, and actively engaged in all classes, labs, and clinical rotations. Prompt and regular attendance is part of the professional behavior that students are expected to demonstrate. Students are responsible for scheduling personal appointments around class, labs and clinical rotation schedules.

No program activities are rescheduled to account for student absences, including course sessions, labs, evaluations, and assessments. Should excused absences occur, students are responsible for completing all material missed.

Students may be required to attend weekend and/or evening events outside of regularly scheduled courses or rotations. Students will be notified of any changes in course times, lectures, or exams.

## Didactic Phase

In the event of a short term, unexpected absence, students are expected to notify the course director by email preferably before the class, but if unable to do so, after the class was missed. Three unexcused absences from any course are grounds for failure in that course. Students have the responsibility of notifying *each* course director individually for the absence. Documentation supporting the absence is expected. For example, if the student’s car breaks down, the program expects to see a towing or repair bill as evidence.

In the event of an anticipated absence requiring the student to miss one or more days of courses, the student must complete the Absence Excusal Form (Appendix C) and submit it to the Program Director *at least seven days* in advance of the anticipated absence. Examples include an elective operation, death of a first-degree relative creating responsibility with dependent care arrangements, and recovery from a car accident.

Students are responsible for contacting the course director and Academic Director in advance of missing a scheduled examination. Students who do not contact the Academic Director to receive permission for the absence and arrange for a make-up examination, or do not have a valid emergency excusal, will earn a grade of zero for the examination and may be referred for review to the SEC (Student Evaluation Committee). Students who miss an examination as the result of an excused absence may expect to make up the examination within a reasonable amount of time, as agreed upon by the Academic Director and the student. The make-up examination may differ from the one missed.

### Clinical Phase

Student clinical rotation schedules and hours are determined by their preceptors. Unreliable or undependable behavior is considered unprofessional behavior. Scheduled activities and/or clinical rotations may take place on any day of the week (including weekends), and may take place during day or night hours. Students should follow the instructions from clinical site preceptor(s) regarding the schedule for a particular clinical rotation. MSPAS students must maintain sufficient flexibility to respond to schedule changes and unexpected patient care demands.

Tardiness and early departures from clinical rotations are not permitted. A student is subject to receiving unsatisfactory scores on his/her clinical performance evaluation for tardiness and early departures, which may result in the student having to repeat part or all of the rotation. Attendance is a critical element in the student's clinical performance evaluation.

Students are afforded up to eight days of excused absences for the entire clinical phase. No more than two days may be missed per rotation. A student's absence requires submission of a Leave Request and approval by the Clinical Education Director at least seven days in advance of an anticipated absence. In the event of an unanticipated absence, the form requires submission and approval by the Clinical Education Director within 24 hours.

In the event of an emergency, students must notify the following by phone and send a confirmatory e-mail within thirty minutes of the time they were expected on site:

- MSPAS Clinical Education Director
- On-site preceptor or clinic administrator

Students are required to fulfill missed clinical rotation hours and provide documentation supporting all absences. Lack of required hours, acceptable documentation, or appropriate notification of and approval by both the Clinical Education Director and clinical site preceptor will render an unexcused absence. Any unexcused absences from a clinical rotation are grounds for failure in that course.

Students exceeding two excused absences within a clinical rotation or eight excused absences in the clinical phase will result in review by the Clinical Education Director and may be referred for review to the SEC (Student Evaluation Committee).

For clinical rotations, attendance at end-of-rotation days on the UD campus is required. Students may contact the Clinical Education Director in advance regarding extenuating circumstances. Students are required to complete the End-of-Rotation Day requirements within 14 days. Students with an unexcused absence or an invalid emergency excusal will earn a grade of zero for the End-of-Rotation Day requirements and may be referred to the SEC.

### Leave of Absence

A leave of absence can be recommended by the SEC or be initiated upon student request. Students who want to request a leave of absence must discuss their intention with their advisor. With advisor approval, the student completes a petition to request the leave of absence. The petition is submitted to the Program Director, who gives a final decision. A leave of absence may be requested and granted for academic, medical, or other personal reasons. A leave of absence may be granted for a period not exceeding one year, except for military service according to length of military commitment.

### Pregnancy

Any student, who has confirmation of pregnancy, must report the pregnancy to the MSPAS Program Director. Students are required to obtain written documentation from their healthcare provider which must be returned to the PA Program Director stating either the student is able to continue with their education (didactic and/or clinical) during the pregnancy, needs a leave of absence, or has restrictions. This is to ensure that the student and her unborn child are not exposed to undue hazards inherent within the program.

Time off due to maternity or paternity leave will need to be made up and will delay graduation. Any student whose delivery date occurs during clinical rotations may need to repeat a rotation, resulting in an "incomplete" for the rotation. The student will repeat the rotation at the end of the clinical phase which could result in a delay in graduation. All requirements must be completed successfully in order to graduate.

### Program Progression and Graduation Requirements

Student records are reviewed by faculty advisors prior to progression from the didactic to the clinical year. Students must pass all academic courses and end of didactic phase requirements before moving into the clinical phase of the MSPAS program.



The MSPAS Program Director and faculty will review all student records prior to graduation. All MSPAS program requirements must be met and any outstanding financial balances paid prior to the awarding of a diploma. Students who do not graduate are ineligible to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). Before graduation, students must meet all of the following:

1. Pass each required course/rotation with a grade of 'C+' (77%) or higher;
2. Pass summative examinations (written, practical, oral, simulation, and Objective Structured Clinical Examinations) and presentations in the didactic and clinical phases;
3. Comply with the Program "Code of Conduct" and the UD "Value of Integrity";
4. Complete the Program's Physician Assistant Board Review Course; and
5. Achieve a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0.

### Remediation

Remediation is a formal process designed to address and correct deficiencies in a student's knowledge, skills, and/or professional behavior. Remediation plans are designed with use of measurable objectives to be completed within a fixed period of time. Should a remediating student fail to meet the terms of the agreed-upon remediation plan, the student will face dismissal.

Remediation occurs through a Document of Concern and may be required by the SEC. The SEC makes recommendations regarding remediation based on the process described below.

Students offered the opportunity to participate in a remediation plan should speak with their advisor, the Program Director, and other relevant stakeholders regarding the student's decision to comply. The faculty may be involved in remediation plans, and their recommendations may be incorporated into an educational review to enhance achievement of the stated goals.

### Deceleration

Deceleration occurs when students remain active in the MSPAS program, but do not progress with their entering cohort. Because of the yearly cycle of didactic courses, deceleration during the didactic phase is typically for one year. The decision of whether a student should be offered a deceleration plan is made by the SEC; final adjudication is the responsibility of the Program Director. Students taking a deceleration plan must meet all terms defined in the plan within the specified timelines. Students who do not meet these terms or do not do so within the specified timelines are dismissed from the program.

### Dismissal

The MSPAS program, after due consideration and process, reserves the right to dismiss any student at any time before graduation for any reason legal, moral, behavioral, ethical, or academic. Recommendations for dismissal are made by the SEC to the Program Director pursuant to the process described below.

## Withdrawal

Official withdrawal from the program requires approval from the Program Director and completion of withdrawal documentation by the student. The Withdrawal Form for the MSPAS Program is found in Appendix D.

Students who have withdrawn from the program and seek re-admittance will be required to meet with the SEC to present their case for re-admittance. This should be scheduled through the Program Director's office. The timing of the SEC meeting should be no sooner than two months prior to the start of the term in which the student desires to re-enter the program. The student seeking re-admittance should be prepared to explain what conditions led to the original withdrawal and how those conditions have been addressed or overcome. The SEC's decision may be to re-admit, re-admit with conditions, or deny re-admittance. The decision of the SEC is final and not appealable.

## Grading and Evaluation

Students in the MSPAS program must earn a grade of 77% or better in all MSPAS courses and course enhancements to pass a course. Any score below a 77% is considered failing. Students who fail to maintain a minimum GPA of 3.0 or "Pass" in a Pass/Fail course are referred to the Student Evaluation Committee (SEC), described below.

The following grading scale will be used; any grade below a "C+" is considered failing:

93% - 100%	A	73% - 76%	C
90% - 92%	A-	70% - 72%	C-
87% - 89%	B+	67% - 69%	D+
83% - 86%	B	63% - 66%	D
80% - 82%	B-	60% - 62%	D-
77% - 79%	C+	0% - 59%	F

Decimals beginning at .5 are rounded up to the nearest whole number.

### Incomplete Grades

#### Didactic Year

All required course assignments must be completed by the end of the term or the student will receive an "Incomplete" (I) for the course. All course work, including remediation, must be successfully completed within one week of the end of a term. Failure to complete the required course work during the specified time may result in a failing grade for the course.

#### Clinical Year

A grade of incomplete may be assigned for any missing evaluation, assignment, or examination. Failure to complete course requirements within the prescribed time may result in referral to the SEC.

## Written Assignments

Any written assignment will lose 10% of its score each 24 hour period past the date and time it is due. Unless otherwise directed, all papers must conform to the following standards:

- Typed in MS Word in standard 8.5 x 11 inch pages with 1 inch margins all around.
- Typed in Times New Roman size 12 font, double-spaced, with covering title/author page.
- References following AMA style <http://libguides.dbq.edu/PA>
- No more than 20% of the document in attributed quotes. Ellipses may be used to shorten content within quotes.

