

SOUTHERN ILLINOIS UNIVERSITY PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM STUDENT PROGRESS SYSTEM

PREAMBLE

Physician Assistant (PA) students at Southern Illinois University are members of the university community and as such, are responsible for conforming to all rules and regulations of Southern Illinois University Carbondale including the Student Conduct Code for Southern Illinois University at Carbondale and the School of Medicine Code of Conduct. In addition, they shall be responsible for conforming to the standards of Academic Conduct established by the PA Program under this PA Student Progress System.

DIVISION I - PURPOSE

Southern Illinois University's School of Medicine (SOM) provides a professional community of faculty, students, administrators, and staff who share responsibility for the achievement of a common goal: the training of competent physician assistants who shall exhibit and maintain high standards of professional and personal conduct. The progress of students shall be monitored to ensure and facilitate each student's adherence to established standards of Academic Conduct which is defined to include Academic Performance and Professional Conduct. This document describes the system employed by the Physician Assistant Program for considering matters of student progress.

DIVISION II – INTRODUCTION

The primary objectives of any educational institution are broadly academic in nature: the institution exists to help the student acquire knowledge and to certify that knowledge has been acquired. Therefore, where training of physician assistants is concerned, special consideration is given to noncognitive expectations related to Academic and Clinical Performance as well as to Professional Conduct. Certification of completion by the PA program implies that the student has acquired the knowledge and has demonstrated the behaviors and conduct necessary to assume the responsibility with physician collaboration for the protection of human life and health.

However, knowledge alone does not ensure academic competence. It is also necessary that knowledge be employed in a skillful, responsible, and ethical manner.

PA students shall demonstrate sensitive and humane consideration for patients by projecting a professional image through proper attitude, behavior, manner, dress, and grooming. Therefore PA students shall display behavior congruent with the standards of the profession. PA students shall not demonstrate behavior that is considered to render them unfit for a career in medicine or that shall cast serious doubts upon their potential suitability or competence as physician assistants, (e.g. demonstration of poor judgment, lack of integrity, inappropriate interpersonal relations with patients, faculty, or peers, poor self-discipline, lack of responsibility or dependability, inability to recognize personal limitations or function under pressure).

PA students are members of the medical community. While trainee status dictates restriction of their privileges within this community, PA students have responsibilities similar to those of their senior colleagues for their own Professional Conduct. Professional Conduct includes, but is not limited to: behavior consistent with the highest standards of professional and personal integrity and honesty, as well as compliance with laws, rules, regulations, and applicable guidelines.

In summary, it is the responsibility of the PA program faculty to define academic and professional conduct standards.

DIVISION III - STANDARDS OF ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Section 3.1 - Academic Performances

Both didactic and clinical objectives are included as components of Academic Conduct.

Promotion within the curriculum and graduation from the PA program with the granting of the MSPA degree are based on satisfactorily meeting the performance standards established by the faculty.

A. Performance Standards

Evaluation of students' progress is determined by achievement of identified curricular objectives at the end of appropriate curricular segments (e.g., modules, units, clinical rotations, preceptorship, and electives). Each student's performance is by PBL group assessments and ongoing evaluations by academic and clinical faculty.

B. Completion of Curricular Segments

To complete a curricular segment, a student must achieve both the cognitive and noncognitive objectives specified by faculty.

In order to achieve academic and clinical objectives, a student must demonstrate: the acquisition of reasoning and problem solving abilities, appropriate technical and procedural skills, clinical sophistication in history taking and physical examination, problem identification and integration, diagnosis and patient management, use of current literature, computer skills and knowledge of patient education.

In order to achieve professional conduct objectives, a student must demonstrate behavior congruent with the PA profession including, but not limited to, the following: self-directed learning; effective time utilization; critical thinking; sound judgment; appropriate interpersonal relations with program and clinical faculty, patients, and peers; self-evaluation; self-discipline; professional dress and grooming; responsibility; motivation; dependability; integrity; emotional and professional maturity; ability to recognize personal limitations and to function under pressure; and both oral and written communication skills.

