



**Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies  
Student Handbook  
for the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program**

**Class of 2026**

**This *Student Handbook* will be your primary source of information for the Program. Read it. Refer to it. Keep it close to you. The Program will expect you to refer to it prior to calling or emailing with a question.**

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# SECTION I: JOINT MSPAS/MPH PROGRAM GENERAL INFORMATION, POLICIES & PROCEDURES

## INTRODUCTION

The *Student Handbook* contains policies and requirements that govern academic performance and student conduct for the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program (the Program) at Touro University California (TUC). These policies are unique to the Program, and are designed to promote standards for academic competency, professional discipline, and personal responsibility. It represents the parameters of achievement and behavior the faculty expects of its students. It is the responsibility of all students to be knowledgeable about Program and TUC policies. These policies will be applied to all aspects of the student's academic progress and personal conduct for as long as the student is enrolled.

The Program and TUC reserves the right to make changes at any time in this handbook or in the requirements for admission, graduation, tuition, fees, and any rules or regulations. TUC maintains the right to refuse to matriculate a student deemed by the faculty to be academically incompetent or otherwise unfit or unsuited for enrollment.

In recognition of the gender spectrum, this handbook uses gender-neutral language, where appropriate, including the singular 'they' pronoun instead of 'he/she'.

Please see the [University Catalog](#) for a complete resource on University procedures and policies.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Touro University California does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, gender, gender identity or expression, marital status, pregnancy/childbirth/lactation status, disability, medical condition, genetic information, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, veteran status, or any other status characteristic protected by applicable laws in employment, or in admission, treatment or access to educational programs or activities.

To the extent provided by law, the University will reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities that meet the legal standards for documentation, whenever the individual is otherwise qualified to safely perform all essential functions of the position and meet the academic program technical standards ([Appendix F](#)).

Please refer to the [University Catalog](#) for additional details, including who to contact regarding non-discrimination policies and information on the TUC Complaint Hotline.

## ACCREDITATION

### Touro University California

Touro University California (TUC) is fully accredited by the [WASC Senior College and University Commission](#) (WSCUC). The WASC Commission reaffirmed Institutional Accreditation in July 2018 after



a three-stage review, which demonstrated core commitments to Institutional Capacity and Educational Effectiveness. The next accreditation review is scheduled for Spring 2026.

### Joint MSPAS/MPH Program

[The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for Physician Assistants \(ARC-PA\)](#) has granted **Accreditation-Continued** status to the Touro University California Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Touro University California and the Touro College and University System. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the [ARC-PA Standards](#).

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the *Standards*. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be **September 2029**. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy.

### Master of Public Health Program

The Touro University California (TUC) Public Health Program has been accredited by the Council on Education for Public Health (CEPH) since 2009. On December 9, 2022, the TUC Public Health Program received notice from the Council regarding the decision of its Board of Councilors to reaccredit the MPH Program at TUC for a 7-year term, the maximum period of accreditation for a graduate public health program.

## DEGREES AWARDED

The Joint Program awards the following degrees:

- Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS)
- Master of Public Health (MPH)

Upon successful completion of the 33-month program, graduates are eligible to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) administered by the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA, <https://www.nccpa.net>). After passing the PANCE, graduates become certified Physician Assistants (PA-C) and are eligible for licensure to practice as determined by a state's licensing board.

All students who choose the Public Health Comprehensive Exam culminating experience option, rather than a Capstone Project, will also sit for the [Certified Public Health \(CPH\) Exam](#).

# JOINT MSPAS/MPH PROGRAM

## MISSION STATEMENT

Using a social justice framework and public health lens, the mission of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program is to:

1. Recruit applicants from under-resourced communities and individuals with a demonstrated interest in serving these communities,
2. Educate PAs who will provide culturally sensitive care and advocate for under-resourced communities,
3. Increase access to high-quality care for under-resourced communities with an emphasis in primary care.

## VISION

Educating caring Physician Assistants to Serve, to Lead, to Teach.

## VALUES

The TUC Joint MSPAS/MPH program values:

1. Primary care as the backbone of the U.S. healthcare system to achieve health equity.
2. Caring for patients with a social-justice lens, especially in under-resourced populations.
3. Clinicians who are empathetic professionals who provide patient-centered, culturally sensitive, gender-equitable, evidence-based care to all patients as part of an interprofessional team.

## GOALS

The goals of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program are to:

1. Accept a cohort of students where 70% or more self-identify as one or more of the following:
  - a. First generation college student
  - b. Multilingual
  - c. Military background
  - d. Grew up in a medically underserved or health professional shortage area
  - e. Candidates from an economically disadvantaged background
2. Organize well-being activities thereby modeling to students the need to emphasize personal wellness to combat burnout.
3. The cohort will meet or exceed an average of three clinical rotations within medically under-resourced areas or with medically underserved populations such as sites designated as Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), Health Resource and Service Administration (HRSA) rural, Medically Underserved Areas (MUA) or Indian Health Service (IHS).
4. Meet or exceed the national average first time pass rate on the PANCE.
5. Graduate of the programs will serve in medically underserved communities (MUC) or Health professional shortage areas (HPSA) with rates above national average as defined by the NCCPA certified PAs report.

## COMPETENCIES

The Joint MSPAS-MPH Program competencies are consistent with the *Core Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates* (<https://paeaonline.org/our-work/current-issues/core-competencies>), graduates will be expected to demonstrate knowledge, proficiency and competency in the following areas and tasks as newly graduated physician assistants:

- Medical Knowledge (MK)
- Interpersonal and communication skills (ICS)
- Clinical and Technical skills (CTS)
- Clinical Reasoning and Problem Solving (CRPS)
- Professional Behaviors and Ethics (PB)
- Society and Population Health (SPH)

**Medical Knowledge:** Graduates need to have a comprehensive understanding of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention.

MK	Competencies
MK 1	Demonstrate knowledge of pathophysiologic principles of specific disease processes and differential diagnoses for general medical and surgical conditions.
MK 2	Identify signs, symptoms and physical manifestations of medical and surgical conditions.
MK 3	Select and monitor the appropriate pharmacological therapy for medical and surgical conditions.
MK 4	Management, treatment and follow up of medical and surgical conditions.
MK 5	Identify appropriate patient education regarding preventable conditions and lifestyle modifications including preventative screening.
MK 6	Demonstrate knowledge of medical care across the lifespan including prenatal, infant, children, adolescents, adults and elderly.

**Interpersonal and communication skills:** Graduates will demonstrate verbal, nonverbal and written communication skills which are effective for exchange of information with patients, their families, collaborating physicians and other members of team care team.

ICS	Competencies
ICS 1	Establish a meaningful and therapeutic relationship with patients ensuring the individual's psychosocial, socioeconomic, and personal beliefs are explored to deliver culturally competent care.
ICS 2	Effectively communicate with members of the health care team.
ICS 3	Perform patient education which considers health literacy and other social determinants to encourage treatment adherence.
ICS 4	Demonstrate effective medical documentation.

**Clinical and Technical skills:** Graduates will demonstrate clinical and technical skills required to provide age-appropriate assessment, evaluation, and management of patients.

<b>CTS</b>	<b>Competencies</b>
CTS 1	Elicit and perform a history and physical for any given medical condition; recognize normal from abnormal findings.
CTS 2	Perform clinical procedures using aseptic technique.
CTS 3	Select the appropriate laboratory and diagnostic studies in the aid of decision making.

**Clinical Reasoning and problem solving:** Graduates will be able to analyze and synthesize clinical, diagnostic, cultural information to diagnose and manage patients' health care needs across the lifespan.

<b>CRPS</b>	<b>Competencies</b>
CRPS 1	Synthesize history and physical exam findings to formulate a differential diagnosis for acute and chronic conditions.
CRPS 2	Incorporate diagnostic data into medical decision making.
CRPS 3	Formulate health management plans which include pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapies for the treatment of acute, chronic and emergent conditions.

**Professional Behaviors and Ethics:** Graduates will demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.

<b>PB</b>	<b>Competencies</b>
PB 1	Demonstrate compassion, integrity, and respect for others.
PB 2	Collaborate within interprofessional teams while understanding the roles of others to improve quality of patient care.
PB 3	Recognize the importance of patient safety strategies to help improve patient outcomes and quality of care.
PB 4	Exhibit clear understanding of the medical ethics and legal aspects of health care.
PB 5	Demonstrate a growth mindset by recognizing personal limitations, ensuring individual accountability, and accepting constructive feedback.
PB 6	Demonstrate understanding of the regulatory environment, laws and regulations regarding professional practice.

**Society and Population Health:** Graduates will be able to recognize and understand that the influences of the larger community may affect the health of patients and integrate knowledge of social determinants of health into care decisions. Patient care includes promotion of wellness.

<b>SPH</b>	<b>Competencies</b>
SPH 1	Recognize the cultural norms, influences, socioeconomic, environmental, and other population level determinants affecting the health of the individual and community being served.
SPH 2	Acknowledge and reflect on personal and professional limitations in providing patient care.
SPH 3	Reflect how one might utilize their master's in public health degree to affect the health of patients and the larger community.
SPH 4	Use credible sources to make evidence-based decisions on patient care.
SPH 5	Approach quality care with consideration to financial impact, safety, and cost-effective resource allocation.

Essential Skills required for a graduate of the program are as follows: Patient advocacy, Patient agency, Self-advocacy, Self-agency, Active community engagement, Resourcefulness, Relationship development, Self-awareness, Interpersonal skills (including influence, empathy, and humility), Awareness of unconscious biases, Information gathering, Discernment of important versus extraneous information, Prioritization of action steps based on information available, Awareness of biases and attitudes towards others, Empathetic listening, Knowing when to consult, Active listening, Patient education, Cultural competency, Health literacy, Trust-building, Effective communication, Empathetic listening, Advocacy, Teamwork, Relationship building, Care planning, History-taking, Physical examination, Prioritization of actions and clinical care decisions based on information available and the patient’s beliefs about their care, Evidence-based decision-making.

### **Cultural Humility**

Across each of the core domains, competent PA graduates must demonstrate the ability to exercise humility, “a state of openness toward understanding and respecting important aspects of other people’s cultural identities.” This requires an awareness of one’s personal and professional beliefs, biases, attitudes, and actions that affect patient care and a commitment to ongoing professional development. To demonstrate cultural humility, according to Tervalon and Murray-Garcia, “health care providers should consider a person’s culture from the individual’s specific view and to be aware and humble enough to ‘say that they do not know when they do not know’ and know when to ask for help.” Integrity is an essential skill under the professional and legal aspects of health care.

Cultural humility requires listening to those from different backgrounds while also being aware of one’s own thoughts and feelings about the culture of others. Cultural humility goes hand-in-hand with ongoing professional development because developing it is a lifelong project. Some experts in the field believe that “cultural humility does not have an end point” and therefore requires a commitment on

the part of the health care professional to be open to learning from their patients in a true partnership in health care throughout their careers.

## **MPH PROGRAM**

Please see the [\*MPH Student Handbook\*](#).

## GENERAL POLICIES

### JOINT DEGREE

All students must complete both the MSPAS and the MPH degree requirements to graduate. The MPH is not optional.

### MAXIMUM HOURS/TIME-FRAME ALLOWED

All students must complete degree requirements within 4.5 years of matriculation into the PA program. If it is determined at any time within a student's course of study that they will be unable to meet this expectation, the student will be withdrawn from the program and become ineligible for financial aid. Any leave of absence, program breaks, or deceleration will be counted towards the maximum time frame allowed for Program completion. Please refer to the [University Catalog](#) section titled "Financial Aid Satisfactory Academic Progress" for details regarding maximum hours/time-frame allowed and financial aid eligibility. Please check with the Registrar and/or the Financial Office with any questions.

### ADVANCE PLACEMENT

Advance placement cannot be granted in the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program.

### CREDIT BY EXAMINATION

There is no credit by examination for courses taken in other institutions. All students must take all courses in the program and complete the clinical year of rotations in their entirety.

### PART-TIME STATUS

The program does not allow a part-time option for incoming students.

### TRANSFER OF CREDIT & CREDIT FOR EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Transfer of credit is not allowed. No credit will be granted for work-related experiences.

### TRANSFER STUDENTS FROM OTHER PA PROGRAMS

The Program does not accept transfer students.

### ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

Students are obliged to adhere to the standards and expectations for academic integrity as delineated by the current [University Catalog](#) under "Appendix K: Touro University System Academic Integrity Policy" and "Student Code of Responsibilities and Rights." Additionally, those that seek to be certified Physician Assistants are required to follow the NCCPA code of conduct which also includes refraining

from distributing, sharing, or discussing test questions. Refer to the [NCCPA Code of Conduct](#) for additional details.

Any suspected plagiarism or cheating should be reported to the Program Director. Please note that artificial intelligence should not be utilized unless explicitly allowed for an assignment. The Program Director will report all violations to the Associate Dean of the College of Education and Health Sciences, who fulfills the role of Chief Academic Integrity Officer for the college.

## DISABILITY SERVICES

For information on the University's disability services and procedure for requesting accommodations, please see the [Touro website](#) and "Student Resources" and "Appendix D" in the [University Catalog](#).

## PARTICIPATION IN EXTRACURRICULAR HEALTH-RELATED ACTIVITIES

Community service is a mission-related activity of TUC and the Joint Program and is encouraged. However, Joint students who wish to participate in health-related extracurricular activities must be properly supervised. Moreover, students must comply with Touro policies regarding participation in official activities when they are scheduled on the Sabbath or on other Jewish holidays that are observed by Touro.

Therefore, this policy sets forth guidelines and an approval process for participation in any health-related extracurricular activity:

- Any student or student group that wishes to participate in an extracurricular health-related activity must contact the Program Director. No activity will be approved unless complete information is provided, addressing the following: nature and scope of the activity; sponsorship and/or faculty advisor; group to be served; place of the activity; clinical oversight, and the date on which the activity is scheduled to occur. Additional information may be requested by the Program.
- The request and information must be provided to the Program Director a minimum of two weeks in advance of the activity. The Program Director will review the request and determine whether the activity is appropriately supervised. No student may participate in a health-related activity without a Touro-credentialed and licensed healthcare provider present.
- All students interested in participating must be approved by the Program Director. Students must complete/meet the following requirements in order to be approved:
  - i. HIPAA and OSHA training;
  - ii. If the activity involves using needles (e.g., vaccine clinic), successful completion of PA Program injection training;
  - iii. Sign off by a PA Program faculty member;
  - iv. Approval may not be granted for students on academic probation - this will be decided on a case-by-case basis.
- Participation in activities that are responding to an acute emergency situation may be excluded from the prohibition regarding the Jewish Sabbath and Jewish holidays, but require approval. The Campus Rabbi should be consulted in a timely fashion.



- No person who is covered by the Touro malpractice policy may provide supervision for an extracurricular health-related function that is held on any such day of religious observance, unless it falls under an emergency situation as noted above.
- Documentation of TB clearance, pertussis vaccination and immunity to MMR, hepatitis B and varicella must be verified and approved by the Program.
- Submission of COVID vaccination must be uploaded to Castlebranch. Students who wish to obtain a COVID vaccination exemption, either religious or medical, should contact Dr. Fraylanie Aglipay, Associate Dean of Student Affairs at [faglipay@touro.edu](mailto:faglipay@touro.edu).
- Students must immediately report any blood/body fluid exposure(s) to their preceptor/faculty member, the Program Director, and Student Health. Students must adhere to the University's Exposure protocol for any blood/body fluid exposure including needlestick injury. The instructions and protocol are available on the Student Health website: <https://tu.edu/policies/exposure-policy--procedure/>.

## EMPLOYMENT

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program curriculum is rigorous and requires the presence of students at all classes and rotations. Many hours are committed to classroom work with additional hours dedicated to self-study. For this reason, the Program strongly discourages outside employment. If a student feels that it is necessary to work while in the Program, it is advisable that the student inform their faculty advisor of this. Program expectations, assignments, schedules, deadlines, and responsibilities will not be altered to adjust or accommodate working students. It is expected that employment will not interfere with a student's learning experience.

Students may work within the institution while participating in the Federal Work Study Program as long as such work will not interfere with their academic pursuits. Students interested in applying for a peer tutor position should refer to the *University Catalog* section titled "Peer Tutoring" for eligibility criteria. For Program approval, students interested in peer tutoring must be in good academic standing, maintain a 3.0 GPA, and receive an endorsement from PA Program leadership, which will be considered on an individual basis. Joint Program Students, however, may not be employed by or be required to perform clerical or administrative work for the Program. In addition, students may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practical experiences. Students with specific prior knowledge, experiences, and skills may assist faculty in didactic and laboratory sessions to share their knowledge and skills. However, students are not to be the primary instructor or instructor of record for any component of the curriculum.

## STUDENT SERVICE WORK

In order to avoid practices that might conflict with the professional and educational objectives of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program and to avoid practices in which students are substituted for regular staff, the following shall be in effect regarding service work:

1. Students may not be hired as employees for any private or public practice, clinic, or institution to perform medical services during any time they are part of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program under the sponsorship of that specific practice, clinic, or institution. An example of this would

be if a student was working at a clinic on the weekends and a student there during the week. If this were to occur, the student would not be placed at this site/institution for clinical rotations, which may negatively impact the student's rotation assignments and may delay graduation.

2. Students may not take the responsibility or place of qualified staff.
3. Students may not be given any payments, stipends or other remuneration for medical services performed as part of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program.
4. Students may volunteer for charitable, humanitarian, or community service organizations. Such volunteer work must not interfere with a student's academic responsibilities or be conducted at the same time of a scheduled classroom or clinical instruction unless prior Program approval has been granted. Students on academic probation are strongly discouraged from participating in activities that take time away from their studies.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES RELATED TO THE PA PROFESSION

Leadership development is an essential component of the educational process. This may require that students attend relevant off-campus activities during class/clinical rotation time. Off-campus activities must be in accordance with students' professional development. It is the responsibility of the student or approved student organization to coordinate the event and receive approval from the Program. Students requesting permission to attend an off-campus conference or program, such as CAPA, AAPA, PAEA, or APHA, must be in good academic standing and remain in good academic standing at the time of the conference. Refer to the 'Absences' section for Program protocol. Students may request to be excused up to one week to attend a professional activity, e.g., the AAPA Annual Conference; however, the duration of approved time is determined on an individual basis.

Students attending off-campus events are responsible for making up any missed classes/laboratories or other course assignments. Refer to the examination policy for information regarding missed examinations. Attendance at these events will be the fiduciary responsibility of the student.