## Exams and/or Courses

### Didactic

A student who fails an exam other than the final exam will receive an email notification of the failure from the Course Director. The student is required to meet with his/her advisor no later than one week of receipt of the email to discuss the exam failure, and jointly agree on a student plan for improvement, which may include a remediation exam, as contained within the Document of Concern (Appendix B). The Document of Concern will be kept in the MSPAS student's records.

The second time a student fails an exam in the same didactic course, or in the case of a didactic comprehensive final exam, the student will be referred for review with the SEC and a remediation exam is required. Remedial study and exams must be completed by the start of the next term in the didactic phase in order for the student to immediately progress in the program and begin the next term's courses. *Seventy-seven percent will be the highest percent credited as a replacement score.*

A student who fails a third exam fails the didactic course, and is automatically referred for review to the SEC for review and discussion of plans to either be dismissed from the program or decelerated to retake the course the following year.

### Clinical

In the event a student scores below 60% on any end-of-rotation course exam, reexamination will be required. Students enrolled in the Clinical phase of the Physician Assistant Program are permitted reexamination one (1) time per course, and a combined total of two (2) times for the entire clinical phase. If the student exhausts the two reexaminations for the clinical phase, any failure of a future end-of-rotation course exam will result in termination from the Physician Assistant Program.

The following rules outline the process of exam remediation and reexamination for End-of-Rotation Exams:

1. The student must complete the reexamination prior to the next end of rotation exam. The reexamination is scheduled on campus one (1) day prior to the

monthly call-back day. The student will be responsible for the cost of reexamination.

2. The student must achieve 60% or higher to pass a reexamination.
3. Upon successful completion of a reexamination, the student may earn up to a 77% score.
4. If the reexamination score is less than 60%, the student will fail the course.

If a student has more than one instructor during a rotation, there is an option to complete a collective final evaluation rather than multiple evaluations. It is the student's responsibility to make these arrangements with the clinical instructors. However, if the student receives more than one final rotation evaluation, the score will be the average of all evaluations. A grade of less than 77% on **any** of the final evaluations constitutes a failure for that rotation. *It is the student's responsibility to inform/remind the clinical preceptor(s) the importance of timely submissions of evaluations and that the information is part of the academic record.*

Students failing a course will be referred to the SEC. If a student fails more than one course during the program he/she will be dismissed from the program.

## Student Policies

### Student Employment

The MSPAS program discourages students from holding outside employment while enrolled in the didactic or clinical years. In the case that a student finds it necessary to hold outside employment while taking courses or during clinical rotations, he/she should speak to his/her assigned faculty advisor. Expectations, assignments, and due dates are not changed for students who are employed. Students are not permitted to be employed by any program-affiliated clinical education sites during the clinical phase.

### Student Work to Benefit the MSPAS Program

MSPAS students are not allowed to work on behalf of the MSPAS program in any clerical, administrative, or instructional capacity. While students may be asked to volunteer for a particular task or activity, students are not obligated to do so. Students who choose to volunteer do not receive remuneration for the task completed.

### Nepotism and Fraternalization

Occasionally students request to schedule a supervised clinical experience with a friend or relative (who is also a health care provider) that will serve as the preceptor. Due to the potential for personal relationships to interfere with the clinical evaluation process, which is both objective and subjective in nature, such rotation arrangements are prohibited.

The PA student should maintain a professional relationship with the preceptor and all clinic personnel at all times and adhere to appropriate professional boundaries. Social activities and

personal relationships outside of the professional learning environment should be avoided so as not to put the student or preceptor in a compromising situation. Contact through web-based social networking sites should be deferred until the student fully matriculates through the educational program. Students also should be aware of the sexual harassment policy found in the UD Student Handbook:

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

Students with questions or concerns about the above issues should immediately consult the Clinical Education Director or Program Director.

## Clinical Sites and Responsibilities

The MSPAS program and ARC-PA regulations require formal affiliation agreements between the MSPAS program and all clinical sites. Clinical site selection and approval rests with the MSPAS program.

Students are prohibited from soliciting clinical rotation experiences. Student solicitation of preceptors and/or clinical sites is a violation of MSPAS policy. All communication regarding clinical site recruitment and placement assignments must go through the Office of Clinical Education, initiated with the Clinical Placement Director. Unless instructed otherwise, students are not to directly contact affiliated and nonaffiliated clinical sites.

Students may suggest a nonaffiliated site or qualified practitioner interested in precepting for the program via an online submission form

(<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/f33b064b67a94400a16fec28f45119b2>) to the Clinical Placement Director, no later than 100 days prior to the rotation start date. Requests made in an alternate way will not be considered. MSPAS may decline or pursue the suggestion. Students submitting suggestions are not guaranteed to be placed in the clinical rotation. Affiliation depends on the MSPAS program's approval of the site and ability to secure an affiliation agreement. All affiliation agreements are subject to requirements set forth by ARC-PA and the MSPAS program. The MSPAS program ensures clinical sites provide clinical instruction, education, and experiences requisite to a master's level physician assistant education.

Final placement at a clinical site is entirely at the discretion of the MSPAS program with consideration of a variety of factors, such as:

- Quality of the practice for educational purposes
- Student performance
- Preexisting student professional relationship with the preceptor
- Potential for future clinical rotations at the site or with the preceptor
- Student level of professionalism and conduct
- And/or other factors

The clinical phase of the MSPAS program is an intense training period that takes place in a variety of clinical settings including, but not limited to, outpatient clinics; private practice clinics; community hospitals; and federal government facilities. Clinical rotations are scheduled

according to site availability, site location, and program requirements. Although the program strives to provide clinical rotations within an 80 mile radius, students should expect to be assigned to geographically diverse and distant locations throughout the clinical phase. Reasonable efforts are made to accommodate student preference; the MSPAS program cannot guarantee any or all student preferences will be honored.

The Clinical Placement Director and Clinical Education Director control student placement of clinical rotations including the locations and order of rotations, preceptor assignments, and the elective settings. Students will have an opportunity to provide the program with preferred medical specialties for consideration; however, there is no guarantee students will be placed in their preferred disciplines.

Clinical sites may have requirements beyond those set by UD MSPAS. For example, clinical rotation sites may require additional immunizations, drug testing, or site-specific orientation. Students are responsible for ensuring compliance and completion of site specific requirements at their expense.

Circumstances may arise that require changes to a student's clinical rotation schedule. Should changes be necessary, students will be informed as soon as possible; however in rare cases advance warning may not be possible. MSPAS students are responsible for their housing and transportation to and from clinical sites. Inability to travel to a particular site is not considered an acceptable reason for a request to change any rotation.

During clinical rotations, students are not allowed to substitute for, or function as, clinical or administrative staff. Any student asked to perform administrative or clinical activities that are the responsibility of the preceptor are obligated to inform the MSPAS program immediately. Failure to do so will result in recommended disciplinary action up to dismissal from the program.

Any student who fails to comply with an assigned clinical rotation schedule will receive a document of concern to be included in their permanent record and may warrant a review by the SEC.

### Student Assessment Process

Student performance is assessed based upon academic performance and demonstrated professionalism, including behavior in the classroom and clinical settings. The evaluation criteria are described in this MSPAS Student Handbook in the Physician Assistant Competencies section. The Student Evaluation Committee (SEC) is the committee tasked with evaluating all aspects of each student's performance. The SEC may evaluate a student's performance regardless of when an event(s) triggering review occurs, and shall include the student's overall performance in the evaluation, including prior disciplinary actions and/or remediation. A student may be referred to the SEC by an advisor, another faculty member, or the Program Director. Through the review process, the SEC is responsible for examining the concerns cited, evaluating their merits, determining student status, and recommending a course of action. Additionally, at the end of the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum, faculty evaluate each MSPAS student's grades

and professionalism and may refer students to the SEC for further evaluation before making a recommendation regarding advancement to the clinical phase or graduation, as applicable. The SEC is responsible for evaluating each student's academic performance and professionalism; all facets of a student's performance are considered when a student is evaluated by the SEC. Students may not have lawyers accompany them in any meetings with faculty or staff.

An appeals process is established in this MSPAS Student Handbook to allow appeals from adverse recommendations when there are sufficient grounds as more specifically provided herein. This summary is not intended to fully describe the processes set forth below. In the event of a conflict between this summary and the specific provisions set forth herein, the specific provisions shall control.

## Professionalism Policies

Students are required to follow the rules of conduct, policies, and procedures outlined in the MSPAS Student Handbook and those established at affiliated facilities. The responsibility of assuming the role of a physician assistant demands the highest moral and ethical standards. Developing these standards is a lifelong process which continues as an integrated component of the MSPAS student's education in the MSPAS program. With this as a fundamental principle, the MSPAS program does not tolerate violations of ethical and moral values.

MSPAS students are required to abide by the MSPAS Code of Academic Integrity, the MSPAS Student Code of Conduct, the applicable policies and procedures of the MSPAS Program, and the policies and procedures of institutions with which MSPAS has affiliation agreements. In addition to abiding by the policies and procedures of UD and specifically of the MSPAS program, MSPAS students are expected to abide by the American Academy of Physician Assistants' Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession, which can be found in the Policy Manual page 180: <https://www.aapa.org/about/aapa-governance-leadership/house-of-delegates/policy-manual-papers-and-forms/>

Violations by a MSPAS student of any of the above policies or procedures are reviewed and processed by the Program Director and/or the SEC as provided in this MSPAS Student Handbook.

