

**Delaware Valley University
Physician Assistant Program**

Technical Standards for the Physician Assistant Student

Physician assistants must have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to function in a broad variety of clinical situations, including stressful and emergent situations, and to render a wide spectrum of patient care. In addition to academic, personal, and extracurricular achievements, safely and successfully functioning as a physician assistant requires additional intellectual, physical, and emotional/behavioral characteristics. Being granted the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree signifies an individual is prepared to practice medicine accordingly; thus, the PA student must be able to demonstrate competencies in the defined technical standards in the same manner as necessary for clinical practice.

Delaware Valley University and its Physician Assistant program will not deny admission or continuation in the program to any student on the basis of any disability, pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, as amended in 2008, and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, provided the student demonstrates ability to meet the minimum standards described below. Delaware Valley University's Physician Assistant program will provide reasonable accommodations to individuals with disabilities to enable them to meet these technical standards, provided that the standards required by the program of all graduates and the integrity of the program's curriculum are upheld. Requests for accommodations are managed by the Office of Learning Support Services. Whether or not a requested accommodation is reasonable will be determined on an individual basis. Essential functions of health care providers and patient safety are paramount in these determinations.

In order to enter, continue in, and successfully complete the PA clinical training program, students must demonstrate the ability to achieve competency in the seven domains described below:

Observation

Students must be able to:

- Use all general sensory capacities to observe in lecture, small-group, and laboratory-based instruction
- Actively participate in classroom- and clinic-based instruction
- Observe patient demeanor and non-verbal communication in outpatient, inpatient, emergent, and operative settings
- Identify normal findings as well as gross and subtle abnormalities in laboratory settings (i.e. microbiologic cultures, tissue/fluid pathology, etc.)
- Perform a physical examination in a timely manner and distinguish normal from abnormal findings when inspecting, auscultating, and palpating appropriate body systems. Normal and abnormal odors must also be identified.

Communication

Students must be able to:

- Communicate clearly, sensitively, and effectively with patients of varying levels of health literacy and language proficiency in both academic and healthcare settings

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- Acquire all necessary elements of a patient's medical history and current condition in a timely manner
- Display effective reading comprehension and written and verbal communication skills in English
- Listen and understand information and ideas
- Perceive and describe changes in mood, activity, and posture
- Interpret non-verbal communication signals

Motor

Students must be able to:

- Diagnose patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers
- Perform appropriate laboratory and diagnostic studies and therapeutic procedures
- Interpret diagnostic studies
- Execute movements with reasonable dexterity and timeliness to provide both general and urgent/emergent care

Examples of skills reasonably required of a physician assistant student to perform or interpret include but are not limited to:

- Cardiopulmonary resuscitation
- Administration of intravenous medication
- Application of pressure to a wound
- Opening of obstructed airways
- Suturing of wounds
- Application of casts and splints
- Performance of obstetrical maneuvers
- Reading of radiographic studies and electrocardiograms
- Injections, venipuncture, IV insertion

Intellectual – Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative

Students must be able to:

- Identify problems in an academic or clinical setting and gather associated essential information
- Identify and interpret significant findings from available historical and clinical data to develop a reasonable explanation for likely diagnoses and treatment/management plans.
- Incorporate new information from many sources, and adapt/adjust plans appropriately in response to this new information.
- Apply clinical decision making, evaluation, reasoning and problem-solving skills to complex scenarios in both classroom and clinical settings
- Interpret three-dimensional relationships and spatial relationships of anatomic structures
- Synthesize and analyze complex data to reach appropriate conclusions
- Critically read and interpret medical literature
- Deal with a system of real numbers, including but not limited to basic algebraic equations, statistical analyses, fractions, percentages, and decimals

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Behavioral and Social

Students must be able to:

- Demonstrate use of intellectual abilities and exercise of good judgment in completion of all academic and clinical responsibilities
- Promptly attend to responsibilities required in the diagnosis and care of patients
- Develop mature, sensitive, and effective therapeutic relationships with patients, faculty, preceptors, and other members of the health care team
- Adapt to stressful and dynamic, changing environments inherent in clinical practice
- Manage physically and mentally taxing workloads
- Learn and function in uncertain and ambiguous scenarios
- Demonstrate compassion, integrity, empathy, and interpersonal skills requisite for working directly with the public

Ethical and Professional

Students must be able to:

- Adjust appropriately to various levels of supervision pursuant to appropriate level of training, experience, and responsibility
- Take personal responsibility for actions
- Accept constructive feedback from others
- Understand the basis for and content of the Ethical Standards for the PA Profession
- Recognize limitations in knowledge, skills, and abilities and conduct themselves accordingly in academic and clinical settings
- Demonstrate ability to function free from impairment due to physical, mental, or substance use disorders
- Act in accordance with all Program and University, local, state, and federal laws and regulations

Physical Demands

Students must be able to:

- Maintain focus, concentration, and physical stamina necessary for long periods of sitting, standing, or moving
- Implement technical skills and clinical procedures included in the program's curriculum
- Lift and carry books, medical equipment, and/or supplies weighing 10-20 pounds
- Assist in positioning, fall prevention, and transfers of patients of varying body habitus