### Participation in Clinical Activities

Students are not allowed to participate in clinical activities, including observations, as a representative of TUC, the MSPAS/MPH Program, or as a physician assistant student at a clinical site during enrollment unless the experience is authorized (e.g., the Touro Student Run Free Clinic) and/or arranged by the Program. Participation in unauthorized clinical experiences while enrolled is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal from the Program.

## TUC NAME TAGS

The Program fully supports any student who decides to use their chosen name for their TUC name tag instead of their legal name. Please note that rotation site paperwork typically requires the use of a student's legal name, including two forms of identification (ID) displaying that name. If a student's name tag does not match their driver's license or other state issued ID, they will be required to

provide a birth certificate, passport, or some other form of government-issued ID to meet this requirement.

## DRESS CODE

Consistent with the [University Catalog](#), students must maintain a neat and clean appearance befitting students attending a professional school. While workplace-appropriate, casual attire is acceptable during didactic training, professional attire may be required for certain situations. Scrubs, eye protection, and close-toed shoes are required in the anatomy lab. Students should practice good personal hygiene. Fragrances (perfume/cologne or aftershave) should not be worn. Nails should be short and clean. Clothing having caricatures, messages, symbols, etc., that can be construed, based on societal norms, to be vulgar, offensive, or contribute to creating a hostile learning environment is unacceptable attire. Such attire demonstrates inappropriate professional judgment that is subject to review and action by the Program.

## DRESS CODE FOR CLINICAL ACTIVITIES

On clinical rotations, students must maintain a professional appearance. Expectations include clean, pressed, and conservative attire and good personal hygiene, including short and clean nails. Appropriate clothing may include collared shirts, slacks or skirts with dress shirts, or dresses, as noted by the site. Closed-toed shoes are required. Specialty rotations or specific training sites may designate other prescribed clothing such as scrubs and/or tennis shoes. Any clothing, fragrances, or jewelry that may cause a concern with affiliated faculty, hospitals, or patients should be avoided. Students may be asked to change their appearance to conform to the dress code of rotation sites. Short, white coats with a TUC-issued name tag are required.

## MEDICAL RECORDS

Information provided by students at matriculation and periodically during their education at Touro University (i.e., immunization and/or blood test documentation, medical history and physical examination forms, and tuberculosis clearance and screening forms) is collected and retained by [CastleBranch.com](#) in addition to a secure environment by Student Health Services. Immunization and tuberculosis clearance records are also kept by the Program for submission to clinical training sites as requested. However, **all students should retain a copy of all documents for their records**, since these records may be required by a variety of institutions as the student progresses through their professional career. See [Appendix D](#) for instructions on how to create a CastleBranch account.

## STUDENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Students must fulfill the matriculation health requirements prior to beginning the program and must remain compliant with the continuing student health requirements for the duration of the program. These requirements, listed in [Appendix D](#), are to assure protection against certain communicable diseases. For safety purposes, students who are non-compliant with requirements may be asked to leave campus or clinical sites until requirements are met. Students who are non-compliant may be

delayed in completion of the Program or risk professionalism violations based on the Student Handbook for failure to adhere to TUC and Program policies.

## HEALTH REQUIREMENTS DOCUMENTATION

Immunization records, titers, and TB screening results will be made available, as required, to clinical preceptors and clinical rotation sites. Students whose immunizations and titers are not up to date will be removed from classes or from clinical rotation(s) until the deficiency is corrected. Some clinical training sites require students with positive latent TB test results to be treated. As a result, students who have not been treated may not be allowed to attend certain clinical rotations, which may result in a delay of completion of the Program.

### **Matriculation Health Requirements**

See [Appendix D](#) for a comprehensive list of health requirements for matriculation to the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program.

### **Continuing Student Health Requirements**

See [Appendix D](#) for a comprehensive list of continuing student health requirements.

In addition to what is noted on their annual physical exam form, students must report any change in their health to Student Health Services immediately. Failure to notify the University of any significant health changes that may affect patient care or the ability to meet [Program Technical Standards](#) may result in dismissal from the Program.

A reminder to all students: Principal PA Program faculty, the Medical Director, and/or the Program Director may not participate in the care of PA students except in emergency situations. This is an ARC-PA accreditation standard (A3.09).

## BACKGROUND CHECKS/TOXICOLOGY SCREENS

A background check and toxicology (including alcohol) screen will be completed on all students prior to placement on clinical rotations. The [University Catalog Appendix J](#) outlines the procedure for drug screen payment and notification.

Some sites require an additional background check and/or toxicology (including alcohol) screen immediately prior to the start of the rotation, therefore students may be required to complete multiple screens throughout enrollment. A student may be required to complete a toxicology screen if a faculty or staff member or preceptor observes signs of intoxication during academic or clinical activities. In accordance with [University Catalog](#), students may be responsible for payment for this drug screen testing and/or subsequent drug screen tests for other reasons, including, but not limited to student noncompliance and retesting as the result of positive results.

Should a student plead guilty to and/or be convicted of a felony as a student, or have a prior felony conviction, this may impact their ability to continue in the program or be placed at certain clinical sites. A misdemeanor or felony conviction may also impact the ability to obtain licensure or employment. Therefore, all students with convictions are encouraged to contact the medical board in the state they

anticipate working as a PA to determine if licensure will be possible. This includes records that have been expunged. As stated in CASPA, failure to disclose and provide accurate information about convictions prior to PA school may have serious consequences, including program dismissal. If a student is charged with a misdemeanor or felony while enrolled at TUC, they must contact the Program Director within 48 hours or as soon as feasible with details. Failure to disclose this information may result in placement on Professionalism Probation or program dismissal.

Please refer to the [University Catalog](#) sections titled “Background Check Disclosure” and “Drug Free Workplace” for additional details.

## HOLIDAYS

Touro University California is a Jewish-sponsored institution. TUC observes most federal and Judaic holidays. Judaic holidays vary yearly. Therefore, University closures, exam dates, and term breaks may vary for each calendar year. There are no official holidays during the clinical year and students on clinical rotations do not follow the TUC holiday calendar.

## SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Social media is a powerful and far-reaching means of communication that, as a physician assistant student at Touro University California, can have a significant impact on your professional reputation and status. Students are liable for anything they post to social media sites and the same laws, professional expectations, and guidelines must be maintained as if they were interacting in person. The following guidelines have been developed to outline appropriate standards of conduct for each student’s future and the reputation of the Program:

1. Take responsibility and use good judgment. Incomplete, inaccurate, threatening, harassing, punitive, or derogatory posts or use of profanity on postings is strictly prohibited. It is inappropriate to use social media sites as a venue for venting. *Example:* A student posts on Facebook about their frustration with a course instructor (or preceptor) after they are given feedback. The instructor is not identified by name, but is identified by title (my course instructor, or my preceptor), with negative or derogatory comments.
2. Think before posting as internet and email archives can permanently affect your reputation.
3. Social networking during class, program activities, and clinical hours is prohibited.
4. HIPAA laws apply to all social networking, so it is of the utmost priority to protect patient privacy by not sharing information or photographs. *Example of a privacy breach:* A student posts heartfelt concern on her Facebook page for a patient she is caring for. The patient is not identified by name, medical record number, or date of birth. However, the type of treatment, prognosis and the time of treatment are provided, and personal characteristics of the patient are described making the patient identifiable.
5. Protect your own privacy by using privacy settings to prevent outsiders from seeing your personal information, as you may be held liable for postings from other individuals as well.
6. If you state a connection to the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program or Touro University California, you must identify yourself, your role in the program, and use a disclaimer stating that your views are that of your own and do not reflect the views of the TUC Joint MSPAS/MPH Program.

7. All laws governing copyright and fair use of copyrighted material must be followed.
8. Consult your faculty advisor or the Program Director if you have any questions regarding the appropriateness of social networking use.

Failure to follow the above stated guidelines may be considered a breach of appropriate professional behavior and be subject to discipline, up to and including dismissal from the Program.

Students may not communicate with a member of the media or an outside source attempting to gather information regarding the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program or TUC through social networks. Refer all questions regarding program information, policies, and procedures to the Program Director. Questions regarding TUC should be referred to the Vice President of University Advancement at Touro University California, Andrea Garcia ([agarcia9@touro.edu](mailto:agarcia9@touro.edu)).

Please see the current [University Catalog](#) for additional information regarding Internet Services and User-Generated Content Policy, including Social Media.

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES AS A COMPANY AMBASSADOR

The Program does not encourage students to sign on as an ambassador for any for-profit company. If a student chooses to volunteer as an ambassador, they must not:

- Attach Touro University or the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program to their social media profile(s) or website(s);
- Attend in-person or virtual conferences, gatherings, or other events as a representative of Touro University;
- Market the product or send referral codes to classmates to their own benefit or the benefit of any third-party company.

In addition, students will not be allowed to miss class or other school responsibilities in order to attend an ambassador event or fulfill an ambassador obligation.

## CAMPUS SECURITY AND CRIME AWARENESS

**\*\*FOR EMERGENCIES CALL 911, OR 9-911 FROM CAMPUS PHONES \*\***

## EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT & CAMPUS EMERGENCY TELEPHONES

The university's [Annual Security Report](#) (ASR) lists policy and procedure information regarding the university's emergency management activities. For all non-urgent questions concerning safety and security issues, please contact the Facilities department administrator. Additional information is available on the Student Services webpage [Campus Safety and Security](#).

**For emergencies - call 911, or 9-911 from all campus landline phones.**

Ten [Blue Light Emergency Telephones](#) are located throughout campus. These special emergency telephones connect directly to campus security. To make a call, simply push the button, which will activate a flashing blue strobe light and connect you to a campus security officer.

## IMPORTANT PHONE NUMBERS

<b>Campus Security</b>	<b>(on duty 24 hrs/day)</b>	(707) 638-5804
<b>Campus Facilities</b>	<b>Business hours</b>	(707) 638-5800
	<b>After hours pager</b>	(707) 551-6034
<b>Vallejo Fire Department (non-emergency)</b>		(707) 552-3285
<b>Vallejo Police Dept. (non-emergency)</b>		(707) 552-3285
<b>Island Energy</b>		(707) 562-5000

Please see the [University Catalog](#) for additional information regarding:

- Crime Awareness & Campus Security Act (Clery Act Information)
- Emergency Alert System
- Fire Drills, Building Coordinators & Safety Week
- Emergency Management & Campus Emergency Telephones

## WHO TO CONTACT

The following is a guide for who to contact if you have questions. Additionally, please take some time to familiarize yourself with the services available to you through the TouroOne Student portal.

A course	Course Director for that course
The didactic phase of your education (classroom)	Director of Didactic Education
The clinical phase of your education	Director of Clinical Education
The Program, in general, or the PA profession	Your advisor, Program Director, or Associate Program Director
Personal questions/concerns	Options include your advisor, any of the faculty or staff, Student Health, a TUC counselor or learning specialist, TUC Equity Officer, Director of Student Success, Wellness Coordinator, and Associate Dean or Dean of Student Affairs
How to get a locker in Lander	See <a href="#">University Catalog</a> section titled “Lockers” for details
University Services: Office of Student Success Student Health & Counseling Financial Aid Registrar Security (24/7)	<a href="https://tu.edu/campus-life/academic-support/">https://tu.edu/campus-life/academic-support/</a> <a href="https://tu.edu/campus-life/health--wellness/">https://tu.edu/campus-life/health--wellness/</a> <a href="https://tu.edu/admissions--aid/financial-aid/">https://tu.edu/admissions--aid/financial-aid/</a> <a href="https://tu.edu/admissions--aid/registrar/">https://tu.edu/admissions--aid/registrar/</a> 707-638-5804

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

### MEDICAL EQUIPMENT

Starting in Semester I, students will need to have certain medical equipment for the program. The cost of the required medical equipment will range from about \$600 to \$1200, depending on the exact equipment models and/or styles chosen.

- Diagnostic Set – oto/ophthalmoscope (averages \$450 - \$600)
- Stethoscope (depending on type, ranges from \$40 - \$400)
- Blood Pressure Cuff (ranges from \$50 - \$160)
- Tuning fork C-128 (approx. \$10)
- Tuning fork C-512 (approx. \$10)
- Reflex Hammer (approx. \$10 - \$15)
- Pocket eye chart/ruler (approx. \$2)
- White student (short) lab coat
- Insufflator bulb (approx. \$3)

The program will recommend a reputable vendor during Semester I. You are not required to purchase from this vendor; however, we have found this company to be reliable and they have given our students very competitive prices and group discounts. In addition, buying from this vendor will ensure that you are purchasing the correct equipment. There have been students in the past that bought equipment prior to starting school and found that it was incorrect or inadequate, and it was too late to return or exchange it. Therefore, we strongly encourage you to wait to purchase your equipment. The cost of this equipment has been factored into the total cost of the program, and therefore is accounted for by Financial Aid.

### LAPTOP/TABLET REQUIREMENTS

Students are required to have a laptop computer and mobile device. By making these a program requirement, the cost is included in your financial aid.

Laptop computers provide students access to primary and supportive information to better prepare for and supplement the learning process. Canvas, an electronic learning tool, will be used as the central component of the “electronic classroom” employed throughout much of the curriculum. Assignments, course material, assessments, and other tools are available for each class through Canvas. Canvas is not resident on the laptop but is simply a web address to our servers at Touro. Because of this, students will be able to access materials from any location with web access. Additionally, the Program utilizes computer-based examinations and survey tools.

The lecture areas offer a wireless environment enabling accessibility to informational resources via the Internet and proprietary Touro sites such as the online Library and other University resources.



Any laptop computer made within the last 3 years with at least 8GB of memory and a webcam is acceptable and should work well. **However, please check that your laptop hardware and software meet each requirement:**

### **Software Requirements**

- Adobe Acrobat Reader (latest, free version)
- VLC Media Player (latest, free version)
- Up-to-date anti-virus software (free or paid)
- Up-to-date anti-spyware software (free or paid)
- Compression (ZIP) utility software (free or paid)
- Internet Browsers: Microsoft Edge, Firefox, Google Chrome, or Safari (for Mac users)
- Free Zoom for classrooms and remote support
- Access to Google Workplace via TUC issued e-mail

### **Hardware Requirements**

For all laptops:

- Operating Systems: Windows 10 or later or Mac OS 10.14 (Mojave) or later
- Memory: 8GB RAM or higher
- Storage: 60GB or higher
- Broadband/high-speed uninterrupted internet access; the minimum speed of 1.5 Mbps download, 750 Kbps upload
- Screen resolution: 1280x1024 or higher
- Webcam, microphone, and speakers (a wearable headphone/headset is recommended)
- Tablets, Chromebooks, and organizationally managed (Non-TUC) devices are not supported
- Administrator-level account permissions

***Tablets, Chromebooks and organizationally-managed (non-TUC) devices are not supported.***

A laptop with these specifications should cost between \$800 - \$1800 depending on memory and hard drive size. Students should also purchase an external hard drive to back up their data (highly recommended).

Our IT department provides campus resources that are not fully tested in an Android/iOS environment, including campus resources such as: student portals, printing software, testing software, etc. Though the new iPads/tablets may be powerful enough to run the software and/or resources, the IT resources provided are optimized for a Windows/MacOS environment. To add, Android and IOS support is very limited on our campus.

### **Warranties**

We **STRONGLY** recommend that students purchase extended warranties or service contracts should there be a hardware failure. Neither the Joint Program nor Touro University California IT offer support to help with hardware and software issues.

## BOOKS

Students can plan on spending approximately \$1,000 to \$3,000 on required textbooks. Course syllabi and the Program Book List also include recommended books which students are not required to purchase but may wish to have as important reference materials. In addition, Touro University library provides access to many online textbooks, some of which are required texts for courses. If a required text is available online, purchase of a hard copy text is optional. However, please note that online text versions may vary slightly in presentation. Students are expected to have purchased required texts that are not available online by the beginning of class for each term.

Students may purchase books through the [TUC online bookstore](#) or any other source, such as Amazon.com or publisher sites. When purchasing texts, please be sure to obtain the correct edition, which is listed next to the title of the book on the book list. Older edition texts are inadequate as they may provide old information. The ISBN number is provided on the list and is the unique identifier for a specific edition of a text.

## ACADEMIC CREDIT

The total credits for the Class of 2026 curriculum is 142.5 with the availability of 1.5 PA elective credit (PASC 705A, 705B, 705C Medical Spanish for Health Professionals). Additional electives are listed on our website when available. These electives are typically interprofessional opportunities. Students should only enroll in electives if they are in good academic standing. Enrollment is subject to Program Director approval.