MSPAS students must demonstrate professionalism in their attitude and interpersonal skills with all members of the University community. MSPAS students are representatives of the Program, the University, and the profession, and a high standard of professional ethics is required at all times. Behaviors such as cheating, malicious conduct or any evidence of unprofessional activity will be grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the Program. Students are expected to be cognizant of their behavior at all times and embrace the professional responsibility that comes with being a University of Dubuque MSPAS student.

## Patient Confidentiality

MSPAS students are expected to respect the rights of patients, including the rights to privacy and confidentiality, and shall maintain the privacy and security of all patient records and information

in accordance with UD and MSPAS policies, the policies of affiliated clinical hospitals and facilities, and state and federal law. As a member of the patient care team, MSPAS students have access to health information that is protected from disclosure under state and federal law including patient medical and/or demographic information. The MSPAS program and each MSPAS-affiliated hospital and clinic is subject to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and has developed HIPAA privacy and security policies to prevent unnecessary and inappropriate disclosures of health information (<http://www.hhs.gov>). MSPAS students are required to abide by HIPAA privacy and security policies and receive education and training to understand the requirements of policies and law. Student participation in training is monitored by the MSPAS program office. In general, protected health information may not be discussed or disclosed to anyone—either verbally, in writing, or electronically—unless this disclosure is necessary to perform the student’s duties and responsibilities. MSPAS students may not review medical records or access electronically stored patient information unless such review is required in the performance of assigned duties. Students are responsible for maintaining the confidence of patients by sharing confidential information only with others who need to know and by handling any documentation of information in a manner that maintains its confidentiality. MSPAS students may be required to submit a signed confidentiality statement during their clinical phase. Students should note that the HIPAA privacy and security policies apply to all student–patient interactions in formal curricular, extracurricular, or even in volunteer contexts.

Inappropriate disclosure of protected health information (PHI) is a serious matter that reflects adversely on a MSPAS student’s professionalism and fitness to become a physician assistant. The following basic rules are considered fundamental requirements for UD MSPAS students at all times:

- Under no circumstances should any protected health information be accessed (read or copied) in the absence of a requirement for performance of duties;
- Health information obtained while providing clinical care duties may not be discussed with others unless (a) such individuals are involved in the treatment of that patient or (b) it is necessary to fulfill educational objectives required of the student;
- Patient logging completed during clinical rotations should not include identifiable patient information to ensure HIPAA compliance;
- Once confidential information is on paper and in a MSPAS student’s hands, he/she is responsible for appropriate disposition: (a) distribute to authorized persons only, (b) file securely, or (c) destroy;
- Medical professionals do discuss cases in wider audiences, so long as the patient is de-identified and details sufficiently common or modified as to preclude patient identification by the audience;
- Unauthorized access or disclosure of PHI may result in federal civil/criminal penalties and/or disciplinary action by the University of Dubuque; and
- Students are required to notify the Clinical Education Director of any HIPAA violations.



## Classroom and Clinical Site Professional Behavior

MSPAS students, staff, faculty, administrators, and preceptors all are responsible for ensuring appropriate student conduct. Professional conduct is required of MSPAS students within and outside the classroom and clinical rotation sites. Students should interact with peers and patients with respect and courtesy, and should refrain from behavior that interferes with another's ability to learn or to teach.

Students should arrive on time for class. Should tardiness be unavoidable, students should enter the classroom quietly and sit in the back of the room. Students should not leave the classroom during a lecture. Students should not use electronic devices for anything other than note taking. Students should refrain from making noise or from participating in distractions during class. Students should not bring animals (except certified companion animals) or other non-student humans to class.

Failure to practice appropriate professional conduct may result in students being asked to leave the classroom or any other learning or clinical environment. Students are immediately referred for review to the SEC should any allegation be made regarding unethical or unprofessional conduct.

## Dress Code

As representatives of the medical profession, all MSPAS students are expected to convey a professional demeanor in behavior, dress, and appearance. A professional image conveys credibility, trust, respect, and confidence to one's colleagues and patients. In all educational settings—classroom, laboratory, and clinical environments—students are expected to be clean, well groomed, and appropriately dressed.

The dress code applies at all times when the student is on campus and to any situation in which patient-care activities occur or the occurrence of direct patient or health care professional contact can be reasonably assumed. These instances include, but are not limited to, all clinical experiences. In the absence of a stated policy for an individual course or setting, the following dress code applies:

### General Personal Care

- Good personal hygiene should be maintained;
- Hair should be neat and clean. Hair longer than shoulder length should be secured if close contact with patients is anticipated. Beards and mustaches must be clean and well groomed;
- Perfume or cologne are not permitted;
- Fingernails should be clean, neatly trimmed, and short to medium length. Acrylic nails are not permitted;
- Tattoos should be covered with clothing; and
- Piercings are only permitted in pierced ears; jewelry is not permitted to be worn in pierced noses, lips, tongues, or any other exposed body part.

#### Attire for the didactic /classroom setting

- Clean, casual clothing should be worn by all students;
- Shoes/sandals need to be worn at all times;
- Undergarments should not be visible; and
- Belts should be worn when necessary.

#### Attire for the anatomy laboratory setting

- Clean scrubs should be worn along with closed-toe shoes;
- Hair should be gathered so that it does not dangle onto patients or cadavers; and
- Faculty may address additional requirements for student attire for the laboratory setting.

#### Attire for the clinical laboratory setting

- Female students are asked to wear shorts and a sports bra, and male students are asked to wear shorts and a tank top.

#### Attire for the clinical setting

- Short, clean, and pressed white coats with the MSPAS logo should be worn;
- Closed-toe shoes (with socks/stockings) should be worn;
- Men should wear collared dress shirts; and
- Name badges should be worn.

#### Inappropriate attire for classroom, laboratory, or clinical settings

- Hats, bandanas, hoods, or head scarves (except if considered as part of religious or cultural dress) are not permitted;
- Pajamas, scrubs (unless otherwise specified), and exercise attire are not permitted;
- Tank, mesh, halter, or tube tops are not permitted. Low-cut, spaghetti strap, and belly shirts are not permitted;
- Shorts and inappropriately short skirts are not permitted;
- Shoes must be worn; and
- Shirts with inappropriate or vulgar lettering or messages are not permitted.

#### Student Code of Conduct

The MSPAS program adopts the UD Community Values and Behavioral Expectations as its Student Code of Conduct. All MSPAS students are expected to abide by this code, which can be found in the UD Student Handbook

<http://www.dbq.edu/media/CampusLife/VPofStudentLife/2015-16-Student-Handbook.pdf>

Students are responsible for seeking clarification on any of the policies of the UD Community Values and Behavioral Expectations, or any policies herein, should they require it at any time throughout their tenure in the MSPAS program.

## Academic Integrity & Academic Misconduct

All MSPAS students are required to abide by the UD Value of Integrity. Students who violate this value with respect to academic dishonesty and misconduct are referred to the SEC in accordance with the procedures outlined in this MSPAS Student Handbook.

The value is as follows: The University of Dubuque expects students to be honest in academic matters. We expect each person on campus to be forthright and direct and to value integrity in all his/her dealings. Activities and attitudes should be consistent with high academic standards, Christian commitment, and with the Mission and Values of the University.

Please see the Values Violations section of the UD Student Handbook for appropriate definitions, procedures, and possible sanctions related to academic dishonesty at:

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

### Terms and Definitions

#### Academic Misconduct

Academic Misconduct is defined as the following intentional acts or omissions committed by any MSPAS student:

#### Cheating

The unauthorized use of books, notes, aids, electronic sources; or assistance from another person with respect to examinations, course assignments, field service reports, class recitations; or the unauthorized possession of examination papers or course materials, whether originally authorized or not. Any student helping another cheat may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

#### Plagiarism

The deliberate use and appropriation of another's work without any indication of the source and the representation of such work as the student's own. Any student who fails to give credit for ideas, expressions, or materials taken from another source, including internet sources, is guilty of plagiarism. Any student helping another to plagiarize may be found guilty of academic misconduct.

#### Misrepresentation

Intentionally lying to a member of the faculty, staff, administration, or an outside agency to gain academic advantage for oneself or another, or to misrepresent or in other ways interfere with the investigation of a charge of academic misconduct.

#### Misuse of Computer Services

The unauthorized use of any computer, computer resource or computer project number, or the alteration or destruction of computerized information or files or unauthorized appropriation of another's program(s).

### Bribery

The offering of money or any item or service to a member of the faculty, staff, administration, or any other person in order to commit academic misconduct.

### Conspiracy and Collusion

The planning or acting with one or more fellow students, any member of the faculty, staff or administration, or any other person to commit any form of academic misconduct together.

### Falsification of Records

The tampering with, or altering in any way, any academic record used or maintained by the University.

### Academic Dishonesty

Any act or omission not specifically mentioned above that is outside the customary scope of preparing and completing academic assignments and/or contrary to the above stated policies concerning academic integrity.

## Student Evaluation Committee (SEC)

The following describes the processes employed to evaluate MSPAS student academic performance and professionalism by the SEC.