C. Remediation of Curricular Segments

If a student does not achieve the objective for a curricular segment, program faculty may develop a plan for remediation. If necessary, adjustments in the student's curricular program will be considered by the PA – SPC. The PA – SPC recommendation will then be forwarded to the PA Program Director for formal approval.

D. Promotion

1. Phase I

The Problem-Based Learning Curriculum is a 26-month continuous curriculum. Progress is determined by achievement of identified curricular objectives (see sections 3.1A & B). At the completion of Phase I, students may be required to satisfactorily complete a pertinent comprehensive evaluation recommended by the PA program faculty. When making recommendations for promotion to Phase II the SPC will evaluate and consider all aspects of a student's academic and professional performance. Program faculty will apprise students of their performance at the end of each unit. Students will be referred to the PA – SPC if serious academic, clinical or professional deficiencies are identified. The PA – SPC will make recommendations regarding promotion from Phase I to Phase II after evaluating and considering all aspects of a student's performance.

2. Phases II & III

Completion of Phases II and III requires satisfactory completion of all clinical rotations included in the student's program. When making recommendations for graduation, the SPC will evaluate and consider all aspects of a student's academic, clinical and professional performance while in the PA Program.

E. Failure to Achieve Objectives

When, after due consideration of a student's overall academic and clinical performance and any special circumstances, it has been determined that the student has failed to meet identified objectives, the student may be given a Letter of Concern, Formal Warning, placed on Programmatic Remediation, Leave of Absence or Special Student Status, or dismissed from the PA program. Any of these actions may be taken based upon the severity of the student's deficiencies. Progressive implementation of the above actions shall not be required.

A student who fails to meet the objectives of any curricular segment may be required to repeat it or to participate in other remedial activities as deemed appropriate by the Student Progress Committee. Unlimited opportunity to repeat curricular segments is neither feasible nor desirable. A student may be dismissed from the PA program as a result of frequent remediation, repetition of curricular units, repetition of the clinical rotations, or as a result of professional misconduct.

In this regard, it should be emphasized that a pattern of academic performance difficulty creates serious doubts about a student's competence and potential ability to function as a physician assistant. As a student moves from Phase I through Phase II, there are increasing expectations relative to academic performance. Accordingly, when a student has experienced prior deficiencies there will be decreasing tolerance by the PA program for deficient performance in subsequent curricular activities. In such instances, the Student Progress Committee may consider programmatic remediation or dismissal to be appropriate.

In situations where students fail to achieve the academic objectives of the curriculum because of academic dishonesty or social misconduct, their behavior is governed by the Student Conduct Code.

Section 3.2 Professional Conduct in Clinical Facilities

Students are required to conform to standards of professional conduct at all times while participating in clinical settings such as physician's offices, clinics or hospitals. Students participate in activities such as direct patient contact and performance of clinical procedures under the direction of a physician or PA. Professional conduct is governed by the Code of Ethics of the Physician Assistant Profession. See Appendix A.

Examples of behaviors inconsistent with professional clinical conduct include but are not limited to:

1. assuming the role of or answering to the title of Physician
2. disclosing confidential privileged information inappropriately or unethically
3. engaging in inappropriate interpersonal behavior with staff or patients
4. removing medications or supplies from a facility
5. failing to comply with Federal and/or state laws governing affiliated hospitals or other medical facilities

Failure to demonstrate behavior consistent with the standards of the PA profession, including personal and professional integrity and honesty may result in loss of the status of good standing and may result in dismissal from the program.

DIVISION IV - GRADUATION

Graduation is recommended by the Student Progress Committee to the PA Program Director and to the Chair of the Department of Family and Community Medicine and to the Dean of the School of Medicine when a student has met the Standards of Academic Conduct including Academic Performance and Professional Conduct previously described. The PA Program Director shall review and act upon the recommendation of the PA- SPC.