## CLASS OF 2026 CURRICULUM

\*Dates Subject to Change; Contact/Credit Hours Subject to Adjustment

<b>Semester I (Fall)</b>		<b>July 31 - December 15, 2023 (20 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 601J	Clinical Microbiology & Antimicrobial Pharmacology	30	1.5
2	PASC 601K	Pre-Clinical Basic Sciences	45	3.0
3	PASC 700A	Topics in PA Practice I	60	3.0
4	PASC 701	Introduction to Clinical Anatomy	30	1.5
5	PASC 702	Introduction to Pediatrics	20	1.5
6	PASC 703A	Clinical Integration I	22.5	1.5
7	PBHC 604	<i>Health Policy and Management</i>	45	3.0
8	PBHC 607	<i>Biostatistics</i>	45	3.0
9	PBHC 608	<i>Behavioral and Social Aspects of Public Health</i>	45	3.0
10	PBHC 631	<i>Social Justice Lecture Series</i>	12	0.0
11	PBHC 648	<i>Environmental Health</i>	45	3.0
			PA Final Exams December 4-8, 2023	
			PA Re-take Exams December 11-15, 2023	
			Public Health Ends December 15, 2023	
<b>Total</b>			<b>399.5</b>	<b>24.0</b>

<b>Semester II (Spring)</b>		<b>January 2 - May 10, 2024 (19 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 703B	Clinical Integration II	15	0.5
2	PASC 704R	Renal System	37.5	2.0
3	PASC 704E	Endocrine System	45	2.5
4	PASC 704H	Hematology and Oncology System	30	2.0
5	PASC 704C	Cardiovascular System	90	5
6	PASC 704T	EENT System	45	2.5
7	PASC 705A	<i>Medical Spanish for Health Professionals I (Elective)</i>	8	0.5
8	PBHC 619	<i>Research Methods</i>	30	2.0
9	PBHC 618	<i>Epidemiology</i>	45	3.0
10	PBHC 620/633/614	<i>Public Health Track Course (Social Inequities &amp; Health, Criminal Justice &amp; PH, or Essentials of Global Health)</i>	45	3.0
			PA Final Exams April 29-May 3, 2024	
			PA Re-take Exams May 6-10, 2024	
			Public Health Ends May 3, 2024	
<b>Total</b>			<b>382.5</b>	<b>22.5</b>

<b>Semester III (Summer)</b>		<b>May 20 - July 26, 2024 (10 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 703C	Clinical Integration III	15	0.5
2	PASC 704B	Psychiatry and Behavioral Health System	62	4
3	PASC 704P	Pulmonary System	55	3.5
4	PASC 705B	<i>Medical Spanish for Health Professionals II (Elective)</i>	8	0.5
5	PBHC 606/634/602	<i>Public Health Track Course (Health Promotion, Criminal Justice Law or Emerging Health Threats)</i>	45	3.0
			PA Final Exams July 8-12, 2024	
			PA Re-take Exams July 15-19, 2024	
			Public Health Ends July 26, 2024	
<b>Total</b>			<b>177</b>	<b>11.0</b>

<b>Semester IV (Fall)</b>		<b>July 29 – December 13, 2024 (20 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 703D	Clinical Integration IV	15	0.5
2	PASC 704G	Gastrointestinal System	70.5	4.5
3	PASC 704S	Sexual Health and Reproductive System	75	4.5
4	PASC 704U	Genitourinary System	26	1.5
5	PASC 704M	Musculoskeletal System	67.5	4
6	PASC 704N	Neurologic System	63	4
7	PASC 704D	Dermatologic System	41	2.5
8	PASC 705C	<i>Medical Spanish for Health Professionals III (Elective)</i>	8	0.5
9	PBHC 647	<i>Program Evaluation and Needs Assessment</i>	45	3.0
			<i>PA Final Exams December 2-6, 2024</i>	
			<i>PA Re-take Exams December 9-13, 2024</i>	
			<i>Public Health Ends December 13, 2024</i>	
<b>Total</b>			<b>403</b>	<b>24.5</b>

<b>Semester V (Spring)</b>		<b>December 30, 2024 – May 9, 2025 (19 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
<b>Didactic Classes: December 30, 2024 - February 7, 2025 (6 wks)</b>				
1	PASC 703E	Clinical Integration V	30	1.5
2	PASC 706	Emergency and Surgical Principles	75	3.0
3	PASC 700B	Topics in PA Practice II	15	1.0
4	PBHC 646	<i>*CPH Exam Preparation</i>	*15	*0.0
			<i>PA Final/Re-take Exams February 3-7, 2025</i>	
<b>Clinical Year Rotations Begin: February 10, 2025</b>				
5	PASC 606	Primary Care 1 (February 10 – March 21, 2025)	240	6.0
6	PASC 607	Primary Care 2 (March 24 – May 2, 2025)	240	6.0
			<i>Callback Week May 5-9, 2025</i>	
<b>Total</b>			<b>*615</b>	<b>*17.5</b>

<b>Semester VI (Summer)</b>		<b>May 12 – August 8, 2025 (13 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 608	Primary Care 3 (May 12 – June 20, 2025)	240	6.0
2	PASC 609	Primary Care 4 (June 23 – August 1, 2025)	240	6.0
			<i>Callback Week August 4-8, 2025</i>	
<b>Total</b>			<b>480</b>	<b>12.0</b>

<b>Semester VII (Fall)</b>		<b>August 11 – December 19, 2025 (19 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 610	Surgery (August 11 – September 19, 2025)	240	6.0
2	PASC 611	Emergency Medicine (September 22 – October 31, 2025)	240	6.0
			<i>Callback Week November 3-7, 2025</i>	
3	PASC 612	Elective 1 (November 10 – December 19, 2025)	240	6.0
<b>Total</b>			<b>720</b>	<b>18.0</b>

<b>Semester VIII (Spring)</b>		<b>December 22, 2025 – May 1, 2026 (19 wks)</b>	<b>Contact Hrs</b>	<b>Credit Hrs</b>
1	PASC 613	Elective 2 (December 22, 2025 – January 30, 2026)	240	6.0
			<i>Callback Week February 2-6, 2026/</i>	
2	PBHC 600-4	<i>Public Health Field Study (February 9 - March 20, 2026)</i>	200	4.0
			<i>Spring Break (see separate Capstone dates) (March 23 – April 3, 2026)</i>	
3	PASC 614	MSPAS Summative Course (April 6 - May 1, 2026)	45	3.0
4	PBHC 645	<i>*MPH Capstone Project (March 23 – May 1, 2026)</i>	*15	*0.0
<b>Total</b>			<b>*500</b>	<b>*13.0</b>

\*Students will take either PBHC 646 in Semester V or PBHC 645 in Semester VIII.  
Totals do not include Medical Spanish Elective.

**Program Total      3555      142.5**

## JOINT MSPAS/MPH PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

College of Education and Health Sciences (CEHS)		
Lisa Norton, Ed.D	Dean	(707) 638-5973 <a href="mailto:lnorton2@touro.edu">lnorton2@touro.edu</a>
Farid G. Khalafalla, PhD	Associate Dean	(707) 638-5515 <a href="mailto:fkhalafa@touro.edu">fkhalafa@touro.edu</a>
Erendira Romero	Executive Assistant to the Dean	(707) 638-5429 <a href="mailto:eromero@touro.edu">eromero@touro.edu</a>

### PA Faculty and Staff

PA Faculty (Wilderman Hall 300 wing)		
Joy Moverley, MSPAS, MPH, DHSc, PA-C	Program Director, Professor, Assistant Dean of CEHS	(707) 638-5874 Cell (805)903-3377 (due to FERPA laws, no texting of personal information as this is a personal cell) <a href="mailto:jmoverle@touro.edu">jmoverle@touro.edu</a>
Josie Hunt, MSPAS, MPH, PA-C	Associate Program Director Assistant Professor	(707) 638-5881 <a href="mailto:jhunt@touro.edu">jhunt@touro.edu</a>
Kim Bayliss, MBA, PA-C, RN	Principal Faculty Assistant Professor	(707) 638-5844 <a href="mailto:kbayliss@touro.edu">kbayliss@touro.edu</a>
Kathy Clift, MPAS, PA-C	Principal Faculty Associate Professor	(707) 638-5876 <a href="mailto:kclift@touro.edu">kclift@touro.edu</a>
Kasaundra Heiberger, MSPAS, MPH, PA-C	Director of Didactic Education Assistant Professor	(707) 638-5856 <a href="mailto:kheiberg@touro.edu">kheiberg@touro.edu</a>
Grace Landel, MEd, PA-C	Principal Faculty Professor Emeritus	(707) 638-5877 <a href="mailto:glandel@touro.edu">glandel@touro.edu</a>
Darcie Larimore-Arenas, MSPAS, MPH, PA-C	Principal Faculty Associate Professor	(707) 638-5383 <a href="mailto:dlarimor@touro.edu">dlarimor@touro.edu</a>
Anu Mathur, MS, PA-C	Director of Curriculum Redesign, Assessment and Remediation	<a href="mailto:amathur2@touro.edu">amathur2@touro.edu</a>
Stefan Meers Estrada, MPAS, PA-C	Principal Faculty Assistant Professor	(707) 638-5809 <a href="mailto:smeers_e@touro.edu">smeers_e@touro.edu</a>
Jennifer Pimentel, MAEd	Director of Clinical Education Assistant Professor	(707) 638-5854 <a href="mailto:jpimente@touro.edu">jpimente@touro.edu</a>
Le'Anna St. John Paul, MPAS, PA-C	Principal Faculty Associate Professor	(707) 638-5809 <a href="mailto:lstjohn@touro.edu">lstjohn@touro.edu</a>
Michelle Wolfe, MD	Medical Director Assistant Professor	(707) 638-5877 <a href="mailto:mwolfe@touro.edu">mwolfe@touro.edu</a>

<b>PA Staff (Wilderman Hall 300 wing)</b>		
Regina Branch	Clinical Administrative Coordinator	(707) 638-5854 <a href="mailto:rbranch@touro.edu">rbranch@touro.edu</a>
Tammera Johnson	Didactic Administrative Coordinator	(707) 638-5809 <a href="mailto:tjohnson34@touro.edu">tjohnson34@touro.edu</a>
Jennifer Ramsey, MA	Program Analyst and Recruitment Coordinator	(707) 638-5875 <a href="mailto:jramsey4@touro.edu">jramsey4@touro.edu</a>
<b>PA Adjunct/Instructional Faculty (Wilderman Hall 300 wing)</b>		
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## PH Faculty and Staff

<b>PH Faculty</b>		
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## END OF SECTION I

## SECTION II: SPECIFIC JOINT MSPAS/MPH ACADEMIC PROGRAM POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### INTRODUCTION

This section contains policies and requirements that govern academic performance and professional conduct for all Joint Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies/Master of Public Health Program students who are enrolled in any phase of the 33-month program. These policies are unique to the Program and are designed to promote standards for academic competency, professional behavior and integrity, conduct and personal responsibility necessary for practice as a physician assistant. It represents the parameters of achievement and behavior the Program faculty expects of its students as future health practitioners who will be serving the public and consumer. It is the responsibility of all students to be knowledgeable about Program policies. The policies will be applied to all aspects of the student's academic progress and conduct for as long as the student is enrolled in the Program.

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program has a responsibility to safeguard the patient and public by educating competent physician assistant graduates. As such, the Program maintains the right to refuse to matriculate or graduate a student, as well as the right to remove a student from a clinical experience or rotation who is deemed by the faculty to be academically, clinically, or professionally incompetent or otherwise unfit or unsuited for continued enrollment in the Program. Additionally, students are required to undergo criminal background and toxicology screening during enrollment.

The Program reserves the right to make changes at any time to the handbook or to the requirements for admission, graduation, tuition, fees, and any other rules or regulations.

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program specific policies are in addition to and may be more stringent than the Touro University California policies. Please read this section carefully and thoroughly. Students are expected to refer to these policies as needed. In addition, students must adhere to policies outlined in the [MPH Student Handbook](#).

## ACADEMIC ADVISING AND SUPPORT

### ACADEMIC SUPPORT

Touro University California offers peer tutoring services without charge through the Office of Student Success. Tutoring is available during all academic years and is designed to help students modify their study habits, focus on critical material and content, and to enhance their test taking skills. Please see the section titled "Peer Tutoring" in the [University Catalog](#) for additional details.



## MSPAS ADVISING

With a challenging program such as ours, it is important that students have a faculty member they can meet with regularly to receive mentorship and seek advice. For this reason, each student will be assigned a faculty advisor who they will meet with at least once in semesters I, II and IV to review academic progress, professionalism and any issues that may have come up during the term. Time for these meetings will be blocked out on the academic calendar to aid with availability. The encounter is documented and placed in the student's file.

Aiding in and monitoring the development of professionalism is an important component of PA education. Student professionalism is evaluated and monitored by both faculty and the student through utilization of a professionalism questionnaire. These questionnaires are reviewed and discussed during advisor/advisee meetings. Students must bring a completed *Preclinical Student Professionalism: Self Evaluation Form* (available on Canvas) to their Advisor/Advisee meeting for comparison with the *Faculty Evaluation: Preclinical Student Professionalism Form*. It is expected that students will be able to appropriately assess their abilities and that the form will have been completed in a thoughtful manner. Students who arrive at the meeting unprepared will be asked to reschedule and it will be noted in their academic file.

Students are encouraged to meet with their advisor more frequently if they feel they are having problems academically or personally. It is desirable to identify problems at an early stage and bring these to the attention of the faculty advisor so that remedies can be developed and implemented. Students experiencing academic and/or other difficulties have access to Student Services, which includes tutoring and counseling. Students who are having personal and/or academic difficulties will be referred to Student Services by their advisor and/or course directors.

## MPH ADVISING

In addition to a PA faculty advisor, students will be assigned to an advisor in the MPH Program. Please see the [MPH Student Handbook](#).

## COMMUNICATION POLICIES

### COMMUNICATION WITH THE PROGRAM AND THE UNIVERSITY

You have been assigned a University (@student.touro.edu) email address. **This is the only email address that will be answered by TUC personnel.** Forwarding your TUC email to another email account is discouraged. These accounts can lack the security, capability and sometimes, sufficient space necessary for downloading important attachments.

The following is additional information for email communication:

- Students are expected to check their Touro email accounts at least once daily Monday through Friday.
- Students are expected to respond to program emails within **48 hours or the first business day following a holiday.**

- Email responses and forwarded emails should include the original message when appropriate.
- When checking email, it is expected that students will read the whole message (e.g., on a device with a small screen, scroll down to view messages in their entirety).
- Students must download email attachments rather than viewing them in 'preview' mode in order to assure receipt and visualization of the entire document.
- Email messages and responses should be saved to a file (if necessary) for reference.
- It is helpful to use a signature line in your emails, including your full name, pronouns, class, and phone number.  
 Sam Smith, PA-S  
 Pronouns: She/Her/Hers  
 Joint MSPAS/MPH Class of 2026  
 707-123-4567
- You are responsible for maintaining access to your Touro email account as you move during your education.

## PROFESSIONALISM IN COMMUNICATION

All correspondence between students, staff, and faculty, whether it be written or verbal, must follow the professionalism standards of the Program. Please refer to the following sections of this handbook for additional information: Grievance Policy, Professional Progress, Professional Code of Conduct, Consequences for Non-adherence for professionalism requirements, Appendix G: Giving feedback to your professors, and Appendix H: TUC PA/MPH "Netiquette".

Additionally, emails received by faculty or staff that do not meet the professionalism standards of the Program will be sent back to the student with the following message and an opportunity to revise the email.

*Thank you for your email. I'm happy to address these issues with you. However, before doing so, I would like to discuss the tone of your email, as it contains portions that do not meet the professionalism standards of our program. I am hopeful that this was not your intention, and I recognize that my perception of your communication may be inaccurate as written communication is prone to misinterpretation. However, in order for us to have a productive and effective conversation to adequately address your concerns, I ask that you revise your email. Please consider the following as you do so.*

*Common pitfalls we see from students with email communication include, but are not limited to: using all capital letters, exclamation points, underlined or bolded text, casual conversation as you might have with a friend rather than a professor or other person in a graduate program, and/or insulting or demanding language. If your email doesn't include any of these pitfalls and you are unclear what I am referring to, please feel free to reach out. I also recommend that you refer to the attached "Netiquette" document as well as our Program professionalism policy.*

*As a program, we understand the challenges of virtual communication and want to assist our students in learning this communication skill, as it will be required as a physician assistant. I*

*look forward to discussing your concerns once I have received your revised email. Please let me know if you have questions.*

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS, E-MAIL ADDRESS OR PHONE NUMBER

Students are required to keep the Program and the Office of the Registrar informed of any changes to mailing address, email address and/or phone numbers within one business day of the change. Please visit the Registrar's website to download Personal Information Forms such as Emergency Contact Information, Contact Information Update and Name Change Request Forms at: <https://lum-prod.ec.touro.edu/web/student-tuc-community/registrars-office>.

## ATTENDANCE POLICIES

### ATTENDANCE & PUNCTUALITY

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program curriculum is designed to provide the medical and professionalism education required to be a competent physician assistant (PA). Because attendance and punctuality are expectations of professionals in the workplace, and markers of professional behaviors and attitudes, they are also a requirement of this program. Attending class and arriving on time demonstrates respect for instructors and peers. Tardiness in the didactic phase of training has been linked to tardiness and other unprofessional behaviors in the clinical phase of training and as a licensed clinician. Additionally, tardiness, early departures and absence from classes are not conducive to optimal learning for any student in the program. Therefore, tardiness is considered a professionalism [infraction](#). As such, it is your responsibility - and an expectation of professional behavior – that you be sitting in your seat and ready to learn when class is scheduled to begin (whether that be in person or virtually). This requires you to complete the following activities prior to the start of class - arrival to the classroom (or connecting virtually to the correct classroom link), stowing of your gear, and completion of any other activities (restroom, coffee, etc.). In addition to being seated and ready to learn when class is scheduled to begin, the Program also expects that you will remain for the entire class period.

Additionally, the Joint Program is fast-paced and builds upon previous instruction. Because important information is presented only once and class discussions and other interactions aid in the development of the PA role, the Program requires students to attend all lectures, laboratory activities, clinics, and other scheduled functions. This includes arriving on time and remaining until the class, clinic, or other function has ended. Since attendance is required of all students, formal attendance will be taken. The Program requires all students to be available for class and instructional activities from 8 AM – 9 PM Monday through Thursday and 8 AM – 3 PM on Friday **regardless if classes are scheduled**. On rare occasions, a class may be held on a Sunday. Due to the nature of the Program, courses, lectures, and exams may need to be moved on short notice.

### ABSENCES

While it is the Program policy that students attend all classes, labs, and other Program related functions, the Program understands a student may have an exceptional event that prevents attendance in classes or Program activities. Students are not permitted to take more than the allotted

number of absences during the length of the program. Students are responsible for all material and examinations missed during their time away. Assignments that are due during an approved absence must be submitted before departure unless other arrangements have been agreed upon with the course director. Refer to 'Examination Protocol' section for information regarding missed examinations.

Students in the clinical year must attend all rotations and adhere to the rotation's schedule. Absences during the clinical year are addressed separately in the *Clinical Year Handbook*.

### Excused Absences

Students are permitted two (2) excused (planned and/or unplanned) days per term.

#### Planned Absence/Time Away Requests

Any student requesting time away for an exceptional event must complete and submit a Time Off Request form (available on Canvas and [Appendix C](#)) a minimum of **one month** in advance. Students are required to obtain signatures on this form from the course directors of every class they will miss. Time Off Request forms are to be submitted to the designated Program personnel (Director of Didactic Education). The approval of each request is made on an individual basis and there is no guarantee the approval will be granted. Requests must be submitted for all weekdays, even if no class is scheduled, as course schedules may change. For weekdays with no class scheduled, signatures of course directors are not required.

Time away from class for professional conferences must be approved in advance through the same mechanism (see section on 'Student Activities Related to the PA Profession'). Approved absences for the CAPA and AAPA professional conferences are not included as part of the two excused absences per term.

#### Unplanned Absence

Illness and family emergencies (*i.e.*, **not** routine activities that can be rescheduled to accommodate a PA student's education and career) are generally the only acceptable reasons for an unplanned absence. The Program offers up to five days for bereavement leave.