The purpose of the SEC is:

- To ensure that each student who graduates from the University of Dubuque Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program possesses the skills and knowledge necessary to assume the responsibilities of a physician assistant;
- To evaluate academic performance in the required curriculum, to assess advancement, and to recommend appropriate intervention in the event of unacceptable academic performance; and
- To evaluate personal qualities which bear on a student's professionalism and fitness to become a physician assistant, and to recommend appropriate intervention. The SEC relies upon the cooperation, advice, and judgment of faculty and administrators to perform these duties.

### Composition and Selection of SEC Members

The SEC is comprised of all MSPAS faculty members, all of whom are voting members. The Medical Director will serve as chair. In order to ensure privacy and the confidentiality of students' personal information and academic records, *no students will participate as SEC members.*

## Hearing Process of the SEC

### Notice of Hearing

All hearing notices are made in accordance with the notification provision set forth in this MSPAS Student Handbook. Students are provided a written notice a minimum of five business days prior to the SEC meeting with the student to consider a matter within its jurisdiction. The notice will state:

- A description of the matter under consideration;
- The time, date and place of the hearing;
- That the student has the opportunity to review the documents that the SEC is relying upon; and
- A list of witnesses (if any).

### Hearing Procedure

#### Information Gathering

In the event that a matter is referred to the SEC for evaluation and recommendation, the SEC has the authority to gather information concerning the matter to assist with its deliberation and evaluation of the matter in the context of the student's academic performance and overall professionalism. The SEC may convene meetings for any purpose including assisting with preparation for the SEC hearing.

#### Meeting with Student and Confidentiality

*All student meetings are conducted in private.* During the meeting with the student, the student is advised of the information that forms the basis of the inquiry or allegation; the student then is given an opportunity to respond to the information presented. A student is allowed a representative to be present during any SEC hearing upon his/her request. The student must provide the Program with documentation specifying the name of the individual whom he/she is admitting into the hearing. It is possible that the student's representative could be another MSPAS student. That representative may advise the student and may not address the SEC directly or examine or cross-examine witnesses. The SEC allows witnesses to the incident, if any, to present pertinent information at the meeting with the student. The chair has the authority to exclude witnesses who provide redundant or duplicative information. If witnesses make presentations at any hearing, the student shall be entitled to pose relevant questions to such witnesses. The SEC considers the information it has gathered and any additional information provided by the student and makes written findings of fact and recommendations based upon its assessment of the information presented. Such findings and recommendations shall be provided to the program director within ten (10) business days of the conclusion of the hearing.

### Quorum and Voting

A quorum consists of at least three faculty members of the SEC. A recommendation is adopted when approved by a simple majority of the members present. A recommendation to expel a student from the MSPAS program must be approved by three-fifths of the entire SEC.

### Record of Hearing

Written decisions serve as the official records of a hearing.

### SEC Recommendations

The SEC makes one or more of the following recommendations regarding the disposition of a matter of professional fitness considered by the Committee:

- Find that the matter does not warrant action;
- Issue a written reprimand or warning;
- Allow the student to repeat or otherwise remediate academic deficiencies;
- Allow the student with a learning disability to continue on a modified academic schedule;
- Refer the student for counseling or psychological evaluation;
- Place the student on probation with such conditions as deemed appropriate;
- Suspend the student or place the student on leave of absence for a specified time or until specific conditions are met;
- Suspend the student for a period of time;
- Expel the student.

The SEC may recommend to the Program Director removal of a student's probation once the student has fulfilled the conditions of probation.

### Responsibilities of the Program Director

The SEC's recommended action steps are reviewed by the Program Director for, among other things, logistical viability (faculty workload, support services, etc.). The Program Director either accepts, amends, or rejects the plan. The SEC findings and recommendations with modifications, if any, are sent to the affected student within ten (10) business days of the Program Director's receipt of the SEC's written report notifying the student of the findings and recommendations. Recommendations that would impact UD policy or a student's standing in the program are sent to the Dean for Academic Affairs for review prior to notification of the student. The Dean can affirm or amend the recommendation; or the Dean can forward to the VPAA for further review. The VPAA can affirm or amend the SEC's recommendation.

A student may schedule an appointment with the Program Director to discuss the findings and recommendations. The appointment must be requested in writing and received by the Program Director no more than three business days after the student receives written notification of the findings and recommendations by the SEC. If a meeting is requested, it will take place promptly within five business days.

## Student Appeals

A decision of the MSPAS Program Director may be appealed for the following reasons:

- There has been a violation of the student's due process rights as outlined in the hearing procedures above;
- The severity of the sanction is not justified by the nature of the misconduct; or
- New, relevant information not available during the earlier proceedings is made available, and the new information could have substantially affected the outcome of the hearing.

The appeal must be in writing, specify in detail the alleged procedural impropriety, and must be filed in the Office of Academic Affairs within 14 calendar days of the date of receipt of the Program Director's decision. The Dean for Academic Affairs shall review the appeal and the record of the formal hearing, and issue a decision. The decision of the Dean for Academic Affairs is final.

## Student Record Policies

MSPAS retains all student educational records in accordance with federal and state requirements and UD Board of Trustees regulations.

### Educational Records and Personally Identifiable Information

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (U.S. Public Law 93-579; FERPA) defines educational records, and governs students' rights of privacy and access to their educational records. Any school record, either paper or electronic, that contains personally identifiable information directly related to the student is an educational record under FERPA. Such records may include:

- Directory information
- Clinical rotation schedules
- Evaluations of academic performance
- Letters of commendation and/or notifications of honors
- Information about leaves of absence
- Combined degree program enrollment information
- Records of disciplinary actions
- Documentation of change in enrollment status
- Computer media
- Microfilm
- Video and audio recordings
- Photographs
- Course and rotation grades

Personally identifiable information contained in student education records shall be released, or open for inspection, only to the student, or parents of dependent students as defined in Section 152 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986. "Personally identifiable" means that the data or information includes the name of a student, the student's parent or other family members, the

address of the student, a personal identifier, such as the student's Social Security number or a student number, a list of personal characteristics or other information that would make the student's identity easily traceable. The following are not considered educational records under FERPA:

- Private notes of individual staff or faculty that are in their sole possession
- Campus police records
- Medical records
- Statistical data compilations that contain no mention of personally identifiable information about any specific student.

MSPAS program does not release or permit access to education records and personally identifiable information kept on a student except as otherwise permitted by law and this regulation. Responsibility for custody of all student educational records belongs to the University officials in charge of the area in which the records are maintained. Each designated custodian shall ensure that the procedures required by federal and Iowa law and this regulation are in place to control access to and disclosure of student education records and personally identifiable information contained therein.

### Educational Records and Personally Identifiable Information in the Clinical Phase

In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (U.S. Public Law 93-579; FERPA), the MSPAS program requires students' written consent to share personal information with educational partners (clinical affiliates and practice sites). The sharing of personal information is on a need to know basis and may include a student's social security number, email address, telephone number, results of drug testing, and/or results of background checks. Notice is hereby given that the MSPAS program will require a background check and a drug test through CASPA prior to entering the program and additional background checks and drug tests dependent on clinical site-specific requirements. Random drug testing or additional background checks may be requested of the student at any time while the student is enrolled in the MSPAS program, as well as for placement in certain clinical sites as a matter of standard operating procedures for those sites. The MSPAS student will be responsible for the cost of all background checks and drug testing.

A student's signature on the Student Acknowledgement of Receipt of MSPAS Student Handbook and Statement of Understanding Form (Appendix E) herein states receipt of this policy, acceptance of the terms and conditions contained within this handbook, and is considered informed consent.

### Directory Information

MSPAS students must furnish contact information, including mobile phone number and information for an emergency contact, to the Program Director. It is the MSPAS student's responsibility to keep contact information current with the Program Director.

FERPA allows for the designation of certain academic record information as "directory." In order to prevent access to or release of directory information, a student must notify the designated custodian of record. After such notice, access to or release of directory information is withheld until further written instruction is received from the student. "Directory Information" includes:



- Student's name, local and permanent address, and telephone number(s)
- Date and place of birth
- Student classification and major and minor fields of study
- Participation in officially recognized activities and sports
- Weight and height of members of athletic teams
- Dates of attendance, degrees, and awards received
- The most recent previous educational agency or institution attended by the student
- Photographic image

### Waiver of Right of Access

Students and parents of dependent students have the right to waive their right of access to confidential letters of recommendation and other documents that evaluate student academic performance. Such waivers shall be in writing and made a part of the official academic record. A waiver of right to access shall be effective only when the student is notified, upon request, of the names of all persons who are submitting confidential recommendations or evaluations and when the confidential letters of recommendation and other evaluative documents are used solely for the purpose intended. The University may not condition admission, grants of financial aid, or receipt of any other service or benefit offered by the University, by another public educational institution in the State of Iowa or by any other public agency, upon being provided a waiver of the right to access by the student.

### Requests for Information in Connection with Research

All requests for academic research dealing with data from student education records shall be referred to the University Registrar. Such requests must be in writing and must set forth specifically the type(s) of information to which access is requested and the intended scope of the research project. The applicable custodian of records shall determine whether to grant the request, in whole or in part, and may condition access upon a guarantee that the researcher appropriately safeguards the data; that no personally identifiable information about any individual be published or made available to others; or upon other reasonable conditions.