DIVISION V - COMMITTEE

Section 5.1 - Student Progress Committee

A. Definition

The PA-Student Progress Committee (PA-SPC) is responsible for monitoring the progress of all students through the curriculum.

B. Composition and Appointment

The PA Program Director appoints the members to the SPC and the Chair of the SPC. Voting privileges shall be granted to all committee members.

C. Conduct of Meetings

Meetings to review student progress are regularly scheduled. The Chair establishes the agenda. Special meetings and other proceedings are scheduled as needed.

D. Responsibilities and Jurisdiction

The PA-SPC shall function under the PA-Student Progress System as an advisory body to the PA Program Director. The responsibilities of the Committee are to monitor student progress, identify problem areas, assist students in dealing with these problems, and determine whether the established standards of Academic Conduct have been met. The PA-SPC may delegate any or all of its responsibilities to an appointed subcommittee or subcommittees.

Problems may be identified and reported through such means as written evaluation by departments and communications from individual members of the PA program faculty and the medical community. Ordinarily such concerns are directed to the PA-SPC Chair, who establishes the agenda for meetings and/or other proceedings as appropriate. The PA-SPC shall have jurisdiction to consider all matters of Academic Conduct as previously defined to include Academic Performance. The PA-SPC is responsible for conducting meetings and other proceedings in accordance with these procedures, making recommendations for actions to the PA Program Director. PA-SPC recommendations may include, but are not limited to the following:

1. Graduation.
2. Promotion.
3. Remediation.

4. Leaves of Absence.

- a. Voluntary: A student may request a Leave of Absence from the PA Program Director or designee. The request must be in writing and must set out the dates, reasons therefore and the proposed use of Leave of Absence time. The PA Director or designee may grant the request or refer the request to the PA-SPC for action. If the request is granted, then the PA-SPC will be informed of this action. If the request is referred to the PA-SPC for action then the PA-SPC will evaluate the request and make a recommendation to the PA Program Director. If a Leave of Absence is granted, then conditions may be specified, which the student must meet during the Leave of Absence period.
- b. Involuntary: Under extraordinary circumstances, the PA-SPC may recommend to the PA Program Director that a student be placed on Leave of Absence. Such leave of absence might be imposed if the SPC thinks that it is in the student's best interest, i.e. due to personal illness, the extended illness of a family member or other unforeseen situations. In imposing a Leave of Absence, the PA Program Director may specify conditions that must be met during the period of the Leave of Absence.

5. Letter of Concern. A letter of concern could be sent to students whose overall progress is satisfactory but marked by marginal or unsatisfactory performance on specific curricular objectives. A letter may also be sent when the PA-SPC perceives a trend toward increasing academic or professional difficulties. The letter shall state the specific reasons for faculty concern.

6. Formal Warning: A written notice of formal warning will be sent by the committee chair and may be issued for a consistent pattern of marginal or unsatisfactory performance. In addition, major deficiencies in academic performance or violations of the standards of professional conduct may warrant a letter of formal warning.

7. Programmatic remediation: Programmatic remediation is a status other than good standing which shall be established with specified requirements that must be met before the student is returned to good standing. If these requirements are not met, a recommendation for dismissal from the PA program will follow. A student may be placed on Programmatic remediation for deficiencies in Academic Performance or for violation of the standards of Professional Conduct. Any student in this category will meet with the PA Program Director to discuss the terms of remediation.

8. Special Student Status: Special Student Status is a status, which shall be established for a specified period of time with specified requirements that must be met. This special status is appropriate for students receiving academic support services.
9. Dismissal from the PA program: A student may be dismissed from the PA program for failure to meet the standards of Academic Conduct and/or Professional Conduct previously described, failure to meet the requirements of Programmatic remediation or Special Student Status, or failure to meet Leave of Absence conditions.

DIVISION VI – PROCEDURES

Section 6.1 Academic Grievance

A. Grading procedures

Grades given at the end of a course are final and may not be changed by additional work or by submitting additional materials. Extenuating circumstances which transcend faculty judgment of the instructor may be appealed through procedures established by the instructor's school or college. Matters related to faculty judgment in grading may not be appealed.