Students are required to notify the course director(s) and the Program Administrative Coordinator of any unplanned absence via email if the absence is anticipated 24 hours in advance. If 24 hours advance notice is not feasible (e.g., the student got sick during the night), notification by phone and email as soon as possible is acceptable. **Sending messages through classmates is not an acceptable form of notification.** For the course director to determine if the absence is excused, the reason for the absence must be included in the notification. Failure to properly notify the course director may result in an unexcused absence.

### Unexcused Absences

If an absence is not approved by the course director, it will be considered unexcused. Even if you anticipate that the absence will be deemed unexcused, you must notify the Program as soon as possible.

## ATTENDANCE/ PUNCTUALITY POLICY INFRACTIONS

Tardiness, early departures, unexcused absences, and/or improper notification regarding absences will result in intervention by the faculty and may have consequences for a student's continuation in the Program. Each of these is counted separately (e.g., a student with one tardy and one improper notification will receive a verbal warning for each infraction) and will be tracked cumulatively across courses and across terms. Late students are fully responsible for the material covered during the time period missed.

A pattern of unexcused absences and/or tardiness may indicate unsatisfactory professionalism progress and will be addressed by the Program. Please reference the section, 'Consequences for Non-Adherence to Professionalism Requirements.' Failure to achieve satisfactory progress in professional development, behaviors and attitudes may result in Professionalism Probation.

**Note:** Most state licensure boards request information on disciplinary issues on the official program completion verification paperwork. The Program must document when a student has been on Professionalism Probation, and in most cases, the reasons for probation. Additionally, this information is often requested by credentialing agencies, and therefore, it may impact your ability to obtain employment clearance.

## UNIVERSAL CLASSROOM POLICIES

### STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

In addition to timely attendance, students are expected to report to all classes and critical thinking sessions appropriately prepared to participate actively and respectfully in the scheduled activity. This includes completion of reading and other pre-class assignments prior to class as a means to facilitate comprehension of the material presented during lecture. Students are expected to contribute in a non-judgmental manner, and in a "give and take" dialogue about sensitive subjects. The student will demonstrate this skill by active discussion, contribution, appreciation for and an understanding of the subject.

Throughout each semester/term, students may be assigned individual work or group work. Individual assignments are to be completed independently by each student, with or without the use of text resources as directed by course directors. Group work may be assigned to small groups of students. While each group will be responsible for turning in one assignment, it is expected that each student will contribute equally to the preparation, development, overall process, and final product of the assignment. Working separately on individual pieces will not be accepted. Peer evaluations and feedback may be utilized as a means of assessing student participation and teamwork within a group.

Students are expected to complete all assignments on time and in a thorough manner. Likewise, students are expected to review performance on written assignments to identify areas of weakness and accept personal feedback in a constructive fashion. Additionally, constructive course feedback and evaluation is an integral part of the ongoing success of the Program. It is appreciated and expected that all students will constructively complete online course evaluations as directed. Student feedback and communication with course directors is always welcome.

As the Canvas platform is an integral part of curriculum delivery and will be used to convey messages, to post course materials, and to post exam grades, your email address within Canvas must be kept up to date.

## USE OF WIRELESS DEVICES IN THE CLASSROOM AND CLINIC

Laptops, tablets, and smartphones/cell phones may be used in the classroom and during virtual classes at the discretion of the course director. However, use of these and other electronic equipment in a manner not consistent with classroom activities can create unacceptable disruptions when used during class. Instructors will notify students if electronic equipment will be required for an in-class activity. Otherwise, cell phones and pagers must be turned off or on silent mode and put away during class.

## CLASSROOM AND CLINIC DISTRACTIONS

Please be considerate of others in the classroom and clinic and avoid these distractions:

- Texting/Messaging
- Cell phone ringing
- Surfing the web
- Checking or writing emails
- Playing games
- Checking or posting to social media sites
- Talking to others during lectures
- Noisy foods (e.g., crunchy vegetables/fruits, snack chips, or those with noisy wrappers)

Distractions in class or clinic are considered a professionalism issue and will be addressed individually. Please reference the section, 'Consequences for Non-Adherence to Professionalism Requirements.' Failure to achieve satisfactory progress in professional development, behaviors and attitudes may result in Professionalism Probation.

Students may use electronic devices during class breaks, between classes and/or during any other non-instructional time.

Note: Please see the section on [Academic Professionalism](#) for additional information.

## RECORDING OF LECTURES

Some lectures are recorded by the Program and may be made available to students at the Course Director's discretion. If a lecture is not scheduled to be recorded, permission to record lectures is solely at the discretion of the course director and lecturer unless recording is a University-approved accommodation. Otherwise, prior approval must be obtained. The course director's approval is on a voluntary basis and, as such, a privilege, which may be withdrawn at any time. Recording of group discussions and exam reviews is not permitted. Please see the section titled "Recording of Lectures" in the [University Catalog](#) for additional details.

## COMMUNICATION REGARDING COURSE MATERIAL

If information presented in class or other required resource conflicts with information provided by a different yet reputable medical source, the student may choose to post their question on the Course Question Discussion Board. Discussion boards will provide the option for students to post anonymously or with their name and photo. On this post, the student should provide the following information which will assist the course director in providing a timely response:

- General question stated briefly
- Information from class, including source
- Information from outside of class, including source
- Specific details outlining the conflict
- 

Additionally, students should review the discussion board thoroughly before posting to ensure their question hasn't already been answered.

## ACADEMIC HUMILITY

Academic humility is an important trait for both healthcare professionals and students. Academic humility requires students to possess self-awareness, an understanding of their limits, and a willingness to say "I don't know" when appropriate. It also requires an understanding that each of us is continuously learning and must do so to become excellent practitioners, that a positive and supportive learning environment is key to success, and that education is a team effort made up of students and teachers alike.

## CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS

### EVALUATION OF STUDENT PERFORMANCE

Modalities of evaluation of student performance will be outlined in each course/rotation syllabus. Other modalities may be included as deemed appropriate by the course director(s). There are additional graduation requirements for the PH Program. Please see the [MPH Student Handbook](#) for details.

## EXAMINATION PROTOCOL

The following are the procedures regarding the administration of an examination. These are based on the PANCE protocols, so that you become accustomed to the PANCE format during PA school. Both the student and proctor are responsible for adhering to the examination protocol. Exams may be given outside of the regularly scheduled class time. Check the official schedule for date and times.

Although paper exams and scantrons may be used on occasion, the majority of exams will be given using a computer-based program. Students will use their own laptop computers to download and take exams.

**Students are responsible for the course instructional objectives whether or not they are covered in lectures. Exam questions may be from the text, lectures, assigned modules and/or handouts. All questions will be based on both the general course learning outcomes and specific instructional objectives.**

Your professional conduct during exams affects future policies. We expect that you will hold yourself and your colleagues to the highest standards.

### On Campus Exams

1. Students are required to be present for all scheduled examinations, must arrive on time for the examination, and must bring a working and fully charged laptop computer and power cord.
2. Exam Download
  - a. Students will be notified when the exam is available for download.
  - b. Each student must download the exam **before** arriving to take the exam. If a student has not downloaded the exam prior to arrival:
    - i. The first time, the student will be reminded to download the exam ahead of time and will take the exam on paper
    - ii. The second time, the student will take the exam on paper and meet with the course director and/or their faculty advisor to discuss the reason the student has not been compliant
    - iii. The third time, the student will not be able to take the exam and will receive a zero (0)
  - c. For technical difficulties, call 1-866-429-8889 or email [support@examsoft.com](mailto:support@examsoft.com).
3. If there is a computer problem prior to the start of the exam, it is the student's responsibility to address that issue before coming to the exam, including getting a loaner/replacement computer.
4. Upon entry into the examination site, the student must place all belongings (e.g., books, notes, study aids, smart watches, electronic devices other than a laptop and mouse used for the exam, coats, and personal possessions) at a site away from the seats.

Cellular phones are not allowed at a student's seat and must be turned off before being stowed. If a student is found to have an electronic device other than a laptop (e.g., cell phone



or smart watch) on them during an exam, the student may be referred to the Student Promotion Committee or Student Services for disciplinary action.

5. Students must sit several seats apart within a row and have at least one empty row between rows of seated students. The Program reserves the right to assign seating.
6. If you plan to use earplugs, you must use the squishy, foam-like, compressible type.
7. No talking is allowed once an examination starts.
8. In the rare event of a malfunction on an exam-taker's computer that cannot be resolved quickly, a paper copy of the exam will be made available to the student.
9. Hats/caps may not be worn during any examination except for the wearing of a headpiece for religious reasons. Any student wearing a hat will be asked to remove it. Failure to comply with this or any other reasonable request of a proctor will result in the immediate dismissal of the student from the examination and may result in a zero (0) for the exam.
10. Food and drinks, including water, are not allowed during exams and must be stowed with other belongings. An exception may be made at the discretion of the course director in extreme circumstances. This request must be made before the exam day.
11. Late Arrival: A student who arrives late to an examination will not be given additional time to complete the exam. Any student arriving late will have their exam time monitored separately by the Program proctor (and will equal the total exam time minus the number of minutes late). This new amount of time will supersede the original time within Examplify. If a student arrives  $\geq 15$  minutes late from the exam start time, it will be at the discretion of the course director or designated proctor to determine if the student will be permitted to take the exam at that time or whether the exam will be rescheduled for that student. If the exam is rescheduled, the exam will cover the same subject material covered by the original examination; however, the exam may be in a different format than the original examination. Furthermore, any student arriving after other students have completed the exam and left the testing area will not be allowed to start the examination.
12. Before a student can leave the testing area, the proctor will verify that the student's answer file has been uploaded.
13. Previously approved Time Off requests: If a student has been previously approved to miss class and an examination is subsequently scheduled, it is the student's responsibility to contact the course director within 36 hours to arrange to take the exam. The missed exam will be administered as soon as possible, so students should be prepared to take the exam with short notice. The date and time of the rescheduled exam will be determined by the course director and may include evening hours and/or Sunday. Although the make-up exam will cover the same subject material covered by the original examination, at the course director's discretion, it may be given in a different format than the original exam. Failure to make up the examination

within the specified time period will result in a grade of zero (0) for that examination. See Examination Integrity section below.

14. Absence: A student unable to attend a scheduled examination for any reason must immediately notify the course director and program administrative assistant (in person or by phone in addition to email) as soon as possible **prior** to the start of the exam. Failure to appear for an examination and/or failure to communicate with the course director prior to the exam start time is considered unprofessional behavior and may result in an unexcused absence and/or disciplinary action. The course director will determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.
  - a. Excused absences: If an absence is deemed excused, a make-up exam will be scheduled for the student at a date and time determined by the course director, which may include evening hours and/or Sunday. Although the make-up exam will cover the same subject material covered by the original examination, at the course director's discretion, it may be in a different format than the original exam. Failure to make up the examination within the specified time period will result in a grade of zero (0) for that examination.
  - b. Unexcused absences: If an absence is deemed unexcused, a grade of zero (0) will be given for the test. No make-up exam will be offered. Formal documentation will be placed in the student's file.

### Virtual Exams

1. Students are required to be present for all scheduled examinations, must log in and begin the examination at the scheduled time, and must have a working laptop computer and power cord.
2. Exam Download
  - a. Students will be notified when the exam is available for download.
  - b. Each student must download the exam **before** the test is scheduled to begin. If a student has not downloaded the exam prior to start time:
    - i. The first time, the student will be reminded to download the exam ahead of time
    - ii. The second time, the student will meet with the course director and/or their faculty advisor to discuss the reason the student has not been compliant
    - iii. The third time, the student will not be allowed to take the exam and will receive a zero (0)
  - c. For technical difficulties, call 1-866-429-8889 or email [support@examsoft.com](mailto:support@examsoft.com).
3. If there is a computer problem prior to the start of the exam, it is the student's responsibility to address that issue before the day of the exam, including getting a loaner/replacement computer if needed.
4. The student should set up in a location to take the exam that is free from books, notes, papers, electronics, or other objects (i.e., a clear table or desk with no items nearby). Cellular phones are not allowed at a student's seat and must be turned off before being stowed.
5. Virtual exams are proctored with Exam Monitor. Exam Monitor tracks student keystrokes, sounds in the room, and video (including eye gaze and movement). The same rules regarding exam integrity for on campus exams apply to virtual exam reviews. Students are not permitted to

have any writing or recording devices, paper, books, cell phones etc. during the exam review. In addition, students should avoid stepping away from their computers for any length of time during exams and should avoid turning their attention towards anything other than the exam until it is over. Students who step away from their computer or turn their attention towards anything other than the exam will be flagged for concerning behavior. If a student is flagged by Exam Monitor to have concerning behavior during the exam, the video will be reviewed by faculty and, if deemed appropriate, the student may be referred to the Student Promotion Committee.

6. If you plan to use earplugs, you must use the squishy, foam-like, compressible type and follow this procedure:
  - a. At the start of the exam, while being recorded, hold up the earplugs so that they are visible.
  - b. While holding them up, squish the earplugs so that it is obvious that they are the correct kind.
  - c. Insert them into your ears.
7. Talking to others is not allowed once an examination starts.
8. In the rare event of a malfunction on an exam-taker's computer that cannot be resolved quickly, the student should contact the course director immediately.
9. Hats/caps may not be worn during any examination except for the wearing of a headpiece for religious reasons. During virtual exams, students are expected to comply with this requirement. Failure to comply with this or any other reasonable request may result in the immediate dismissal of the student from the examination and may result in a zero (0) for the exam.
10. Food and drinks, including water, are not allowed during exams and must be stowed with other belongings. An exception may be made at the discretion of the course director in extreme circumstances. This request must be made before the exam day.
11. Late Starts: A student who starts the exam  $\geq$  15 minutes after exam start time will not be permitted to take the exam and will receive a zero on the exam.
12. Previously approved Time Off requests: If a student has been previously approved to miss class and an examination is subsequently scheduled, it is the student's responsibility to contact the course director within 36 hours to arrange to take the exam. The missed exam will be administered as soon as possible, so students should be prepared to take the exam with short notice. The date and time of the rescheduled exam will be determined by the course director and may include evening hours and/or Sunday. Although the make-up exam will cover the same subject material covered by the original examination, at the course director's discretion, it may be given in a different format than the original exam. Failure to make up the examination within the specified time period will result in a grade of zero (0) for that examination. See Examination Integrity section below.
13. Absence: A student unable to attend a scheduled examination for any reason must immediately notify the course director and program administrative assistant (in person or by phone in addition

to email) as soon as possible **prior** to the start of the exam. Failure to log in for an examination and/or failure to communicate with the course director prior to the exam start time is considered unprofessional behavior and may result in an unexcused absence and/or disciplinary action. The course director will determine whether the absence is excused or unexcused.

- a. Excused absences: If an absence is deemed excused, a make-up exam will be scheduled for the student at a date and time determined by the course director. Although the make-up exam will cover the same subject material covered by the original examination, at the course director's discretion, it may be in a different format than the original exam. Failure to make up the examination within the specified time period will result in a grade of zero (0) for that examination.
- b. Unexcused absences: If an absence is deemed unexcused, a grade of zero (0) will be given for the test. No make-up exam will be offered. Formal documentation will be placed in the student's file.

## EXAMINATION INTEGRITY

Exam integrity is vital to the assessment of the academic knowledge of students. It is therefore essential that academic and professional standards be maintained at all times to ensure fairness and validity of exams. Students are expected to abide by the policies as outlined in Appendix C: Student Conduct Code, Appendix E: Student Code of Responsibility and Rights, and Appendix K: Touro University System Academic Integrity Policy in the current [University Catalog](#).

The Program is in alignment with the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination ("PANCE") policy regarding examination integrity. All examinations, including examination grading sheets such as for practical/OSCE exams, will remain confidential and in possession of the Program. No student may retain a copy of an examination or part of an examination. Violation of exam integrity via any method noted below, in the NCCPA Policy, or by any other form of cheating, such as but not limited to, obtaining a copy of the exam, a previous year's exam or questions and/or getting help from another student during the exam, is grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program.

**NCCPA Policy:** The content of the NCCPA Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination ("PANCE"), and each of its items, is proprietary and strictly confidential, and the unauthorized retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral, or other form of communication, including but not limited to emailing, copying, or printing of electronic files, and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during, or after an examination, **is strictly prohibited**. In addition to constituting irregular behavior subject to disciplinary action such as revocation of certification, revocation of eligibility for future certification, and disciplinary fines, such activities violate the NCCPA proprietary rights, including copyrights, and may subject violators to legal action resulting in monetary damages.

**NCCPA Principles of Conduct:** Certified or certifying physician assistants shall protect the integrity of the certification or recertification process. They shall not engage in cheating or other dishonest behavior that violates exam security (including unauthorized reproducing, distributing, displaying,

discussing, sharing, or otherwise misusing test questions or any part of test questions) before, during, or after an NCCPA examination.

As noted in the NCCPA Principles of Conduct above, discussion of PANCE/PANRE exam questions is considered a breach of the Principles. The Program also adheres to this principle.

Although it is common for students to want to discuss exam questions they felt were hard or that they might have missed, do not do so. This is a violation of the NCCPA and PA Program Principles. After an exam (including OSCEs), students are not to discuss the content of the exam. To do so may be grounds for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the Program.

## TIME PROVIDED FOR WRITTEN EXAMS

The amount of time allotted for written exams decreases over the academic year for multiple-choice questions. During the 1<sup>st</sup> semester, since students are new to the process, there is more time (1.5 minutes/multiple choice question). This decreases to 1.25 minutes in semester 2 and 1 minute/question from Semester/Term 3 on. This is to familiarize students to the timing used by the NCCPA on the PANCE. The timing for OSCEs and other practicums is not addressed here. Timing for each type of question is as follows:

1. Multiple choice questions:
  - a. 1.5 min/question for Semester 1
  - b. 1.25 min/question for Semester 2
  - c. 1 minute/question for Semester/Term 3+
2. Fill in the blank
  - a. In general, 1.5 min/question
  - b. If the answer requires a sentence or more - 2 minutes/question
3. Essay questions – timing is at the discretion of the course director as based on answer expectations.

## CORE ASSESSMENTS

Core assessments will be noted in the syllabus with asterisks.

The following applies to core assessments:

1. A score of 75% or greater is required to pass each core assessment.
2. If a student fails a core assessment, a “Course Warning” will be issued.
  - The student must meet with the course director as soon as possible to discuss exam results and ways to ensure success with future exams.
  - The student should review the exam and consider contacting Student Success Services, as well as their academic advisor, for additional academic support.