### FERPA Notice to Students

The University shall provide notification annually to students of their rights relating to education records, including the right to file complaints, the procedures to be followed in order to exercise such rights, the types of information entered in the education records maintained by the University, and the University's policy to support the law. Notifications are published in the UD Student Handbook:

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

The MSPAS program complies with the following rights of privacy and access to student education records:

The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 30 days after the day the MSPAS program receives a request for access.

A student should submit to the Admission Director or Program Director a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The request must be in writing and signed by the person seeking access or release. The custodian of the records shall require the student, or legal representative of the student when applicable, requesting access to or release of the records to present proper identification such as a valid driver's license or passport. A copy of the request for access or release shall be retained in the student's file. Requests are usually honored within two business days unless the custodian or designee is not available. The student may review his/her file under supervision. Supervision is by a member of the staff to ensure that the record is not altered during the review process. The MSPAS policy states that the custodian shall have up to 30 days in which to comply with a request. When the record includes information on more than one student, the custodian shall release, or permit access to only that part of the record that relates to the student who is the subject of the request. Students requesting the release to others of personally identifiable information contained in the student's education records must provide the custodian of such records with a signed, written request specifying the information to be released, the purpose(s) for such release, and the person or organization to whom such information shall be released. A copy of all requests for access and release shall be retained by the custodian of the records and shall be available for inspection and review by the student or a parent. The University reserves the right to deny a request for copies of education records made by a student or legal representative when there is a financial obligation to the University that has not been satisfied or when there is an unresolved disciplinary action pending against the student.

The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes is inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student who wishes to ask the school to amend a record should write the school official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed. Students who challenge the accuracy of an education record shall file a written request for amendment with the custodian of the records. The student also shall present to the custodian of the records copies of all available evidence relating to the data or material being challenged. The custodian of the records shall consider the request and shall notify the student in writing within 15 school days whether the request is granted or denied. During that time, any challenge may be settled informally between the student and the custodian of the records, in consultation with other appropriate MSPAS officials. If an agreement is reached, it shall be in writing and signed by all parties involved. Such agreement shall be maintained in the student's records. If an agreement is not reached informally, or if the request for amendment is

denied, the student shall be informed in writing of the denial and the right to a hearing on the matter. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures is provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

The right to provide written consent before the University discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.

The school discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to University officials with legitimate educational interests. The following persons and organizations are considered "University officials" and may have access to personally identifiable information without the student's prior consent:

- a. Faculty, administrators, staff and consultants employed by the University, the University of Dubuque Board of Trustees whose work involves:
  - I. Performance of administrative tasks which relate to students;
  - II. Performance of supervisory or instructional tasks which relate to students;  
or
  - III. Performance of services that benefit students.
- b. Other persons who are authorized by federal and state law and regulations to have access to or receive copies of such information. Upon request, MSPAS also discloses education records without consent to officials of another school in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. MSPAS makes a reasonable attempt to notify each student of these disclosures.

The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by MSPAS to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

Mail complaint to:  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

## Technology Policies

MSPAS students are expected to abide by the UD policies on the use of information technology, found online at:

<http://www.dbq.edu/media/admissions/financialaid/Technology-Acceptable-Use-Policy.pdf>

## Computer Misuse

Definition: all policies outlined in the Technology Acceptable Use policy which includes, but is not limited to, criminal speech and/or use in the course of committing a crime, inappropriate, obscene, profane, lewd, vulgar, pornographic, disrespectful, threatening, or inflammatory language, video, or graphics. It also includes harassment, personal attacks (including prejudicial or discriminatory attacks), false or defamatory material about a person or organization,

dangerous information (information that, if acted upon, could cause damage, present a danger, or educational or business operation disruption), violations of privacy, abuse of resources (use of chain letters or “spamming”), and copyright infringement or plagiarism.

## Email Policy

Each student has been provided with a UD email address. The MSPAS program uses UD email as the primary means of communication with students. This is the only email address used for MSPAS program communications. MSPAS students should check their UD email daily for important information and notifications from the MSPAS program. Failure to respond to faculty or staff communications in a timely and respectful manner may result in disciplinary action. The MSPAS program cannot be held responsible for missed notifications resulting from unread email. The UD MSPAS email address should only be used when acting in your official role at UD-MSPAS.

## Technology HelpDesk

The University offers a Technology HelpDesk on the first floor of Van Vliet Hall. It is staffed Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. To report computer problems, call 563.589.3737 or email [helpdesk@dbq.edu](mailto:helpdesk@dbq.edu). Additional information regarding this service is available in the UD Student Handbook

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>

## Media Services

Media Services loans equipment to students for classes and University-related events. Available items include camcorders and tripods, PowerPoint remotes, Mixers, amplifiers, speakers and microphones. For more information, you can call Media Services at 563.589.3350 or go to

<http://www.dbq.edu/CampusLife/FacilitiesandServices/OfficeofTechnology/MultimediaServices/>

## Social Media Policy

Social media refers to a variety of internet-based programs that allow users the ability to create and publish online content (text and photos) about themselves or others. Subject to applicable UD policies, and state and federal laws regarding the use of such technologies for transmitting protected information, the MSPAS program welcomes the responsible use of social media technologies to support and engage learning and for effective outreach to the global community.

The term “social media” includes the following:

Communication via email, text messaging, or transfer of photographs or file documents using computers, smart phones, portable communication devices, and other technologies;

The use of web-based applications such as, but not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr, Instagram, Myspace, LinkedIn, YouTube, Flickr, blogs, wikis, and other outlets where comments are posted in network-based public settings; and future technologies that permit Internet-based information sharing.

This policy applies to all types of social media participation at any time by UD MSPAS students.

Students must abide by the laws, rules, regulations, and policies governing the protection of sensitive information such as the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) governing the dissemination of health information and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) governing the dissemination of education records. Failure to do so can result in serious consequences both academically and legally. Confidential information must be protected at all times and must never be shared on any social media site, including, but not limited, to the following:

- Health information about anyone other than the student posting the information.
- Personal information about MSPAS students, employees, or alumni (e.g., private email addresses, grades, health information, demographic information, information about interactions with patients, and photographs of patients or the care environment— some of which may be FERPA protected).
- Defamation of MSPAS and its affiliates, faculty, staff, and other students.

If UD and/or MSPAS become aware of postings on any social media venue that have a negative or detrimental impact on the University or MSPAS program, such information can be used in determining the appropriate sanction for failure to act in accordance with this policy, which may include dismissal.

Be proactive about your professionalism:

- Separate personal from professional. Identify your opinions as your own.
- Be professional and respectful;
- Always think before you post, remembering that anything you share via social media is not private and can be shared, stored, and spread globally;
- Never post anything when you are angry, stressed, or lack sufficient time to review carefully;
- You should only post information, photos, and comments online if you would feel comfortable seeing them on TV or on the front page of the newspaper;
- Postings are permanent and can be retrieved even after being deleted by the user;
- Be timely and accurate. Check facts, grammar, and spelling of all content before posting; and
- Use highest privacy settings available. Social media sites are often targeted by cyber-criminals who use personal data for identity theft.

Prohibited activities, which may represent violations of the law and/or University policy and may result in academic discipline and/or legal sanctions:

- Communicating with patients using social media, including “friending” a patient;
- Posting patient information, including protected health information or photos, on any social networking sites, blogs, instant messaging or text messaging services;
- Taking photos of patients and procedures. Photos of patients may only be taken when instructed by clinical faculty and proper protocols are followed and permissions obtained;
- Using cell phones, fax machines, or email to transmit confidential information;

- Posting personal information (e.g., home address, phone, password clues, social security number) or photos that show or appear to show you engaging in any offensive behavior, including, without limitation, promiscuity, intoxication, or substance abuse;
- Posting potentially inflammatory or unflattering material on another’s website or wall;
- Posting educational records or other student information protected by FERPA;
- Posting profane or disparaging information about students, faculty, courses, rotations, hospitals, UD, or the MSPAS program;
- Presenting yourself as an official representative or spokesperson for UD or the MSPAS program on social media;
- Using UD and/or MSPAS logos or personal identification numbers in any social media postings;
- Creating personal social media sites using UD email addresses or computer equipment;
- Using smart phones, portable communication and/or other social media devices for personal or non-emergent reasons during encounters involving patients or patients’ families and friends, to include but not limited to, the following areas:
  1. Hospital patient rooms, exam and treatment areas, operating room, emergency room
  2. Outpatient clinics
  3. Physician or patient lounges, nurse’s stations, hallways, waiting rooms, elevators, etc.
  4. During patient care rounds or didactic presentations that discuss specific patients

### Violations of Policy

Students who violate this policy are disciplined and verbally instructed by the Program Director to implement immediate corrective action. Depending on the type and severity of the infraction, immediate disciplinary and/or legal action may be warranted. This policy does not replace other UD or MSPAS program policies governing disclosure of confidential information, including protected health information and education records.

### Library

The Charles C. Myers Library has 5.0 FTE professional librarians and 5.25 FTE support staff. The library is located at the heart of campus and is open 108.5 hours per week. The building provides a variety of individual and small-group workspaces, including some located in designated quiet areas. There are many individual research carrels and small group tables in addition to seven individual study rooms and five small group study rooms which accommodate up to six students each. There are more than 60 computers available for student use as well as laptops for check-out. Wireless printing and a cell phone/tablet charging station ensure that the library is a convenient place for study as well as relaxation. The library has a designated liaison for the MSPAS program who actively helps students and faculty to effectively access information for teaching and learning. The liaison will assist faculty with program development and evaluation by providing literature reviews on relevant topics as requested. The liaison will assist students

through large group information literacy instruction in the MSPAS program orientation as well as in selected courses with required research assignments. Library staff are partnering with MSPAS faculty to identify and purchase a collection of library resources for the program, emphasizing electronic resources available from any location.