- Requirements to pass the course include:
  - A score of 75% or higher on the remediation exam at the end of the course.
  - An overall course grade of 75% or higher.
  - See 'Appendix A' and the course syllabus for additional details.
- Failure to meet any of the above requirements will result in failure of the course and placement on academic probation for a course failure (see section on 'MSPAS Terms of Probation'). If a student is already on academic probation, the course failure may result in referral to the SPC (see section on [MSPAS Dismissal](#)).
- If a student has met criteria for course failure prior to the end of the term, they must continue to attend all classes and complete all assignments and exams in order to be eligible for future remediation of the course.

## COURSES WITH OSCE EXAMS

Please see the course syllabus for details of OSCE grading and minimum passing requirements.

## CLINICAL CURRICULUM ASSESSMENTS

Please refer to the *Clinical Year Handbook* for further information.

## EXAM REVIEW PROCESS & PROCEDURE

Students may review graded exams during designated exam review blocks after exams have been completed, as delineated in the procedure set forth in [Appendix B: Exam Review and Procedure](#). Exam reviews are not permitted in the clinical phase of the program.

## COURSE GRADING

At the end of each course, a grade for each student will be submitted to the Registrar. The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program uses the following grading system for the didactic curriculum. Please refer to the *Clinical Year Handbook* for details about the clinical curriculum.

## DEFINITION OF GRADES

Please refer to the current [University Catalog](#) section titled Grades to see the grading system and definitions of the following grades. **Note that the passing grade for MSPAS exams and courses is 75%.**

## GRADING SYSTEM

To successfully pass a course the student must:

1. Complete ALL course elements listed on the syllabus satisfactorily and on time.
2. Successfully complete all core assessments with a required minimum score of 75%. These are indicated by an asterisk (\*).

- a. Those who do not achieve a grade of 75% on the core assessment will be given an opportunity to remediate the exam at the end of term during re-take week. If a student is not successful at achieving a minimum score of 75% on the remediation assessment during re-take week, then the student has failed the course. The maximum score a student can achieve during remediation at re-take week is 75%. After a course failure, the student will be required to repeat the course prior to starting the clinical year. If the repeat course assessment is unsatisfactory, the student will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee (SPC) for further action. Please review [Appendix A](#) flowchart.
3. The final course grade must be 75% or higher.

## ASSESSMENT REMEDIATION & REPEATING A COURSE

### ASSESSMENT REMEDIATION POLICY

Students identified as having deficiencies (grade below 75%) on any individual core assessment must remedy the deficiency to pass the course by the end of the semester/term. Assessments that are indicated as core with an asterisk (\*) on the syllabus are eligible for remediation.

It is the responsibility of each student to check their grade, assess if they have passed each core assessment, and take the required steps if they did not. It is important that students track any core assessment failures so that they understand their status in the Program.

### ASSESSMENT REMEDIATION PROCEDURE

Successful remediation will consist of a student scheduling a meeting with the course director(s) to discuss the matter and identify any specific issue(s) within 1-2 business days of grades being posted. It is the responsibility of the student to arrange the meeting with the course director(s). Strengths and opportunities for improvement will be discussed based on the assessment performance. The student may be provided with additional instruction and intervention plans may be developed for academic improvement. Course director(s) will fill out a Course Warning Form (CWF) which will be placed in the student file. The maximum grade that a student can attain on a remediation examination is 75%. Depending on the number of course warning forms and course failures, the student may need to also meet with the Director of Remediation or depending on the phase of the curriculum, the Director of Didactic Education, or Director of Clinical Education. The remediation method of assessment may not be identical to how it was originally presented and will be determined by the course director(s). If a student fails the remediation exam, they will have failed the course and will have to successfully repeat the course prior to beginning the clinical year. The student will be placed on Program Warning and Academic Probation and, depending on the nature and number of failures, may be referred to the SPC for further action. Please refer to 'Appendix A' for more information.

### POLICY ON REPEATING A COURSE

Listed below are some instances when a course might be repeated:

- A student is unsuccessful in completing core assessments indicated on the syllabus with a

passing grade of 75% or higher during initial assessment and failed to attain a minimum score of 75% during remediation leading to a course failure.

- A student attains an overall course grade of <75%.

Students will be required to successfully repeat the course before beginning the clinical year. This will postpone the start of clinical year and allow the student the time for remediation of didactic coursework. **A student MAY NOT repeat more than 2 courses during this phase prior to clinical year.** Please note, students who fail a course will not be considered for class rankings such as valedictorian.

## PROCEDURE FOR REPEATING A COURSE

Successful course remediation will consist of a student meeting with the course director to discuss the matter and highlight any specific concerns identified during prior assessments. Repeating a course might involve more detailed repeat course work, oral examinations, or other more intensive assessments to ensure proper knowledge to proceed within the program. The method of course delivery and method of assessment may not be identical to how it was originally presented and will be determined by the course director(s). The student will need to repeat the course satisfactorily and achieve a minimum score of 75%. Failure to satisfactorily complete the repeat course will lead to SPC referral with recommendation for dismissal from the program.

Please see sections on 'Academic/Professionalism Probation' and 'MSPAS Dismissal' for additional details.

## MISTREATMENT, GRIEVANCE, AND APPEAL POLICY

Mistreatment including discrimination, sexual harassment, unprofessional relationships, abuse of authority, and abusive and/or intimidating behavior should be reported immediately. Violations of the Code of Responsibilities and Rights of the Students should be addressed using the policies outlined in the current [University Catalog](#) under "Student Conduct Code". The following policies in the *University Catalog* pertain to Student Concerns and Grievances:

- APPENDIX C: STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT
- APPENDIX E: CODE OF RESPONSIBILITIES AND RIGHTS OF THE STUDENTS OF Touro UNIVERSITY CALIFORNIA
- APPENDIX F: RESOLUTION PROCESS FOR DISPUTES AND GRIEVANCES AND MISCONDUCT
- APPENDIX H: TUC SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY
- APPENDIX I: TITLE IX GRIEVANCE POLICY

Students may present general concerns or suggestions for improvement to the program in the following manner:

- If there is a concern from the class as a whole, then the student leaders are encouraged to meet first with the Student Curriculum Committee which includes the Director of Didactic Education and Principal Faculty.
- Individual students or student leaders may discuss directly with the Course Director and/or the Director of Didactic Education.



- Alternatively, students may also discuss directly with the Associate Program Director or Program Director.

The purpose of the Student Curriculum Committee meetings is to encourage open communication between the students and Program faculty/administration, and address student concerns. It is the Program's goal to encourage feedback for the purpose of quality improvement. Students should voice their concerns in a thoughtful and constructive manner.

All concerns or suggestions (i.e., feedback) to the Program must be presented in a professional manner and tone. Feedback that does not meet these standards will not be addressed. In this situation, the Program will give the student an opportunity to rework their presentation of the grievance to meet Program standards. Bullying of students, staff, or faculty will not be tolerated and may result in a professionalism warning or professionalism probation. The Program will not take any action based on an anonymous concern (e.g., note, email), with the rare exception of complaints regarding egregious or dangerous behavior as identified by The Program.

## LEAVE OF ABSENCE, DECELERATION, PROGRAM BREAK AND WITHDRAWAL

Students can request a Leave of Absence (LOA) or withdrawal from the Program. An LOA is defined in the University Catalog as a short, defined period of one or more academic terms that has the potential to impact attendance and, therefore, successful progression in the program. The amount of leave time granted depends largely on the personal needs of the student and the timing of the LOA within the academic program as that will look different in the didactic and clinical phase. Students must make this request in writing to the Program Director and follow all procedures as outlined in the current [University Catalog](#). Students are encouraged to contact the Offices of the Registrar, Bursar, and Financial Aid to understand the implications of taking a leave or withdrawal.

From an accreditation reporting standpoint, the Program defines a Leave of Absence as a temporary student separation from the program due to personal or medical (non-academic) reasons.

It should be noted that the PA program didactic phase is a modular curriculum with courses that only occur once a year. A Programmatic LOA that is greater than 2 weeks during the didactic phase of education may lead the student having to restart with the next cohort and graduate with the subsequent cohort. (e.g. a student from Class of 2026 on a LOA will be required to join the Class of 2027). This is defined as the student leaving the current cohort to join the following cohort with the goal to satisfactorily complete the program with the next cohort. Due to the many variables involved, this will be determined on a case-by-case basis. For the purposes of our accrediting body and our program, such an action will be deemed as a non-academic deceleration.

Students are responsible for fully understanding the consequences of taking an LOA as it will have financial and academic implications. It is the student's responsibility to discuss these options with the Registrar, Bursar and Financial aid offices. Students on a LOA may not participate in any academic activity at TUC nor are they expected to submit any work or participate in any way with any academic program. In addition, any LOA may be counted toward the total amount of time given for a student to complete the PA program which is limited to 4.5 years from the time of matriculation.

It is important to keep in mind that a student in the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program is a joint student. Therefore, a student cannot request a LOA from the PA program and continue courses within the Public Health program. An LOA is a separation from ALL academic work. An LOA is not guaranteed. It is initiated by the student, outlining a defined period of time, and requires approval by the program directors of both programs (PA and PH).

An LOA during the PA clinical phase of education will lead to delayed graduation as the student will be forced to forfeit a clinical rotation(s) which is typically 6 weeks in length. Depending on the length of time and number of rotations impacted, the student may be advised to take a Program Break versus an LOA. Please see details below and the Clinical Year handbook for further details.

The procedure for a leave of absence is as follows:

- To initiate the LOA, a Leave of Absence form must be submitted by either the student or the program. The form can be found in TouroOne Portal in the Registrar section under "Forms."
- Student will meet with the Program Director to discuss possible effects on their academic program progress and discuss any required actions that must take place before returning.
- Students are required to contact the Registrar, Bursar and Financial Aid offices to review their circumstances.
- The official start date of the LOA will be the effective date listed on the LOA petition. Please review University Catalog for further details.
- If a student needs to extend their leave, a new LOA form must be completed by the student and the academic program which then needs to be processed/approved by the Registrar's office.
- It is the student's responsibility to initiate any Petition to Return with the program and Registrar's office prior to expiration of the LOA.
- Involuntary leave of absence: In certain circumstances, the Provost, Dean, or designee, may require a student to take an involuntary leave of absence. In these cases, the LOA will be applied to the student's record and they will be informed of the details by the department and/or Registrar's office.
- Unapproved LOA: Students who have not completed a term, did not re-enroll as defined by the LOA petition are considered as being on an Unapproved LOA. Students who have an Unapproved LOA are administratively withdrawn and/or dismissed by the program for non-enrollment. The time away will count towards the total time to graduate of 4.5 years since matriculation.

Deceleration, from an accreditation reporting standpoint, is defined as a student who is required to leave the class in which they entered for academic reasons. More specifically, the student remains matriculated in the PA program but will now complete their course of study with the following cohort and graduate with the next cohort. Deceleration cannot be requested by the student. Decelerating into the following cohort is not guaranteed and requires approval by the SPC and Program Director. Deceleration into the following academic cycle/cohort may only be granted once during the duration of the program.

The procedure for deceleration due to academic deficiency is as follows:

- Student will have been referred to SPC for academic deficiencies. If the SPC makes a recommendation for deceleration and the Program Director accepts the recommendation, the student will be decelerated to the following cohort.
- Deceleration may happen only once during the academic program.
- To initiate the deceleration, the Program Director will initiate communication with the student detailing the effects on their academic program progress and discuss any required actions that must take place before returning.
- Students are required to contact the Registrar, Bursar and Financial Aid offices to review their circumstances.
- The official restart date of the deceleration will be listed in the communication by the Program Director to the student. Please note for University purposes, this is a LOA due to academic reasons.
- It is the student's responsibility to initiate any Petition to Return with the program and Registrar's office prior to restarting the PA program with the following cohort.

A maximum of 18 months on an LOA or deceleration may be allowed (consecutive or combined). The time spent on an LOA and/or deceleration is counted towards the maximum limit of 4.5 years that a student must complete the PA program. An LOA beyond 18 months will be cause for academic withdrawal if it is not possible to complete the program within 4.5 years of matriculating into the program.

Any LOA or deceleration will impact the total cost of program. Additional fees, tuition differences, and other financial aid considerations are the responsibility of the student. Students are encouraged to talk to the Bursar and Financial Aid offices for detailed information, as these are subject to change. Please review the University Catalog for more information.

### **Program Break**

There are times when a student might need to take a short break from academics within a defined term due to personal or medical reasons. The time impacted might be limited to a few weeks versus an entire term or semester(s) which will require an LOA. In this scenario, where the student might still be able to satisfactorily complete the required course work in a sufficient amount of time, a student may request a program break.

Program break is not guaranteed and needs to be approved by the program's Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education.

During the didactic phase of education, a program break of more than 2 weeks can seriously hinder the students ability to progress with the curricular components. Therefore, the student could be required to decelerate into the following cohort and above the LOA policy would be applied.

During the clinical phase of the program, a break of more than 2 weeks during a clinical rotation could impact the minimum total hours of clinical hours on a rotation. Therefore, the student may be required to sit out a rotation which would delay Program completion. At times, due to poor academic performance, the Director of Clinical Education could require a student to take a program break from clinical rotations and instead enroll the student in a Knowledge Remediation course. This is typically an individualized, self-study course. Further details are defined in the Clinical Year handbook.

Knowledge remediations cannot be requested by the student and the student cannot have more than one knowledge remediation during the clinical phase of the curriculum. This action will delay the student's Program completion date and will impact the total amount of time the student has to complete the PA program which is a maximum of 4.5 years from matriculation into the program.

All requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis due to the unique nature of the curriculum and student circumstances. Program break is not a separation of the student from the University or program but a short, well-defined break during which time the student may be expected to submit course work and keep up with the curriculum to ensure successful reentry at the end of the program break.

The procedure for requesting a Program Break is as follows:

- Student will contact the Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education as soon as they are aware of the need for a program break via email or phone call.
- Student will then complete the Time off request form.
- Depending on the length of leave requested and how it would impact academics, the Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education may involve PA program leadership to make a determination of approval, denial, or recommendation for leave of absence or deceleration.
- Students are always encouraged to discuss the impacts of such actions with the Bursar, Financial Aid and Registrar's offices.
- Student will be responsible for successfully completing all course work and study as defined by the course director under a modified curriculum during the Program break.

Please note: a Program break, leave of absence, or deceleration cannot be retroactively enforced or applied. It behooves the student to take the time to discuss all their options with the advisor, Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education to ensure they are on a path for success and completion of the program.

## RETURNING FROM A LOA

The procedure for returning from Leave of absence (non-academic deceleration) or academic deceleration is as follows:

- Student will complete a "Petition to return to classes" form six (6) weeks prior to the start of the upcoming semester.
- The form will need to be completed and approved by both the academic program and the Registrar's office. Once completed and approved the student will then be able to register for classes. Please see University Catalog for further details.
- Each student will be required to complete a competency examination prior to returning. Please see "Competency examination for students decelerating or returning from a leave of absence" below.
- Student is responsible for fulfilling the matriculation health requirements prior to beginning and must remain compliant with the continuing student health requirements for the duration of the program.

Please see the current [University Catalog](#) for additional information.

## COMPETENCY EXAMINATION FOR STUDENTS DECELERATING OR RETURNING FROM A LEAVE

In order to ensure students returning from a LOA or decelerating have retained mastery of previously covered PA course material, the student will be required to complete and pass competency examinations for the PA courses, practical examinations, and/or H&P or SOAP note assignments as a prerequisite for re-entry into the Program. Any student joining the subsequent cohort, for academic or non-academic reasons, will be required to take reentry exams for any previously completed course with the exception of Topics in PA Professionalism (TPAP). Any student who takes a break from the program of 12 weeks or longer during the Clinical Year may be required to complete a reentry OSCE prior to returning to rotations. Examinations must be completed a minimum of two (2) weeks prior to resuming the PA coursework. Re-Entry Competency Examinations Score requirements are 75%. If a student fails a competency exam, they will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee.

Students returning from a Medical Leave of Absence must be able to meet the Program Technical Standards and will be required to provide clearance to return to the Program from their medical provider (forms available through the [Office of Student Services](#)).

## WITHDRAWAL FROM THE PROGRAM

Withdrawal from the Program and/or the University is addressed in the current [University Catalog](#).

## MODIFIED CURRICULUM

Touro University California recognizes that some students may need to modify the standard prescribed curriculum. A modified curriculum may be recommended by the Program, or a student may petition the Program Directors in writing for a modified curriculum. This petition is not granted automatically and is approved only in extenuating circumstances. The Program Directors are responsible for evaluating and approving the petition.

Students who are placed in a modified curriculum will not be considered for class rankings such as valedictorian. A student on a modified curriculum may not serve as an officer of any official TUC club or organization (including holding a Class Officer position), or as a representative of the College as it may detract from time needed to be academically successful.

Students should discuss with the Registrar, Bursar, and Financial Aid offices the added cost for any modifications to the curriculum.

## ACADEMIC STANDING

Academic Standing is an indication of current progress toward completion of the program. Academic standing is established at the end of each semester/term. Students are in good academic standing unless they have been placed on probation. See Academic Probation section for indications for placement on probation.

## ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS

### ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Satisfactory academic progress must be evident and demonstrated by students in the Program in order to continue in the Program. Any failure to progress academically up to and including the failure of a course may be cause for referral to the MSPAS Student Promotions Committee (SPC). The MSPAS SPC monitors academic progress for the entire program (refer also to the *Clinical Year Handbook* for academic progress policies associated with the clinical year) as outlined in this Student Handbook and the University Catalog.

### PROGRESSING FROM DIDACTIC TO CLINICAL CURRICULUM

Students must complete and pass all PA and PH didactic courses in Terms 1 - 5 before they can progress to the clinical phase of the Program. If any didactic course requirements have not been met by the end of Term 5, the student will be required to sit out for the first scheduled clinical rotation (a duration of 6 weeks) in order to complete the outstanding requirement(s). Students may not repeat more than 2 courses prior to starting the clinical year. Upon successful completion of the requirement(s), the student will progress into the clinical curriculum no sooner than the second rotation block start date.

### PROGRESSION REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS TAKING PBHC 646: CPH EXAM PREP

As with all other required didactic courses in the Joint curriculum, students must complete and pass the PBHC 646 course prior to beginning clinical year rotations. This includes taking and passing the CPH exam. Receipt of an Incomplete or Fail grade will delay the start of a student's clinical year until a Passing grade is achieved.

In Semester 4, a session will be scheduled to review the CPH exam and CPH Exam Preparation course requirements. Students will be expected to take and pass the CPH exam by the last day of finals during the six-week didactic phase of Semester 5. Please note this deadline will be published on the Class Google calendar and will not include re-take days.

Students who have not taken and passed the CPH exam by this deadline will receive an Incomplete grade for the course and will be required to sit out for at least the first scheduled clinical year rotation (a duration of at least six weeks) in order to successfully pass the exam. Please note: if a student is already delayed in starting their clinical rotations (for example, in order to re-take a failed PA course), failure to complete the CPH exam requirements by the deadline will result in an additional 6-week delay (e.g., 6 weeks to re-take the PA course and another 6 weeks to pass the CPH exam).

Upon successful completion of the CPH exam and any other outstanding PA requirements, the student will progress into the clinical year no sooner than the next scheduled rotation block (e.g., Student A sits out Block 1 to complete the CPH exam; the exam is passed during week 2 of the 6-week block; Student A would begin rotations at the start of Block 2 – please refer to curriculum dates as listed in this handbook).

During the 6-week period of taking (or re-taking) the CPH exam, students will meet with the course director(s) to discuss their exam results and ways to ensure success with future exams. This will be imperative as students will be required to continue to register and take the exam until it is passed, which could result in a continuation of delayed clinical rotations in 6-week increments.

## **PROFESSIONAL PROGRESS**

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program expects students to maintain the highest standards of professional conduct. In addition to content knowledge, professional behaviors and attitudes are an important component of being a PA and considered to be a part of academic performance. Attendance, tardiness, participation in class discussions, courtesy to and consideration for speakers, faculty, preceptors, staff and fellow students are markers of professional behavior and attitudes. Problems in any of these areas will be discussed with students individually and must be satisfactorily addressed. Unresolved professionalism issues will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee as part of unsatisfactory academic performance.

Professionalism is as important as, and holds equal importance to, academic progress. Students are expected to demonstrate the legal, moral and ethical standards required of a health care professional and display behavior that is consistent with these qualities. Professionalism and professional ethics are terms that signify certain scholastic, interpersonal and behavioral expectations. Among the characteristics included in this context are the knowledge, competence, demeanor, attitude, appearance, mannerisms, integrity, and morals displayed by the students to faculty, staff, preceptors, peers, patients, colleagues in health care and other educational settings and the public. The Program expects nothing short of respect and professional demeanor at all times.

## **PROFESSIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT**

Success in the physician assistant profession requires certain professional behavioral attributes in addition to content knowledge. Therefore, these professional behavioral attributes, to include empathy, respect, discipline, honesty, integrity, the ability to work effectively with others in a team environment, the ability to take and give constructive feedback, the ability to follow directions, and the ability to address a crisis or emergency situation in a composed manner, are considered to be a part of academic performance.

Touro community members share a commitment to social justice. This commitment includes the need to create safe learning environments. We recognize that societal biases impact underserved and underrepresented populations in varying ways. As such, we are committed to holding ourselves accountable when it comes to issues of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ageism, ableism, weightism, and learning ability as it arises in learning, work, and social spaces. Therefore, expectations

for coursework and in class discussions are concomitant with these values. It is expected that we (faculty, students and staff) treat each other with respect and collegiality. It is important that we acknowledge that everyone should be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity and we will be open to conversations and diverse perspectives necessary for full understanding and to create a safe learning environment.

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education 5th edition, states, “The role of the PA demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills and the capacity to respond to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. Essential attributes of the graduate PA include an attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients and a commitment to the patient’s welfare” (pg 3). Adherence to these attributes requires that physician assistants and physician assistant students exhibit a high level of maturity and self-control even in highly stressful situations or in difficult circumstances and situations.

In keeping with these principles, physician assistant students must conduct themselves in a demeanor that is nothing less than professional and consistent with appropriate patient care and adhere to the Professional Code of Conduct. Students will be evaluated not only on their academic and clinical skills but also on their interpersonal skills, reliability, and professional and behavioral conduct.

1. **Respect:** Students are expected to treat all patients, faculty, university staff, clinical preceptors, health care workers, and fellow students with dignity and respect. Students are expected to be able to follow direction and to appropriately express concerns in a professional and respectful manner. Conflicts are to be resolved in a diplomatic and reasoned manner. Students should be sensitive to, and tolerant of, diversity in the student, TUC employee, and patient populations. PA education requires a close working environment with other students and includes physical examination of fellow students and discussion groups that may reveal personal information. These situations must be approached with respect for the privacy, confidentiality, and feelings of fellow students.

Students should offer constructive feedback in a thoughtful and reasoned manner that fosters respect and trust. Displays of anger, which include demeaning, offensive, argumentative, threatening language/behavior, or language that is insensitive to race, gender identity, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or other protected group will not be tolerated. Students must be appropriately responsive to lawful requests from their instructors, preceptors, and clinical sites. Students should not display disruptive or obstructive behavior at the university or at clinical sites. Additionally, taking or posting photos of any students, faculty, staff, or patients requires explicit permission. Any concerns brought to the Program regarding the student will be addressed and discussed with the student.

2. **Nondiscrimination:** The PA Program values diversity and inclusivity and it is expected that student behavior will reflect those values. Each student is expected to play a role in maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment for all people. Students shall deliver health care service to patients without regard to their race, religion, sex, gender identity, creed,



national origin, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, disability, disease status, legal involvement, or political beliefs.

3. **Integrity:** Students are expected to follow this Professional Code of Conduct in addition to all policies in the current [University Catalog](#) (including the Student Conduct Code), the [MPH Student Handbook](#) and the *Clinical Year Handbook* including those pertaining to academic honesty. Infractions such as forgery, plagiarism, stealing/copying tests, and cheating during examinations will not be tolerated. PA students are also expected to display the highest ethical standards commensurate with work as a health care professional. Some of these are outlined in the [Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession](#) published by the American Academy of Physician Assistants. Students are mandated to report any illegal or unethical activity to the Program Director, Associate Program Director or Medical Director. Students may not accept gifts or gratuities from patients or families. Breaches in confidentiality, falsification of records, misuse of medications, and sexual relationships with patients, preceptors, or staff will not be tolerated.
4. **Confidentiality:** In accordance with the [Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession](#) and in compliance with HIPAA Standards, students must respect and maintain the confidentiality of patients. Students are not permitted to discuss any patients by name or any other identifiable means outside the clinical encounter. For academic presentations and H&P and/or SOAP note assignments, all identifiable information must be removed as per HIPAA requirements. The confidentiality of fellow students should be respected and maintained as well.
5. **Flexibility:** PA education involves instruction from practicing clinicians with unpredictable schedules. At times, lectures, sessions or clinical rotations may need to be adjusted with short notice. The Program believes the advantage of utilizing practicing clinicians outweighs this inconvenience, and requires students to be flexible and tolerant of changes. Student schedules in the academic and clinical year may involve night and weekend hours.
6. **Health and Safety:** Any student whose actions directly or indirectly jeopardize the health and safety of patients, faculty, clinical site staff or fellow students may be immediately removed from campus, the clinical site and/or face disciplinary action. Removal from a clinical rotation may delay the student's completion of the program.
7. **Impairment:** Students shall not appear at the university or clinical sites under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Should this occur, the student will immediately be asked to leave campus or rotation (driven by someone not under the influence, whether that be a friend, family, or paid driver service) and referred to the SPC for disciplinary action. The student may be required to complete a urine toxicology screen within a designated time frame.
8. **Weapons:** Students are not permitted to carry any firearms, knives, or other weapons on campus or to clinical sites.
9. **Identification:** Students must always identify themselves as a “physician assistant student” or “PA student” to patients and clinical site staff, and never present themselves as physicians,

residents, medical students, or graduate physician assistants. Students must wear a short clinical jacket while at all clinical sites unless instructed not to do so by the clinical site or the Program. Students must always wear their Program-supplied nametag while at clinical sites. While in the Program, students may not use previously earned titles (i.e., RN, MD, DC, Ph.D., etc.) for identification purposes.

10. **Student Role:** Students must be aware of their limitations as students and of the limitations and regulations pertaining to PA practice. Students at clinical sites must always work under the supervision of a preceptor. They may not function in the place of an employee or assume primary responsibility for a patient's care. **Students must not treat and discharge a patient from care without consultation with the clinical preceptor. All patients must be seen by a licensed provider PRIOR to leaving the facility.** Students should seek advice when appropriate and should not evaluate or treat patients without supervision from, and direct access to a supervising clinical preceptor at all times. Unusual or abnormal physical findings should be confirmed by a licensed provider. Students shall perform only those procedures authorized by the preceptor. Students must adhere to all regulations of the Program and the clinical sites. The student is to contact the Program immediately with any questions or concerns about the student's role at a site.
11. **Meeting Deadlines:** Students must submit all required assignments and forms by their designated due date. Timeliness is an important aspect of professional behavior. Repetitive delay in paperwork/assignment submission in any portion of the Program may result in disciplinary action.
12. **Attire:** Attire is a component of professionalism. Refer to the [Dress Code](#) section for further information.

## CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-ADHERENCE TO PROFESSIONALISM REQUIREMENTS

Failure to adhere to the Professional Code of Conduct or the TUC Student Conduct Code will result in the following consequences for unprofessional behavior. Egregious behavior will automatically result in consequences listed under point V. below. All incidents will be documented in the student's file, the third incident and beyond may be reportable to licensing and credentialing inquires as deemed appropriate by the program director. All incidents may impact a student's professionalism evaluation.

- I. First incident
  - The student will receive a verbal warning with email follow up to change the behavior.
- II. Second incident
  - The student will receive a written warning and be required to meet with the appropriate faculty member (Didactic Advisor or Director of Clinical Education).

- III. Third incident
  - The student will receive a written Program Warning Form and be required to meet with the appropriate faculty member (Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education).
- IV. Fourth incident
  - The student will be required to meet with the Associate Program Director or Program Director.
- V. Fifth incident or egregious behavior
  - The student may be placed on Professionalism Probation and/or referred to the Student Promotions Committee (SPC). If referred to the SPC, the Committee will determine a course of action, which may include, but is not limited to, corrective or disciplinary action, probation, or dismissal.

Additional Guidelines for conduct specific to the clinical training experiences are outlined in the *Clinical Year Handbook*, which will be distributed to students prior to the clinical phase of their education.

**Note:** Most state licensure boards request information on disciplinary issues on the official program completion verification paperwork. The Program must document when a student has been on Professionalism Probation, and in most cases, the reasons for probation. This may impact the licensure process. Additionally, this information is often requested by credentialing agencies, and therefore, it may impact your ability to obtain employment clearance.

## MSPAS STUDENT PROMOTION COMMITTEE (SPC)

The MSPAS SPC is charged with monitoring all Joint MSPAS/MPH students both academically and professionally, promoting students who have successfully completed a term, as well as reviewing the cases of students who meet the criteria for probation or dismissal. It is made up of faculty members from the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program and from other TUC programs and Colleges that provide instruction to the PA students. Student performance in the PH curriculum is monitored by the MPH Academic Progress Committee (APC). The APC includes a representative from the PA program. If necessary, the APC and SPC will jointly review a student's record. The MSPAS SPC may review student records and discuss student records with appropriate faculty members and/or preceptors in determining an appropriate course of action for students experiencing academic and/or professional conduct difficulties in the Program. The MSPAS SPC may choose to request the appearance of the student during an MSPAS SPC meeting. The committee can recommend actions such as, but not limited to, probation, remediation, suspension, or dismissal. Recommendations are made on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances. The committee's recommendations are forwarded to the MSPAS Program Director for review. The Program Director may agree, amend or disagree with SPC recommendation. Final decision regarding student status is determined by the Program Director. A letter of decision to the student regarding their status in the Program will be issued by the Program Director or a designee.

Since the MSPAS Program only offers courses once a year, if the MSPAS SPC recommends that a student repeat an entire term, the student must decelerate for academic deficiencies from the Program until those courses are offered again. A place will be held for the student to return to the

Program at the beginning of the term that must be repeated. Additionally, the student will be required to pass competency examinations for all materials covered in the terms prior to the term in which they return. Refer to the section regarding competency testing after taking a leave.

See 'APPENDIX A: MSPAS SPC ALGORITHMS FOR DIDACTIC CORE ASSESSMENT AND COURSE FAILURES' for more information regarding exam failures and the SPC.

## COURSE WARNING

Course Warning is internal to the Program and is documented in the Program file but not on the official transcript. Any student who fails a core assessment will receive a course warning. Upon failure of the assessment, the student will meet with the Course Director to discuss plans for improvement and fill out a course warning form (CWF). If a student receives two course warnings, they will receive a Program Warning (see below for details).

The student will remediate any failed core assessments by taking a remediation exam during retake week at the end of the semester/term. If a student passes the remediation exam, they will have passed the course and no further action is required. If the student does not pass the remediation exam, the following will occur:

- Failure of the course with a U grade
- Completion of a Course Warning form with the Course Director
- Placement on Program Warning with completion of a Program Warning form with the Remediation Director, the Director of Didactic Education, or the Associate Program Director (see below for details)
- Placement on Academic Probation (see below for details)
- The student must successfully repeat the course at the end of the didactic curriculum and before starting the clinical curriculum.

## PROGRAM WARNING

Program Warning is internal to the Program and is documented in the Program file but not on the official transcript. It is instituted when a student fails a remediation assessment, receives two course warning forms, attains a "U" grade, or has professionalism issues and serves as a warning that improvement is needed. Unsuccessful remediation of material or professionalism may result in referral to the SPC.

## ACADEMIC/PROFESSIONALISM PROBATION

**Academic Probation** is the result of unsatisfactory scholarship or professionalism, which may lead to dismissal from the Program. It is documented on the official transcript.

**Professionalism Probation** is a subcategory of Academic Probation. It is the result of unsatisfactory professionalism, which may lead to dismissal from the Program. It is documented on the official transcript as Academic Probation.

Probation is a warning that there are deficiencies. Steps to remediate these deficiencies will be provided to the student. During probation, the student's academic/clinical progress and/or professional conduct will be closely monitored by the MSPAS Student Promotion Committee (SPC) and/or the MPH Academic Progress Committee (APC). Failure to demonstrate improvement in areas of deficiency may result in referral to the SPC. Decisions regarding Academic Probation cannot be appealed.

**Note:** Most state licensure boards request information on disciplinary issues on the official program completion verification paperwork. The Program must document when a student has been on Professionalism Probation, and in most cases, the reasons for probation. Additionally, this information is often requested by credentialing agencies, and therefore, it may impact your ability to obtain employment clearance. Please see the section MSPAS Dismissal.

Students must meet the minimum standards and requirements set by the Joint MSPAS/ MPH Program and Touro University California in order to remain in good academic standing.

## CRITERIA FOR PLACEMENT ON ACADEMIC/ PROFESSIONALISM PROBATION

The following are criteria for which a student may be placed on probation:

1. Failure of a course
2. Failure of 2 end-of-rotation examinations (or 3 if the first 2 were during the 1<sup>st</sup> callback and taken one after the other).
3. Term GPA < 2.5 for MSPAS coursework.
4. Professional misconduct, behavior and/or attitude inconsistent with the PA profession or in violation of the Professional Code of Conduct Policies found in this handbook.
5. Failure to adhere to the Program policies and procedures found in the *Student Handbook* and/or the *Clinical Year Handbook*.
6. Verbal or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptors or designees indicating that a student is not progressing academically and/or not demonstrating proficiency to a level where it may jeopardize patient safety.
7. Verbal or written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptors or designees indicating that a student is not adhering to site regulations, site schedule, ethical standards of conduct, limitations of student role.
8. Failure to follow and/or comply with requirements set forth by the MSPAS SPC and Program Director.

It is important to remember that some aspects of knowledge integration and clinical judgment cannot be adequately evaluated by examinations alone. Observations from academic and/or clinical faculty are crucial for evaluating these critical skills. Failure to achieve minimum competency in coursework, including clinical assignments and satisfactory progress in professional development, behaviors and attitudes may result in Program probation or dismissal. A pattern of documented evaluator concerns

about performance may indicate unsatisfactory progress when the record is viewed as whole, even though passing grades have been assigned. In such instances, successful completion of a remediation plan is required to continue in the program.

## TERMS OF PROBATION

1. When a student is placed on probation they will be notified in writing by the Program and the reasons will be stated. A copy of this letter will be provided to the appropriate university officials and placed in the student's academic file. Probation is also noted on the official transcript.
2. A student will remain on Academic Probation until the terms of probation have been satisfied, as stated in the remediation plan and/or probation letter. Probation may continue throughout the remainder of the didactic year, or until Program completion, if deemed appropriate. A student placed on Professionalism Probation will remain so until Program completion.
3. In the case of probation due to professional misconduct, the Program will determine whether or not the student has achieved an acceptable level of professional behavior. This information may be gained from professionalism assignments, faculty evaluations, preceptor evaluations or any other evaluations from individuals the Program deem appropriate. Failure to remediate professionalism issues will result in referral to the SPC.
4. When the terms of probation have been satisfied, notification of removal from probation will be forwarded to the appropriate university officials, including the Registrar so the necessary documentation on the student's transcript can be made. Additionally, documentation will be placed in the student's academic file.
5. The primary responsibility of a TUC Joint MSPAS/MPH student is to gain the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become a competent and professional PA. Therefore, a student on Academic Probation may not serve as an officer of any official TUC club or organization (including holding a Class Officer position), or as a representative of the College as it may detract from time needed to be academically successful. If a student who is presently serving as an officer/representative is placed on Academic Probation, a substitute officer/ representative will be chosen by the Class to fulfill the position.