Hours are available on the website at <http://www.dbq.edu/library/index.cfm>

Professional and respectful behavior and compliance with policies is expected at all times in the library. Violators are asked to leave. MSPAS students who abuse library policies are reported to the MSPAS program office.

## Resources

### Online Journals and Databases

The library subscribes to approximately 8500 journals in the areas of medicine, the biological sciences, nursing, and allied health, and have identified additional subscriptions necessary for the MSPAS program. Online health sciences databases already available for all UD students include Cumulative Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL), Ovid Essential Nursing Collection, Health Source: Nursing/ Academic, and Medline. Additional PA-specific electronic resources are under consideration. Librarians will support commonly-used medical/diagnostic apps, including collaborating with vendors to link to UD database/journal subscriptions whenever possible. As of February 2015, the library owns approximately 2560 health/medical books in print and 35,900 titles electronically. The collection will emphasize electronic versions and will be updated continuously with faculty input. A large DVD collection is available for faculty and student use, and the library subscribes to a streaming film database (Films on Demand) which includes 2800 health/medical titles as well as 1600 in biology, including 830 in human anatomy.

### Circulating books

Circulating books are available for renewable check-out periods of four weeks for students and the entire semester for faculty; DVDs and print periodicals are available for two weeks. Reserve materials are available for in-library use, with other borrowing options as determined by faculty. The library staff provides a free interlibrary loan service, which provides access to books, films, and articles that UD does not own. Some interlibrary loans are provided via Docline, a partnership of health sciences libraries through the National Library of Medicine, of which UD is a member.

### Computer and Internet Access & Library Help Desk

There are 26 public workstations within the library that are fully networked and provide Microsoft Windows 7 and Office 2013 Professional for student use. The entire campus is wireless.

### Printing and Scanning

The Multimedia Center of the library has a flatbed scanner and a color laser printer available for students. There is another color laser printer available on the second floor.

## Reference/Research Assistance and Tutorials

Dedicated and experienced librarians are available weekdays to assist students who have reference questions or need help with research. Librarians also provide hands-on database instructions to individuals and small groups.

## Interlibrary Loan Service

UD students and staff may check out books and most multimedia for four weeks. Material may be renewed twice if it is not needed by another person or for reserve. Faculty may check out material for the semester. All faculty material must physically be returned to the library at the end of spring semester.

## Periodicals, DVDs and videocassettes

These circulate for 14 days. Reference books do not circulate.

## UD Emergency Policies

Emergency and non-emergency calls from residence halls for fire, police, or ambulance assistance or services should be directed through the UD Safety and Security Department at x3333 or 563.589.3333. If a situation requires immediate action, the local emergency service number should be contacted (911); then if able, call the Safety and Security Department.

Depending on the type of emergency, contact one of the following:

- Police 911
- UD Safety and Security Department at x3333 or 563.589.3333
- A Resident Assistant (on duty each evening in residence halls) and/or the Hall Director/Area Coordinator on duty
- Assistant Dean and Director of Residence Life, or Vice President and Dean of Student Life

If you feel unsafe or are faced with an emergency, use the emergency telephones located around campus. The telephones have a blue light on top and are labeled "Emergency." To operate emergency telephones, press the red button and the Safety and Security staff will immediately know your location and assist. They are located in the following areas:

- University Park Drive near the traffic gate (by Donnell Hall)
- University Park Drive (between Donnell Hall and Park Village)
- University Park Drive near the traffic gate (by Park Village).
- Hardee's parking lot
- CRWC located at the outside entrance
- Mercer Birmingham Hall
- Heritage Center- north, south, and west entrances
- All residence halls have a phone in the main exterior entrance. However, they do not have a blue light
- The following academic buildings have exterior phones but do not have a blue light: CRWC, maintenance building, MTAC, Myers Library and the University Science Center



- Smith Hall (does not have an exterior phone.) However, the lower entrance is always unlocked and the Safety and Security staff is always available in their office or by using the red security phone located outside the office
- When faced with any type of emergency or inclement weather, the health and safety of students are paramount concerns of the MSPAS Program. As emergencies occur unexpectedly, the MSPAS program in conjunction with the UD Safety and Security Department ensures that all MSPAS students receive immediate notification of all emergency alerts provided to MSPAS students.

By definition, an emergency at UD can include all of the following:

- Fatal or critical accidents, injuries, or illnesses occurring on university premises, involving employees, students, or visitors
- University-related transportation accidents involving hazardous materials or major property damage
- Reports of acute illnesses involving persons arising from chemical or biological emissions or exposures on University premises
- Reports of acute illnesses or injuries arising from the consumption or use of any product purchased, sold, or distributed by the University or on University premises
- Major spills or emission of hazardous materials inside buildings on University premises to the extent that the well-being of the University community, the local community, and/or the environment may be affected
- Natural disasters, including storms, floods, hurricanes, or tornadoes
- Fires, explosions, bomb threats and terrorist threats on and off campus
- Violence or rioting on or in close proximity to University premises
- Extended and/or widespread utility interruptions with particular emphasis on how they affect class schedules, research projects, University residential facilities, or the ability of the University to continue normal operations
- Unauthorized major work stoppages, boycotts, or threatened boycotts of University-sponsored events.

### MSPAS Classes and Clinical Rotations in Case of an Emergency

In the event of an emergency, all classes in the basic and clinical sciences follow the University's temporary closure policy. Students assigned to off-campus clinical rotations during a local or geographically widespread emergency should contact the Clinical Education Director for specific instructions pertaining to students' instructional responsibilities. As a general rule, clinical care responsibilities are expected to be fulfilled, and students should follow the policies of the affiliate clinical site where they are currently assigned. Students on clinical rotations are expected to report to their clinical assignments unless severe weather conditions prohibit safe travel; each student should make a prudent judgment as to the possibility of safe travel. The student will contact clinical sites, preceptors, and the Clinical Education Director regarding attendance in the case of an emergency.

During an emergency, students should tune in to local television and radio broadcasts to remain informed regarding MSPAS. This is especially true during natural disasters. In addition, students can contact UD. As soon as possible after an emergency, students should establish contact with professors and/or preceptors.

### General Safety Guidelines

Students must be aware of the need for personal safety and act accordingly to minimize risks. The safety and security of students are the first priority of the MSPAS program. Safety and security practices are reviewed prior to community and clinical experiences. Examples of such educational training programs include:

- Universal precautions
- Needle stick prevention
- Response to needle stick or bodily fluid exposure
- De-escalation techniques when dealing with angry patient
- Emergency procedures involving medical care (e.g., CPR), natural disasters, terrorism, assault, illegal activities and others

While working in community settings, including hospitals, clinics, home visits, and other off-campus venues, MSPAS students should take precautions and use common sense including but not limited to the following:

- Be aware of your surroundings
- Do not stand out (e.g., wearing flashy or expensive jewelry)
- Do not carry excessive amounts of money
- Do not leave valuables in plain sight
- Travel in pairs whenever possible
- Keep car doors locked and windows closed

While working or studying on campus, it is important to note that the UD Safety and Security Department has jurisdiction over the entire University. Emergency phones have been installed at strategic locations around the UD campus, which connect directly to the UD Safety and Security Department. Students are urged to take notice of and become familiar with their locations. As members of the UD community, students can enhance their personal safety and help keep the campus safe by taking precautions, including but not limited to, the following:

- Use prudent precautions for personal safety including walking in pairs in isolated places or during the evening. Students should not hesitate to call the Safety and Security Department at night.
- Keep close watch on your personal property. Do not leave personal property such as books, audio or video players, cell phones, PDAs, laptops, purses, wallets, jewelry, cameras, or other valuable objects unattended or out of your sight or in classrooms, the library, restrooms, campus dining areas, the bookstore, your vehicle, or in any public place.
- Report all on-campus thefts or suspicious persons or activities to the UD Safety and Security Department.

While fulfilling MSPAS educational objectives, students also must be aware of the need for personal safety and act accordingly to minimize risks. The key message for students is to be cautious and use common sense. Always listen to your “gut” and follow your instincts. If an environment or situation feels unsafe, stay calm and leave immediately. Discuss with a faculty supervisor and/or call law enforcement.

#### Emergency contact information:

- For all off-campus emergencies, call 911.
- For all on-campus emergencies and urgent scenarios involving safety, call the UD Safety and Security Department using emergency phones located throughout the campus or by dialing 563.589.3333.
- For non-urgent safety concerns or questions, contact the MSPAS office.