## REMEDATION AND REPEATING A COURSE

Remediation and repeating a course are opportunities given to students to correct unsatisfactory performance, progress and/or professional conduct in the Program. The offer to do so is not automatic or guaranteed. Recommendations will be made by the MSPAS SPC on an individual basis after considering all pertinent circumstances in each case and with a final decision made by the Program Director. Any student placed on probation for academic or professionalism reasons and offered remediation or the opportunity to repeat a course must fulfill all the terms of the contract within the designated time frame or face actions including, but not limited to, dismissal. **Remediation and the opportunity to repeat a course is to be regarded as a privilege which must be earned by a student** through demonstrated dedication to learning, and active participation in the educational program to include, but not limited to, overall academic/clinical performance, regular attendance, individual initiative and utilization of resources available. **Remediation** plans/decisions by the Program Director **cannot be appealed.** The MSPAS SPC may recommend a remediation plan that includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Development of a contract/plan that outlines and defines a remediation program, successful remediation criteria, and the responsibilities of the student.
2. A remediation exam of failed subject material as constructed by the course director.
3. Repeating the course(s)/rotation(s) failed the next time the course(s) is offered.
4. Repeating the entire academic term. The student may be required to repeat and/or audit all course offerings.
5. Auditing previously taken courses or laboratory classes. If a student is advised to audit a class, they are expected to follow the attendance policy for registered students. Students may be required to sit for all course exams, which will be at the discretion of Program Director and associated remediation plan. If a student takes any course assessments, they must meet the same criteria as registered students in order to pass the remediation (e.g., score of  $\geq 75\%$  on assessments).
6. Demonstrating continued competency in previously learned material by passing re-entry competency requirements for students with a remediation plan that includes extended time away from studies.
7. Complete additional clinical rotation(s).
8. Requiring corrective action for unprofessional behavior and/or misconduct. This may include but is not limited to direct apologies, letters of apology, professionalism assignments, additional clinical rotation(s), ongoing monitoring and reports of professional behavior corrections by faculty, preceptors etc.

Failure to meet the requirements of a remediation plan or competency exam results in:

- Failure of the remediation or competency exam
- Referral to the MSPAS SPC committee
- Placement in the category for dismissal

## DISMISSAL

The Touro University California Joint MSPAS/MPH Program, after due consideration and process, reserves the right to require the dismissal of any student at any time before graduation if circumstances of a legal, moral, behavioral, ethical, patient safety concerns, health or academic nature justify such an action.

If a student is dismissed for failure of the MSPAS component of the Joint Program they may apply for consideration to the stand-alone MPH Program. However, acceptance is at the discretion of the MPH Program Director. If a student is dismissed for failure of the MPH Program, they may not remain in the MSPAS component of the Joint Program and will therefore be dismissed as a Joint student.

## REFERRAL TO THE STUDENT PROMOTION COMMITTEE (SPC)

The SPC is charged with evaluating, recommending, and implementing academic standards and assessing the progress of each student to Program completion. Students who attain satisfactory academic and professional progress are promoted to the following academic year, provided all tuition and fees have been paid. The SPC will review each student who has been referred to the SPC based on the criteria listed below. After a thorough review of student performance, the SPC recommends an action to the Program Director. The SPC may recommend actions including, but not limited to, promotion, dismissal, academic probation, repeat or remediation of a course or rotation, or some other improvement plan. These recommendations are communicated to the Program Director by the Chair of the Committee.

The SPC may require one or more interventions at any time, including, but not limited to:

- Placement on Academic Probation.
- Repeating a course or taking additional examinations.
- Taking Boards preparation courses.
- Postponing rotations.
- Performing additional OSCEs.
- Taking a Leave of Absence or Academic Pause
- Meeting with learning specialists and health counselors.
- Meeting with the Director of Remediation or other faculty as deemed appropriate.
- Seeking outside professional help.
- Obtaining approval for extracurricular activities
- Agreeing to a Memorandum of Understanding that stipulates requirements for continued enrollment.

Students must comply with the recommendations and requirements issued by the SPC and approved by the Program Director; students who do not provide evidence of adherence to the requirements as outlined or who do not meet academic improvement criteria will be subject to one or more of the following sanctions, including, but not limited to:

- Receiving a negative professionalism report
- Dismissal from the academic program

The Program Director has the authority to accept or modify SPC recommendations and will issue a letter of decision to the student regarding their status in the Program. If the Program Director agrees with a SPC recommendation for dismissal, the dismissal is immediately effective upon receipt of the letter of notification from the Program Director. Students may appeal a Dismissal decision (refer to the sections on 'Appeal Process' and 'Procedure for Program Dismissal'). Please refer to the University Catalog for details regarding issues concerning registration, tuition, and financial aid. If a student is dismissed or is required to voluntarily withdraw from the program for reasons related to behavior that is erratic or perceived to be threatening, the student may be prohibited from the TUC premises, and from attending TUC-sponsored/affiliated events and activities.



## MSPAS CRITERIA FOR REFERRAL TO THE STUDENT PROMOTION COMMITTEE (SPC)

Any of the following may result in a referral to the SPC:

1. Failure of 2 or more didactic courses within the MSPAS curriculum
2. Failure of 2 or more clinical rotations
3. Failure of 3 or more end-of-rotation examinations (or 4 if the first 2 were during the 1st callback and taken one after the other)
4. Failure of a repeated course or clinical rotation
5. Failure of 1 or more re-entry competency examinations
6. Failure by a student on probation to comply with or complete a remediation program within the defined time frame
7. Meeting 2 or more criteria for Academic and/or Professionalism Probation
8. One egregious or  $\geq 2$  other occurrences of professional misconduct, behavior and/or attitude inconsistent with the PA profession or in violation of the [Professional Code of Conduct Policies](#)
9. Verbal, written reports from academic faculty, clinical preceptors or designees indicating that a student who is already on probation is not adhering to site regulations, site schedules, ethical standards of conduct, or limitations
10. Verbal, written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptor or designees indicating that a student, who is already on probation, is not progressing academically.
11. Verbal, written reports and/or evaluations from academic faculty, clinical preceptor or designees indicating that a student, who is already on probation, is jeopardizing patient safety due to a lack of knowledge and/or skill proficiency.
12. Consistently failing to progress academically as demonstrated by repetitive failure to demonstrate competency across multiple evaluation modalities, including but not limited to, written examinations, Objective Structured Clinical Examinations (OSCEs), preceptor evaluations, written assignments, faculty observation of clinical skills/decision making, site visits.
13. Two or more occurrences of failure to follow Program policies and procedures as defined in this handbook as well as those defined in the Clinical Year Handbook.
14. Unprofessional conduct due to failure to comply with requirements set forth by the SPC and Program Director

### **MPH Program Criteria for Placement on Academic/Professional Probation or Dismissal**

Please see the [MPH Student Handbook](#) for details.

## TUC SUSPENSION

Suspension from the Program and/or the University is addressed in the current [University Catalog](#) under "Suspension".

## TUC EXPULSION

Expulsion from the Program and/or the University is addressed in the current [University Catalog](#) under “Expulsion”.

## APPEAL PROCESS & PROCEDURE FOR PROGRAM DISMISSAL

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program follows the procedures and protocols outlined in the Academic Appeal Process section of the [University Catalog](#). In addition, the following guidelines apply. Appeals may only be filed for decisions of dismissal. While the appeal is pending, the status of the student will not be altered if in the didactic phase of the program but may be altered if the student is in the clinical phase of the program or during the Public Health Field Study. Any student making an appeal during the didactic phase of their education must continue to meet all requirements of the program, including attending all classes, submitting all assignments, and taking all exams, until the appeal decision has been rendered. The Program reserves the right to remove the student from clinical rotations or their Public Health field study until such time the appeal decision is rendered. Removal from a clinical rotation or Public Health field study may delay the student’s completion of the program should the appeal be granted. If a student is allowed to continue in the clinical rotation or Public Health field study, they must continue to meet all requirements of the program, including attending all scheduled rotation days and Callback sessions, submitting all assignments, and taking all exams, until the appeal decision has been rendered.

## OFFICIAL PROGRAM CELEBRATIONS

### WHITE COAT CEREMONY

Before entering the clinical phase of the Joint Program, a White Coat Ceremony is held to celebrate the completion of the didactic curriculum. The ceremony is organized by Joint Program faculty and staff. During the ceremony, the TUPAC Class President provides remarks to those in attendance. Please note that this student representative must be in good academic and professionalism standing, which the Joint Program defines as not being on either Academic or Professionalism Probation. Please see both the PA and Public Health Student Handbooks regarding the specific criteria.

If the TUPAC Class President does not meet the criteria as above, the opportunity will be offered to the TUPAC Vice President. If both the President and Vice President do not meet the criteria, the Program reserves the right to identify and select an individual to represent their cohort at the ceremony.

Please note: all polls with regards to White Coat and Commencement will be conducted by program faculty/staff. Polls conducted by students on these topics will not be upheld.

### COMMENCEMENT CEREMONY

The Commencement Ceremony marks the celebration of successful completion of the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program. The ceremony is typically held in conjunction with other Programs in the College of Education and Health Sciences. As a result, a campus-wide planning committee is organized and oversees the coordination of

the event. The Joint Program has two individuals that serve on that committee: a PA faculty or staff member and a student within the graduating class. The student representative is peer-nominated and selected via a poll administered by Joint Program faculty and/or staff. The two representatives work together to advocate for the Joint Program and provide regular updates to faculty, staff, and students as needed.

Additionally, during the Commencement Ceremony itself, a student from each Program within the College provides remarks. The Joint student representative must be in good academic and professionalism standing, which the Joint Program defines as not being on either Academic or Professionalism Probation. Please see both the PA and Public Health Student Handbooks regarding the specific criteria.

For this ceremony, the student will be peer-nominated and selected via a poll administered by the PA Faculty/Staff Commencement Ceremony representative. If the nominated student does not meet the criteria as above, the opportunity will be offered to the student who received the next largest number of votes. If that student does not meet the criteria, the Program reserves the right to identify and select an individual to represent their cohort at the ceremony.

## GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

### MSPAS REQUIREMENTS

A student will be recommended for the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) provided they have fulfilled the following:

1. Completion of all prescribed academic requirements with a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or higher in the MSPAS Program
2. Successful completion of the MSPAS Summative course
3. Completion of all MPH Program Requirements.
4. Demonstration of no deficiencies in ethical, professional or personal conduct which would make it inappropriate to award the degrees and receipt of a final overall satisfactory rating on the Professional Evaluation
5. Compliance with all legal and financial requirements of Touro University California
6. Completion of the academic requirements within the required 150% of time frame following matriculation.
7. Completion and submission of the Application for Graduation from the Office of the Registrar.

### MPH REQUIREMENTS

Please see the [MPH Student Handbook](#) regarding MPH requirements and information on the MPH Capstone and Comprehensive Exam.

## END OF SECTION II

# APPENDICES

Please see the current [University Catalog](#) for the following Appendices:

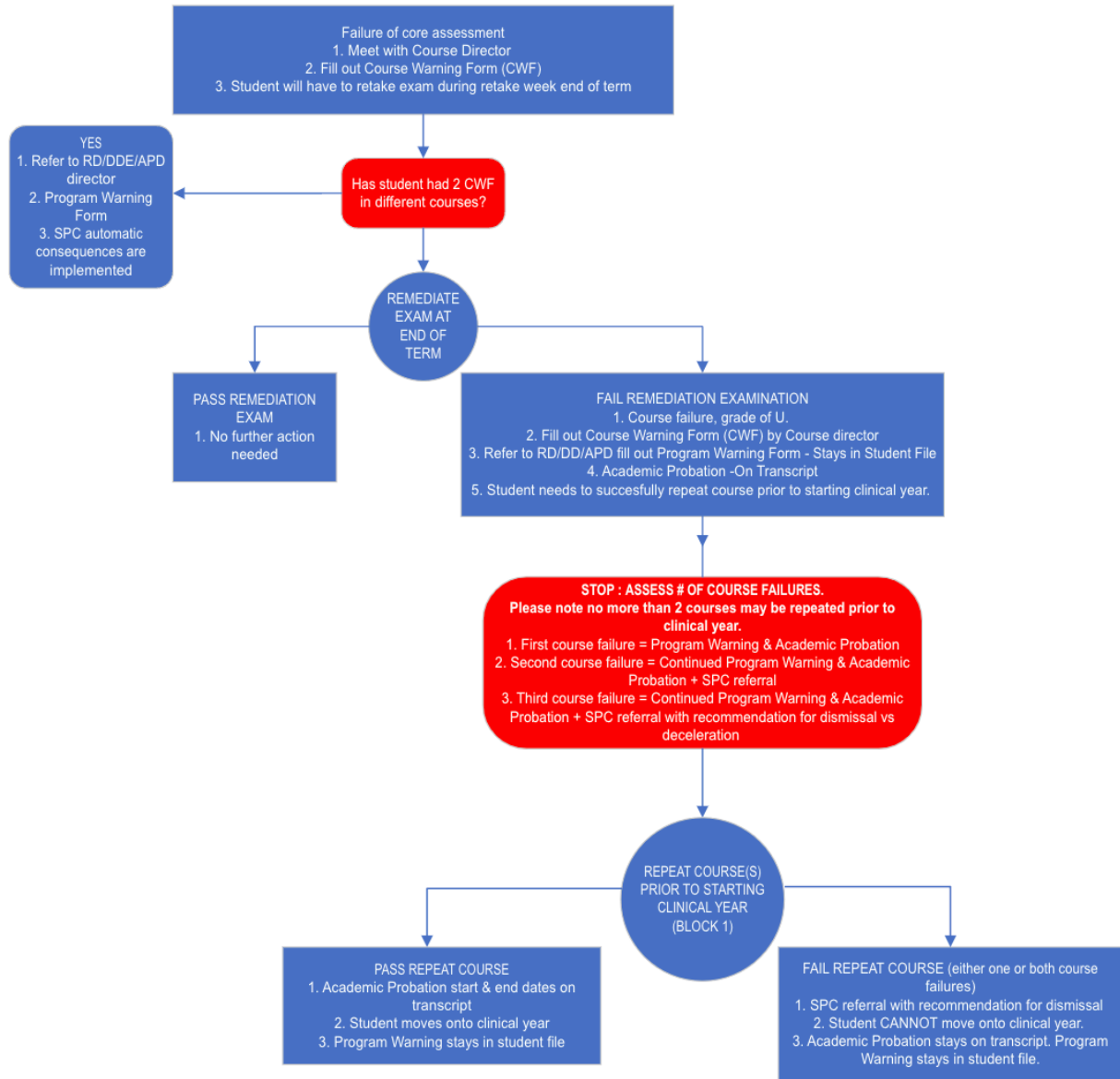
- A: Access to and Disclosure of Educational Records
- B: Drug-free Workplace Conduct Code
- B.1: Responsible Alcohol Use
- C: Student Conduct Code
- D: Policy and Procedure for Accommodating Students with Disabilities
- E: Code of Responsibilities and Rights of the Students of Touro University California
- F: Resolution Process for Disputes and Grievances and Misconduct
- G: Financial Aid Website Resources
- H: TUC Sexual Misconduct Policy
- I: Title IX Grievance Policy
- J: Drug Screening Procedures
- K: Touro University System Academic Integrity Policy
- L: (Excerpted from) Internet Services and User-Generated Content Policy
- M: Policies and Procedures Concerning Requests to Accommodate Disabilities and Complaints Regarding Allegations of Failure to Accommodate and Disability-Based Discrimination

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# APPENDIX A: MSPAS SPC ALGORITHM FOR DIDACTIC CORE ASSESSMENT AND COURSE FAILURES

Failure of a core assessment within a MSPAS course (not including electives) as indicated on the syllabus with a \*. Please see course syllabus for exact details for each course.



The SPC committee can recommend actions such as, but not limited to: probation, remediation, suspension, or dismissal. The committee's recommendations are then forwarded to the MSPAS Program Director for review. The MSPAS Program Director makes the decision to agree, amend or disagree with SPC recommendation

## APPENDIX B: EXAM REVIEW POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Exam review sessions are scheduled to allow students the opportunity to review graded exams on the MSPAS curriculum. The exam review is an individual activity with two purposes. It allows a student to 1) review where they might have had misunderstanding of the material and 2) analyze strengths and weaknesses as a test-taker.

Exam reviews will occur immediately after taking the exam or at a later time determined by the Course Director. There will be only one 20-30-minute review session per exam. Students who took the exam via Exemplify will use the same laptop to review the exam. If students took the exam on paper, they will be able to review their exam on paper at a separate time set up by the course director. If, due to extenuating circumstances, a student is unable to make the exam review session offered, the student may contact the course director to request review of the exam. This decision will be considered on an individual basis and may or may not be granted, including restrictions on when the exam review must be completed.

Review sessions are proctored. At the review session, students are provided with the answers for incorrect questions only. Students are not permitted to have any writing or recording devices, paper, books, cell phones etc. during the exam review. Students attending a delayed exam review are encouraged to complete a *Test Performance Analysis Form* for that exam (the student must write their name and exam being reviewed on the Form - I.e., Cardiovascular). Answering the questions on the exam review form is optional, but highly recommended. All materials passed out must be returned at the end and nothing can be recorded or photocopied. Following the review, if a student has a question or needs clarification regarding a particular question, they have the option to either fill out a *Question Challenge Form* stating the concern or set up an appointment to discuss it with the course director. The challenge form is collected by the exam proctor at the end of the review and turned into the course director. The student will receive an answer within 3 business days.

Clinical year End of Rotation exams (EORs) may not be reviewed at any time.

### **Exam Review Integrity**

Examination integrity policies also apply to exam reviews, whether they are on campus or held virtually. As outlined under 'Examination Integrity', the Program follows the NCCPA PANCE Exam Policy:

The unauthorized retention, possession, copying, distribution, disclosure, discussion, or receipt of any examination question, in whole or in part, by written, electronic, oral, or other form of communication, including but not limited to emailing, copying, or printing of electronic files and reconstruction through memorization and/or dictation, before, during, or after an examination, is strictly prohibited.



## APPENDIX C: TIME OFF REQUEST FORM

Complete this form to request time off during the didactic component of the curriculum. See the Clinical Year Handbook for procedures while on rotations. Prior to submitting this form, please review the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program policies regarding time off, which states the following:

While it is the Program policy that students attend all classes, labs and other Program related functions, the Program understands a student may have exceptional events that might keep them from classes or Program activities.

Students are permitted **two (2)** excused (planned and/or unplanned) absences **per term**.

- Any student requesting time away for an exceptional event must complete and submit a time off request form a minimum of one month in advance. You are required to obtain signatures on this form from the course directors of every class you will miss. Time Away Request forms are to be submitted to the designated Program personnel (Director of Didactic Education). The approval of each request is made on an individual basis and there is no guarantee the approval will be granted.
- Illness and family emergencies (i.e., not routine activities that can be rescheduled to accommodate a PA student's education and career) are generally the only acceptable reasons for an unplanned absence. The Program will allow up to 5 days for bereavement leave.
- Any time away from the Program for up to two weeks during the didactic phase may be considered a Program Break.

For clinical year time off request and definitions, please see the Clinical Year Handbook.

### STUDENT: Complete Part A

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) of planned absence: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for requested absence:

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During which term are you requesting time off? (*circle*)

*Fall/Sem I    Spring/Sem II    Summer/Sem III    Fall/Sem IV    Spring/Sem V*

Please indicate the number of excused & unexcused absences you have already requested or already taken during this term:

#approved absences for this term: \_\_\_\_\_ dates: \_\_\_\_\_

# unexcused absences for this term: \_\_\_\_\_ dates: \_\_\_\_\_

Approval of PA and PH Directors/Instructors for courses to be missed:

Course Name	Date(s) to be missed	Instructor/Director Name	Instructor/Director Signature	Date of Signature

- Are you requesting that the course director(s) record the missed lecture(s)?      Yes      No
- Are you requesting consideration for a DIDACTIC Program Break?                      Yes      No

I verify that the information provided in this form is complete and accurate.

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

**PROGRAM: Complete Part B**

Completed request form was submitted one month in advance: *(circle)* YES / NO  
 If no, reason for waiver: \_\_\_\_\_

All approvals were obtained: *(circle)* YES / NO  
 If no, reason for waiver: \_\_\_\_\_

Time off Request:      Approved      Denied

Authorized Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX D: HEALTH REQUIREMENTS - CLASS OF 2026

## MATRICULATING STUDENTS

As an incoming student, you are required to complete and provide documentation of the following health requirements **prior** to matriculation in the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program. Instructions on submitting this information can be found here: <https://portal.castlebranch.com/TL79> (select “Physician Assistant (Pre-pay)”, followed by “Medical Document Manager”). Be sure that you sign up for the Class of 2026 health requirements. **Once you have a Touro student email address, you will need to update your contact email with Castlebranch so that you continue to receive notifications when new health requirements are due.**

Please note that if you submit a photo of your documentation, it must be of high quality and easy to read (e.g., good lighting, no shadows, a solid color background, etc.), and **converted to a PDF** prior to submission. Please contact Student Health if you need guidance.

### 1. **Quantitative antibody titer for each of the following:**

- A. Measles (Rubeola)
- B. Mumps
- C. Rubella
- D. Varicella (Chicken Pox)
- E. Hepatitis B

Please submit documentation of a **quantitative** antibody titer completed within the past 5 years for each of the above (lab report or physician verification required). Please note that qualitative antibody titers are not sufficient, so be sure to ask specifically for quantitative titers.

This section only applies to you if one or more of your titers comes back negative or equivocal

If you have a negative or equivocal titer, a new alert will be created for you to take additional actions:

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella and/or Varicella- Repeat the 2 dose vaccine series and upload the documentation to Castlebranch.
- Hepatitis B- Repeat the 2 or 3 dose vaccine series and repeat the Hepatitis B titer a minimum of 1 month after the final vaccine.
  - If you are a non-responder (negative titer after 2 series of vaccines), Student Health will provide you with documentation of your non-responder status based on the data you have uploaded to Castlebranch.

### 2. **Tuberculosis (TB)**

- A. If you have never had a positive TB test, submit documentation of the following:
  - Form C – Initial TB Symptom Survey AND
  - Documentation of **one** of the following administered within 3 months of matriculation (May, June, or July):
    - Negative Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) blood test (if you have received a BCG vaccine in the past, you should get this test) OR
    - Negative one-step skin test (on Form D)

B. If you have a documented history of a positive TB test (or if the above TB testing is positive), submit ALL of the following using Forms C & D. Please note that if you have a history of a positive TB test but you have no medical documentation, you should follow the requirements listed above for students with no history of a positive test.

- Documentation of the past positive test AND
- Clear chest x-ray report within the past 6 months AND
- Form C – Initial TB Symptom Survey (signed by a medical provider) AND
- Documentation of one of the following:
  - Latent TB treatment OR
  - Documentation from a medical provider (i.e., PA/NP/MD/DO) that treatment has been declined.

C. Additional information:

- TB skin test results must be read between 48 and 72 hours of placement and recorded in mm of induration.
- If testing is 'indeterminate', then repeat the test. If that repeat testing is still 'indeterminate', then get the other test (i.e., if first 2 tests were PPDs, the 3<sup>rd</sup> should be an IGRA).
- All Documentation must be submitted on Forms C and D (D only for those submitting PPD results rather than IGRA results).

3. **Tetanus, Diphtheria, & Pertussis (Tdap)**- Submit documentation of a Tdap booster administered within the last 10 years.

#### 4. COVID Vaccine Requirement

- A. Students must be up to date with their COVID vaccines, including the primary series and a booster.
- B. Students who wish to obtain a COVID vaccination exemption, either religious or medical, should contact Dr. Fraylanie Aglipay, Associate Dean of Student Affairs at [faglipay@touro.edu](mailto:faglipay@touro.edu). Students who are granted an exemption may be required to wear a KN95 mask on campus and be subject to regularly scheduled surveillance testing depending on community COVID rates.
- C. Campus masking policy is regularly reviewed and updated with changes to masking requirements communicated to the campus community through email.
- D. Please note: If you feel ill, you should not come to campus. If you are diagnosed with COVID, please report this to the Student Health and the appropriate Joint Program staff or faculty member based on the Student Handbook.

#### 5. Forms

Complete the following forms and submit to Castlebranch:

- **Form A: Student Information**
- **Form B: Physical Examination & Health History** (completed within the past 12 months)
- **Form C: Initial TB Symptom Survey**
- **Form D: PPD** (only if you are completing a PPD for your TB requirement, this form is not required for the IGRA test)

- **Form F: Consent for Student Health to maintain health information and release of Information to Clinical Rotations**

## CONTINUING STUDENTS

### 1. Influenza vaccine- due by October 15 of each year

Please submit documentation of a flu vaccine administered during the Fall each year that you are a Touro student. Documentation must indicate that the vaccine you received is from the current flu season. You will not be able to get this vaccine until after you have matriculated, as it is first available in September.

### 2. Updated physical exam- complete between December 15<sup>th</sup> and February 1<sup>st</sup> during the second year of enrollment prior to the start of rotations.

### 3. Tuberculosis (TB)- complete between January 1 and February 1 in the second year of enrollment prior to starting clinical rotations.

#### A. If you have never had a positive TB test, submit documentation of the following:

- Form C – ANNUAL TB Symptom Survey AND
- Documentation of **one** of the following:
  - Negative Interferon Gamma Release Assay (IGRA) blood test (if you have received a BCG vaccine in the past, you should get this test) OR
  - Negative **TWO-step** skin test (on Form D)

#### B. If you have a documented history of a positive TB test (or if the above TB testing is positive), submit the following using Form C. Please note that if you have a history of a positive TB test but you have no medical documentation, you should follow the requirements listed above for students with no history of a positive test.

- Form C – ANNUAL TB Symptom Survey AND
- Clear chest x-ray report within the past 6 months

#### C. Additional information:

- TB skin test results must be read between 48 and 72 hours of placement and recorded in mm of induration.
- If testing is 'indeterminate', then repeat the test. If that repeat testing is still 'indeterminate', then get the other test (i.e., if first 2 tests were PPDs, the 3<sup>rd</sup> should be an IGRA).
- All Documentation must be submitted on Forms C and D (D only for those submitting PPD results rather than IGRA results).

### 4. COVID- Based on CDC recommendations, additional vaccination and/or testing requirements may be added.

### 5. Tetanus, Diphtheria, & Pertussis (Tdap)

You must remain current with either Tdap or Td during your enrollment at Touro (within 10 years).

### 6. Other- Additional requirements may be added during the second year of the program depending on clinical rotation site protocols.

## APPENDIX E: VIRTUAL (ZOOM/ONLINE) ETIQUETTE

The Zoom meeting room platform will be used to conduct all “virtual” sessions. The TUC Joint MSPAS/MPH Program has adopted these “virtual etiquette and behavior expectations” as the minimum requirements for students during Zoom/online classroom sessions.

Students must:

1. Display professionalism at all times, including being prepared to engage in scholarly discussions.
2. Avoid sharing Zoom/classroom information, links or passwords to anyone outside of their cohort or PA Program.
3. Have a computer with video and audio capabilities and know how to operate the features on their device before class begins.
4. Upon entering the Zoom/online classroom, mute their microphones (if not already muted by the Host). In addition, students should rename their display name as “First Name” “Last Name.” This will assist us in maintaining the safety and security of our Zoom/online sessions.
5. When possible, use a headphone device when engaged in the virtual session in order to reduce ambient noise and distractions.
6. Enter the Zoom/online classroom with their videos on (faces displayed) and keep their videos on for the entirety of the class session. Icons or pictures replacing the live Zoom video are only acceptable when taking short breaks during the virtual class setting (limited to no more than five minutes and preferably taken during the regularly scheduled breaks as given by the Host) or as needed when household responsibilities arise.
7. Choose an appropriate physical environment prior to entering the Zoom/online classroom and avoid those that are distracting to other participants. Virtual backgrounds may be allowed at the discretion of the Host. The Host will notify students when they can switch to a virtual background (i.e., the last 15 minutes of class time).
8. As much as possible, attempt to have “stable” access to the Internet at all times to reduce learning interruptions and unfortunate disconnections during the class session.
9. Use the chat box to communicate to the class when appropriate or when taking a short break from the class discussion. While private chat communication is enabled for most Zoom/online classes, it is expected that students will use this feature in a professional manner.
10. Use appropriate language and “Emoticons” during class engagement so as not to offend other members of their learning community. Students are encouraged to use the “raise hand” feature in the Participants tab in order to ask questions of the group or Host.
11. Understand that these virtual rules of engagement also serve as an initial warning to all students and any violation of this “Virtual Etiquette Policy” can result in the student receiving a professionalism warning/infracton as outlined in the Student Handbook.

## APPENDIX F: TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program has developed a set of technical standards that identify the requirements for admission, retention, and graduation of all applicants and students. Every applicant who seeks admission to the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program is expected to possess those intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and achieve the levels of competence required by the program and entry into the PA profession. Each candidate for the MSPAS/MPH degree must be able to integrate all information received, perform as a member of a physician-PA team, and demonstrate the ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize information and data within a reasonable time frame.

These technical standards identify the requirements for admission, retention, and graduation of applicants and students. The Joint MSPAS/MPH Program will make every effort to provide reasonable accommodations for physically challenged students, however in doing so, the program must maintain the integrity of its curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to the acquisition of knowledge in all areas of medicine, including the demonstration of basic skills requisite for the practice of medicine. Completion of this program requires that each student independently demonstrate these capabilities. Surrogates cannot be used to accomplish the essential requirements. Individuals may not have undue dependence on technology or trained intermediaries in order to perform basic clinical skills required for the PA profession. Graduates are expected to be qualified to enter into all fields of medicine.

Each MSPAS/MPH candidate shall be required to attest to his/her ability to meet these technical standards at matriculation and throughout the program. Failure to notify the Joint MSPAS/MPH Program of any significant health changes that may affect patient care or the ability to meet Program Technical Standards may result in dismissal from the Program.

Accordingly, the program requires each individual to meet the following technical requirements.

1. **Communication:** The individual must be able to speak, hear, and observe in order to elicit information, examine patients, perceive non-verbal communication, and describe observed abnormalities. Communication includes not only speech, but also reading and writing. Individuals must also be able to communicate effectively, succinctly, and efficiently in the oral and written form with university personnel, peers, patients, family members and all members of the health care team. Finally, the individual must be capable of responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity to potential cultural differences.
2. **Motor Function and Mobility:** The individual must have sufficient strength and coordination to perform the activities required of a physician assistant. These include performing a physical examination involving techniques in palpation and percussion and utilizing diagnostic instruments. The individual must have sufficient stamina to sit, stand and move within the classroom, laboratory, examination rooms, treatment rooms and operating rooms for extended periods of time. They must have sufficient coordination to move about patient care environments and sufficient dexterity to use common medical instruments. The individual must have sufficient motor function and execute movements required to provide general care and emergency treatment to

patients. Examples of emergency treatment required for physician assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administration of intravenous medication, application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, and suturing of simple wounds. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

3. **Sensory:** The individual must possess sufficient visual, auditory and tactile sensation to receive appropriate information in the classroom, laboratory, clinical and other education settings. Sensation must be sufficient to receive verbal and non-verbal information while interviewing patients and to perceive signs of disease identified through patient evaluation involving inspection, percussion, palpation and auditory information at various frequencies (i.e., patient voice, heart tones, bowel and lung sounds). All of these are essential for the evaluation and treatment of the patient.
4. **Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities:** The individual must have the cognitive abilities necessary to master curriculum content in a timely manner. The individual must also have the cognitive abilities to be able to immediately process and assess all clinical information provided, even in distracting settings, to allow for appropriate patient evaluation and care.

These skills may be described as the ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze, and synthesize material. The individual must be able to discern and comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships of structures and to develop reasoning and decision-making skills. Within a reasonable time frame, the individual must be able to:

- Independently access and interpret medical data
- Identify significant findings from history, physical examination and laboratory data
- Provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses and recommend treatment regimens
- Recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner
- Seek consultation from supervising providers appropriately

5. **Behavioral and Social Abilities:** The individual must possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility, and tolerance. The individual must possess the emotional health required for the:
  - Full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities
  - Exercise of good judgment
  - Prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients
  - Development of mature, sensitive relationships with patients and co-workers.

The individual must also be able to:

- Tolerate physically and mentally taxing workloads
- Adapt to changing environments and display flexibility
- Prioritize competing demands
- Understand the basis and content of medical ethics
- Work effectively as a team member
- Accept constructive feedback and adopt appropriate modifications



- Recognize limitations in knowledge, skills and abilities and seek appropriate assistance with identified limitations.
- Learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in medicine.

## APPENDIX G: GIVING USEFUL FEEDBACK TO PROFESSORS

YOUR FEEDBACK COUNTS – just as professors give you feedback on your work to help you learn more effectively, there are opportunities throughout the curriculum to give your professors useful feedback to help them teach more effectively.

There will be surveys given throughout your time as a student at Touro. These survey results help your professors to know what was working for you and what wasn't. Think back over the whole semester before you rate your professor and carefully consider how much you have learned. Think about the kind of feedback that will be helpful. "Venting" is not appropriate when giving feedback. If you need an outlet for venting, consider talking with friends or family or writing it out in a document that then gets trashed.

Written comments are especially important as feedback for your professors. These should be useful so your professor can create the best learning environment for you and your fellow students.

### Three things to remember:

- Give feedback that avoids "emotionally-charged" words
- Give feedback that describes specific behavior rather than your inferences
- Give feedback that reflects on positive behaviors and gives solutions

Instead of this...	Try this.
This professor was awesome.	This professor gave us lots of activities to do in the classroom which helped me really understand the material.
This professor sucks.	I had trouble following the lecture in class because of going through the material so quickly. It would be helpful if you could slow down or check-in with the class intermittently to be sure we are with you.
The professor was caring.	I really appreciated the way the professor was always there after class to answer questions and always responded to my emails in a timely manner.
The professor wasted our time by teaching us things we didn't need to know. What are we- dentists??	I did not understand the relevance of the Smiles for Life curriculum to the program. I hope you will consider adding an introduction to that curriculum to help me better understand how I might utilize that knowledge as a PA student.
It's not possible to do the homework because the professor never gives us directions.	It would be helpful if the professor incorporated a few of the homework problems into the lecture so we can see how to go about solving them and can ask questions if we still don't understand.

Modified from the University of Texas at Austin Faculty Innovation Center document:

[https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/giving\\_useful\\_feedback\\_to\\_your\\_professors\\_12716.pdf](https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/sites/default/files/giving_useful_feedback_to_your_professors_12716.pdf)

## APPENDIX H: TUC PA/MPH “NETIQUETTE”

**Students are expected to use appropriate etiquette when communicating with faculty and staff.** This applies to in person, telephone or electronic communications (emails, discussion board posts, etc.).

Appropriate etiquette should adhere to the guidelines below:

- Open with a salutation (e.g., Hi, Hello, Dear X) and finish with a closing (e.g., Best, Regards, Thank you, your name). Introductory emails should address faculty and staff more formally (Dear Dr. Smith or Hello Ms. Jones) unless the faculty or staff member has given permission to use their first name. It is appropriate to include a simple, “What would you like me to call you?” or “Is it ok to call you X?” question.
- Use complete sentences and avoid jargon, especially text-type words (e.g., C U). This is especially important when sending messages from mobile devices.
- Be careful with humor and sarcasm; in written form humor does not always translate well. Sarcasm should be avoided.
- Avoid typing a message in CAPSLOCK-this conveys anger or frustration just as raising one’s voice conveys such emotions over the telephone or in person.
- Do not use swear words or pejorative terms (e.g., calling someone stupid).
- Maintain a professional tone; remain neutral when discussing an issue or problem. This helps to engage the reader in finding a solution by avoiding negative emotions. Using “please” and “thank you” are appropriate, and another way to engage the reader.
- Include complete information about the question or concern at hand. Emails should be brief; if it takes more than 3 paragraphs to communicate about the issue or topic, consider an appointment to discuss on the phone or in person.
- Avoid sending email in anger or frustration. Walk away from the computer and wait at least 24 hours. Email communications cannot be “taken back” and the damage caused by an ill-advised email can be permanent. In high-stress or emotional situations, ask a trusted friend or colleague to provide feedback before hitting “send”. Messages sent in anger may be interpreted as disruptive, abusive or threatening, making the sender subject a Student Code of Conduct violation.
- Everyone makes mistakes. If an email was sent in frustration or anger, email an apology as soon as possible. A simple, “I am sorry and should not have sent that email. I apologize for my wording ...” will go a long way to repair the damage to the relationship.
- Proofread! Reread each email message to ensure it is clear and without grammar or spelling errors. Remember that email is simply another professional behavior and a poorly crafted message is a negative reflection on one’s ability to communicate effectively.
- Remember any email you send can be forwarded to others.

Consider adopting the following policy when sending and reading email:

- As the sender, assume the reader will read the email in the most negative light.
- As the receiver, assume the sender had the best possible intent.

## 2026 STUDENT HANDBOOK SIGNATURE SHEET

I have read, understand and agree to follow the policies and procedures set forth by Touro University California and the Joint MSPAS/MPH program as outlined in this handbook. As a student I am responsible for referring to this handbook for specific policies and procedures governing my status as a student to include program requirements, goals and objectives, satisfactory academic and professional progress, graduation requirements and grievance policies.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Signature Sheet Due to Program Office by 3:00pm on Friday, September 1, 2023.**