#### Technical Standards

The technical standards set forth by the MSPAS program establish the essential qualities considered necessary for students to be admitted to and successfully complete the program. These standards ensure graduates possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data. MSPAS students must meet all technical standards upon matriculation and throughout enrollment in the MSPAS program. In the event a student is unable to fulfill these technical standards, with reasonable accommodation, the student is subject to dismissal. MSPAS students must be fully able to perform the essential functions in each of the following categories:

- Observation: Acquire, assimilate, interpret, integrate, and apply information from direct observation, oral and written communication of radiographic and other imaging techniques, pathologic and laboratory testing, electrocardiograms, and other reports or studies.
- Communication: Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, health professionals, teachers, staff, and peers, both orally and in writing and when the time available for communication is limited. Accurately obtain a medical history from the patient or his/her health care proxy.
- Motor: Perform procedures fundamental to medicine, including participating fully in curriculum requirements in the classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings. Perform diagnostic and emergency maneuvers and procedures, such as palpation, percussion, auscultation, airway management, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, suturing, and assisting in surgery.
- Intellectual: Perform problem-solving tasks quickly and efficiently in an environment that may change rapidly, without warning, and/or in unpredictable ways. Comprehend three-dimensional and spatial relationships.
- Behavioral/Social: Possess the emotional stability to exercise sound judgment; manage physical and emotional stress; exhibit sufficient interpersonal skills to interact with people at all levels in a culturally diverse society; and form compassionate relationships with patients while maintaining appropriate professional boundaries.

Meeting the technical standards is required but does not guarantee a student's eligibility for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE). Students also must meet the expectations of the program's accrediting agency (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. [ARC-PA]).

## Students with Disabilities

The MSPAS program abides by UD policies and procedures regarding students with disabilities. MSPAS students with disabilities who wish to receive accommodations based on a disability *must* register with the UD Academic Success Center/Disability Services

<http://www.dbq.edu/academics/academicssupportsuccess/>.

An individual with a disability is one who—with or without reasonable modifications to the rules, policies, or practices; the removal of architectural, communication, or transportation barriers; or the provision of auxiliary aids and services—meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or the participation in programs or activities provided by the University.

Disabilities may be categorized as physical, psychological, and/or learning incapacities. The staff collaborates with students, faculty, staff, and community members to create diverse learning environments that are usable, equitable, inclusive, and sustainable. The Academic Success Center/Disability Services provides MSPAS students with disabilities the support necessary to successfully complete their education and participate in activities available to all students.

## Due Process Policies

### Grievances

Students wishing to file a grievance should do so through the following offices:

- Academic Issues: Program Director, Linda Chlapaty Hall
- Co-curricular Issues: Vice President/Dean of Student Life, Peters Commons

If a student is unsure of who to contact or how to proceed, the student should consult the Office of Academic Affairs or Dean of Student Life.

The purpose of this policy and procedure is to provide a means for MSPAS students to seek investigation and possible resolution of grievances. MSPAS students are encouraged to informally resolve a grievance as soon as possible through a meeting with the instructor. If the matter cannot be resolved, or if the professor cannot be reached, the student should meet with the Program Director. If the student's grievance is against a committee, the students must meet with the committee chairperson and the Program Director to attempt informal resolution. A mutually agreeable resolution shall be formalized through a notation in the student's file/record that is initialed by the student and the professor.

### Formal Grievance Procedure

The formal grievance procedure is outlined in the UD Student Handbook

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

## MSPAS Non-discrimination Policy and Discrimination Complaint Procedures

The University of Dubuque does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, disability, sexual orientation or age. Any violations of such should be reported to the Director of Human Resources.

In addition, the University of Dubuque strives to foster respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the University community by providing an educational and professional environment free of unwanted sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct that is oppressive or intimidating. The University has a zero tolerance policy regarding sexual harassment. The UD Sexual Harassment Policy can be found in the Student Handbook

<http://www.dbq.edu/Academics/OfficeofAcademicAffairs/GraduatePrograms/MasterofScienceinPhysicianAssistantStudies/StudentResourcesandUsefulLinks/>.

## Section V: Student Activities and MSPAS Services

### Class Officers

Each MSPAS class shall elect class officers by the 10th week of their first semester.

Class President:

The class president has the following primary duties:

1. To serve as a student representative on the Curriculum Committee. This committee is charged with evaluation and critique of the curriculum and supporting resources with suggestions and plans for improvement. It is expected that the class president will gather and relay student concerns and suggestions regarding current curriculum and resources to the committee for consideration.
2. To serve as chief organizer of any class activities the class agrees to sponsor, eventually including reunions of alumni.
3. To serve as chief officer of the MSPAS class Executive Board and representative for incoming classes.
4. To serve as class representative when needed by UD for broader University functions.

Class Vice-President:

The class vice-president has the following duties:

1. Organize and coordinate events and class activities, in collaboration with the President and other Executive Board members, while serving as lead organizer of UDPA program social events on campus (Orientation week, PA Potlucks, Holiday events).
2. Assist the President with primary organization of Annual PA Week event and/or other outreach events.

Class Treasurer:

The class Treasurer has the following duties:

1. Investigate grant opportunities and draft initial grant proposals.
2. Investigate fundraising opportunities, as well as UD specific rules about fundraising.
3. Act as lead organizer of fundraisers with support from other executive board members.

Class Secretary:

The class Secretary has the following duties:

1. Record Executive Board meeting minutes.
2. Manage social media advertising/production of flyers for public events.
3. Collect information from IPAS representatives and distribute to class.
4. Manage class calendar
5. Be responsible for managing records of class volunteering hours/submit them to the program director.
6. Be responsible for managing event volunteer recruitment/sign-ups (i.e. STEM Festival, fundraising, PA Week event)

## Professional Organizations

MSPAS students will become student members of the following professional organizations:

- American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) is the student chapter of AAPA. Membership in the SAAAPA can keep students abreast of important and current issues affecting PA education and practice.
- Iowa Physician Assistants Society (IPAS) is a state chapter of AAPA.

## Student Services

The following services are offered to all MSPAS students and the MSPAS program encourages students to utilize these services.

### Counseling Services

Personal Counseling: The University provides personal counseling services for students who have emotional, social, academic, vocational, sexual, or personal concerns, utilizing both psychologists and master's degree-level mental health practitioners. Short term personal counseling is confidential and is provided at no cost to students. In addition, there are two campus chaplains available to provide spiritual counseling as needed.

### Student Health Services

UD health services are available to all UD students who are currently enrolled in classes; undergraduate, graduate, and Seminary students are able to seek medical attention no matter

what insurance plan they are enrolled in. The services also include being seen at UnityPoint Health-Finley Urgent Care after hours and on weekends. Visits to UnityPoint Health-Finley Occupational Health, which include an assessment by a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or physician, are provided free of charge by UD. Tests, such as labs, x-rays, and visits to the emergency room are the responsibility of the student. All charges will be filed with the student's insurance plan.

Transportation to medical facilities: Students are encouraged to organize rides with friends if they cannot transport themselves. Taxi services are available in Dubuque if students cannot find other modes of transportation. The University does not provide transportation to or from medical facilities.

Making a medical appointment utilizing UD Health Service:

- To schedule a medical appointment for an illness or injury, call the UD Medical Coordinator at 563.589.3244.
- The Medical Coordinator will complete a Student Medical Referral which you will take to your appointment.
- The Medical Referral form will indicate when the student may return to class or if the student is being referred to another medical provider for follow-up. The student must return the completed referral form to the UD Medical Coordinator directly after the appointment (if after hours, then the next day).
- If you are unable to reach the Medical Coordinator after hours, report to UnityPoint Health- Finley Convenient Care. If it is an emergency, contact UD Safety and Security Department at 563.589.3333 or call 911. UnityPoint Health-Finley Convenient Care will determine if you should be seen in the Emergency Room. Charges for Emergency Room services will be billed to you or your insurance plan. UD does not cover services provided in the Emergency Room.

Contact Information:

Medical Coordinator's Office in the Stoltz Sports Center

<http://www.dbq.edu/CampusLife/FacilitiesandServices/MedicalServices/>

Office: 563.589.3244

Cell: 563.580.6889

Fax: 563.589.3425

UnityPoint Health-Finley Hospital  
350 North Grandview Avenue  
Dubuque (a block east of the UD campus)

UnityPoint Convenient Care Drop-In Care Center  
(use Emergency Entrance)  
Monday-Friday: 4:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
Weekends/Holidays: 10:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m.



## Appendix A— Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Informed Consent/Release Form\*

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

\*The University of Dubuque may amend this policy from time to time without notice to PA students.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge I have read the University of Dubuque Substance Abuse and Drug Testing Policy for the Physician Assistant Program in its entirety, have been given the chance to ask questions about it, and fully understand its provisions. I understand that the use of marijuana, opiates, phencyclidine (PCP), and amphetamines as described in the Substance Abuse Policy is a violation of University of Dubuque Physician Assistant rules for all students.

I hereby consent to have samples of my urine collected for mandatory random testing or when informed by the University of Dubuque Physician Assistant Program Director that he/she has determined directly or through UD faculty or staff that there is a sufficient basis for reasonable suspicion that I have used or that I am under the influence of prohibited drugs. I understand that my urine samples may be submitted for testing prohibited substances and that this analysis will be conducted by qualified laboratory personnel. The purpose of this analysis will be to determine the presence or absence of proscribed substances in my urine.

I authorize the individual or organization designated by the University of Dubuque, as well as appropriate University of Dubuque personnel, to collect urine samples, determine test results and to make a confidential release of the results to the Medical Director appointed by the Physician Assistant Program, to other University of Dubuque personnel for the purpose of administering the policy, and to any individual, entity or agency to who or which disclosure is required by Federal, state, or local law.

I understand that I must sign the Informed Consent/Release Form to participate in the Physician Assistant Program at the University of Dubuque.

I understand and agree that the results of my drug tests will only be disclosed on an as needed basis in accordance with the University of Dubuque policy or as authorized in this form.

I hereby release the University of Dubuque and its Board of Trustees, officers, employees and agents from all liability and legal responsibility for any action related to the implementation of the Substance Abuse or Drug Testing policies for the Physician Assistant Program, or the release of information and records in accordance with the terms of the Substance Abuse and Drug Testing policies for the Physician Assistant Program and as authorized on this form.

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ MI: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Physician Assistant Student: \_\_\_\_\_





## Appendix B— Document of Concern

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

STUDENT: \_\_\_\_\_ ADVISOR: \_\_\_\_\_

COURSE (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

This information is provided to inform you that you are not meeting program expectations, and to help you develop an improvement plan so that you can successfully complete this course/clinical rotation. Some of the violations listed below are serious enough to warrant sanctions up to and including dismissal from the MSPAS Program.

NOT MEETING PROGRAM EXPECTATIONS	
_____ Disruptive behavior in classroom or clinical setting _____ Inappropriate interpersonal behavior _____ Impaired behavior _____ Breach in confidentiality _____ Disregard for patient/client safety _____ Non-compliance with UD Skills and Medication Policy _____ Unexcused tardiness or absence _____ Scholastic standing at risk (GPA below 3.0) _____ Academic integrity violation _____ Does not meet uniform/hygiene dress code _____ Knowledge, Skills, Technical Standards or Professionalism Deficit	_____ Major exam less than 77% _____ Midterm grade less than C+ (2.3) _____ Does not follow direction from instructor _____ Non-participation in classroom activities _____ Not passing course _____ Insufficient or inaccurate documentation as required _____ Arrival to clinical rotation unprepared (knowledge of medications, diagnoses, treatments) _____ Fabrication of records _____ Other _____

Instructor/Preceptor Statement of Occurrence:

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Program Director Notified

Action Plan:

Warning

Reexamination

Assignment

Referral to SEC

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Assessment of completion:

---

\_\_\_\_\_  
Instructor

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I disagree with this Document of Concern and/or the decision of the Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program Director

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Filed



## Appendix C— Absence Excusal Form

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

In the event of an anticipated absence requiring the student to miss one or more days of class or a clinical rotation, the student must complete this Absence Excusal Form and submit it to the Program Director at least seven days in advance of the anticipated absence.

In addition, students absent from a clinical rotation as a result of an emergency must complete and submit this form to the Program Director within 24 hours of their absence. Failure to do so may result in referral to SEC.

Student Name (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated date(s) off: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Absence(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

### Program Use Only

Request Approved: \_\_\_\_\_ Not Approved: Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Course Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix D— Withdrawal Form

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

In the event that a student needs to withdraw from the program for a sufficient length of time in that they are not able to continue with their cohort, this form is intended to be the official memorandum of understanding between the student and the program as to the permanence of the withdrawal or an intended date of return.

Student Name (PRINT): \_\_\_\_\_

Start Date of Withdrawal: \_\_\_\_\_

Anticipated Date of Return (if applicable):

Reason for Withdrawal:

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Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date Submitted: \_\_\_\_\_

### Program Use Only

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Program Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix E— Student Acknowledgement of Receipt of MSPAS Student Handbook and Statement of Understanding Form

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print name), have read and understand the policies and procedures found in this MSPAS Student Handbook. I also have reviewed the UD Student Handbook. I am familiar with the contents of these documents and the policies and procedures governing grades, probation, promotion, dismissal and mechanisms for appeal. I agree to abide by these policies.

This form must be signed and returned to Program Director on the first day of class.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Academic Director Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Appendix F – Student Exposure Incident Form

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

Dear Healthcare Professional:

One of our MSPAS students may have been exposed to bloodborne pathogens during their clinical rotation. This individual had direct contact with potentially infected blood or other potentially infectious materials.

In accordance with the requirements of OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, the exposed student must immediately have made available to them a confidential medical evaluation and follow-up which must include at least the following elements:

- a. Documentation of the route(s) of exposure, and the circumstances under which the exposure incident occurred;
- b. Identification and documentation of the source individual, unless the clinical education site can establish that identification is infeasible or prohibited by state or local law;
  1. The source individual's blood shall be tested as soon as feasible and after consent is obtained in order to determine HBV and HIV infectivity. If consent is not obtained, the clinical education site shall establish that legally required consent cannot be obtained. When law does not require the source individual's consent, the source individual's blood, if available, shall be tested and the results documented.
  2. When the source individual is already known to be infected with HBV or HIV, testing for the source individual's HBV or HIV status need not be repeated.
  3. Results of the source individual's testing shall be made available to the exposed student, and the student shall be informed of applicable laws and regulations concerning disclosure of the identity and infectious status of the source individual.
- c. Collection and testing of blood for HBV and HIV serological status;
  1. The exposed student's blood shall be collected as soon as feasible and tested after consent is obtained.
  2. If the student consents to baseline blood collection, but does not give consent at that time for HIV serologic testing, the sample shall be preserved for at least 90 days. If, within 90 days of the exposure incident, the student elects to have the baseline sample tested, such testing shall be done as soon as feasible.

- d. Post-exposure prophylaxis, when medically indicated, as recommended by the U.S. Public Health Service
- e. Counseling
- f. Evaluation of reported illnesses

In accordance with the requirements of OSHA's Bloodborne Pathogen Standard, you are being provided with the following information:

- a. A copy of the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard [https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show\\_document?p\\_table=standards&p\\_id=10051](https://www.osha.gov/pls/oshaweb/owadisp.show_document?p_table=standards&p_id=10051) Please pay special attention to sections 1910.1030 (f)(3 to 5) of the Bloodborne Pathogen Standard if you are not familiar with this regulation; the indicated sections deal specifically with post-exposure evaluation and follow-up, information provided to the healthcare professional, and the healthcare professional's written opinion);
- b. A description of the exposed student's duties as they relate to the exposure incident);
- c. Documentation of the route(s) of exposure and circumstances under which exposure occurred;
- d. Results of the source individual's blood testing, if available; and
- e. Copies of all medical records relevant to the appropriate treatment of the student, including hepatitis B virus vaccination status, which are the University's responsibility to maintain.

Please review the provided information and complete the post-exposure evaluation form. Return the original copy of the completed form to the MSPAS Program Director and give a copy to the patient within 15 days of the completion of the evaluation.

The healthcare professional's written opinion for post-exposure evaluation and follow-up (copies attached) must be limited to the following information:

- a. That the student has been informed of the results of the evaluation; and
- b. That the student has been told about any medical conditions resulting from exposure to blood or other potentially infectious materials which require further evaluation or treatment.

All other findings or diagnoses must remain confidential and shall **NOT** be included in the written report. If medical follow-up is indicated, please complete the medical follow-up form for each follow-up visit and return it to the address indicated.

Signature of Medical Provider: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Clinical Preceptor: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Program Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Affected Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_





## Appendix G— Student Accident Report Form

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

In the event of an accident/injury occurring at a clinical rotation site, immediately notify the Program Director. Then, complete and submit this form to the MSPAS Program (fax: 563-589-3650) within 24 hours of the incident. This form is not applicable for needle stick or body fluids exposures.

Student name \_\_\_\_\_

Date of injury \_\_\_\_\_

Where injury occurred \_\_\_\_\_

Time of injury \_\_\_\_\_

Please describe in full detail how the accident occurred (use additional sheet if needed)

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Did you receive medical evaluation and/or treatment? Yes No

Was the MSPAS Program Director notified? Yes No

Date and time MSPAS Program was notified: \_\_\_\_\_

Did you miss time from the clinical rotation? Yes No

If yes, how many days? \_\_\_\_\_

NOTE: If your absence from a clinical rotation will exceed 2 days, you will need a medical note from the medical provider who examined you in a clinic or hospital and the date you can resume clinical activities. You may not return to clinical rotations until this note has been processed by the MSPAS program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



## Appendix H— Authorization to Release Information

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

### University of Dubuque

### Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

#### Authorization to Release Information

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Students in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) Program participate in direct patient care, observation, and clinical rotations which are part of the requisite coursework for the MSPAS degree offered by University of Dubuque (UD). To enable UD and the clinical sites to determine a student's eligibility to participate in these experiences, certain medical, criminal background check, and drug screen information pertaining to that student are required by UD and the clinical sites.

UD is authorized to release to the MSPAS Program and its affiliates results of criminal background check, results of drug screen, immunization records, and current Tuberculosis screening results to be used to satisfy the health information requirements of clinical sites at which the student will participate in educational activities.

I hereby release UD and its officers, trustees, and employees from any and all liabilities, responsibilities, damages, and claims which might arise from the release of information authorized above. I understand that I may withdraw this consent for release of information at any time prior to the expiration date, except to the extent that action has been taken in reliance hereon. I understand that withdrawal of this consent may affect my ability to complete required coursework and my ability to graduate from the MSPAS Program.

I acknowledge it is my responsibility to keep a copy of this signed form and all aforementioned records eligible for release for my own records. I acknowledge I have fully read and understand this release. I further acknowledge that all of my questions have been answered prior to the signing of this release.

\_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date