Matters relating to academic evaluation for the PA program are the responsibility of the Department of Family & Community Medicine and the office of the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine. Every effort should be made to resolve such academic evaluation problems quickly and at the program level where they occur prior to involvement at the departmental level.

Grades may be appealed only on procedural grounds and not on substantive grounds. Grades may not be appealed beyond the level of the dean.

B. Appeal

Matters pertaining to evaluation of a course in which the student is or has been registered that are not resolved between the persons directly involved will be adjudicated in the following manner:

1. A student who has reason to be aggrieved will file the complaint in writing with the Chair of the Department of Family & Community Medicine.
 - a. The complaint must be presented in sufficient detail that a proper response may be made.
 - b. The complaint must be received by the department chair within 30 working days of the occurrence of the incident.
2. The Department of Family & Community Medicine Chair will submit a copy of the complaint to the other party named in the complaint within 20 working days.
3. The other party will respond in writing to the complaint to Department of Family & Community Medicine Chair within 15 working days of receipt of the copy of the complaint.
4. The Department of Family & Community Medicine Chair will, within seven working days of receipt of the response to the complaint, transmit a written decision in the matter to both parties along with notification of appellate procedures. A copy of the response to the complaint will also be sent to the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine. Failure of either party to respond through the appropriate appellate channels within 15 working days will be interpreted as acceptance of the decision and its implementation by the appropriate office.

C. Further Appeal

Should either party be unwilling to accept the decision of the Department of Family & Community Medicine Chair, an appeal may be made to the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine.

- A. When the Physician Assistant Student Progress Committee (PA-SPC) determines that grounds for dismissal of a student from the PA Program for academic and/or clinical performance reasons may exist, the student will be asked to appear at a meeting of the PA-SPC. Written notice shall be forwarded to the student by the PA-SPC Chair at least ten (10) working days prior to the scheduled PA-SPC meeting at which the dismissal question is to be addressed. A copy of the notice shall be forwarded to all PA-SPC members. The notice shall set out a summary of the student's academic and/or clinical performance deficiencies, an indication of all relevant action of the PA-SPC to date, and a description of the concerns that are causing the PA-SPC to consider dismissal of the student from the PA program. The written notice shall further state the date, time, and place of the PA-SPC meeting at which the dismissal question is to be addressed and shall request that the student be available for appearance at the meeting. The student shall be informed in writing of the right to select and be accompanied by an adviser at that time. The written notification shall include a statement that the student may, if desired, submit a written response to the academic and/or performance deficiencies set out in the PA-SPC notice letter. Such response shall be forwarded to the PA-SPC Chair at least three (3) working days in advance of the meeting. The PA-SPC Chair shall then forward a copy of the response to all PA-SPC members.
- B. At least five (5) working days before the meeting, the student shall notify the Chair of the PA-SPC, in writing, of the identity of any witnesses to be presented at the meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the student to contact and arrange for the appearance of any witness the student intends to present. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall notify the student, in writing, of any witnesses it intends to invite to be present at the meeting.
- C. On the scheduled meeting date, the question of dismissal of the named student from the PA program shall be considered by the PA-SPC. It shall be required that not less than a majority of voting members of the PA-SPC be present. In deciding the question of dismissal, the PA-SPC shall have the right to consider any information pertinent to the student's academic and/or clinical performance including, but not limited to, the entire student file of the named individual and the minutes of previous PA-SPC meetings where the performance deficiencies of the named individual were discussed. These documents shall be made available to the student in advance of the scheduled meeting upon written request.

D. Conduct of Meeting and Student Rights

1. The Chair of the PA-SPC, who shall determine the order of the proceeding and make any necessary procedural decisions, shall chair the meeting.
2. The student is entitled to appear at the meeting with an adviser of choice, hear a summary statement of concerns of the PA-SPC, and provide the Committee supporting oral and documentary information, make opening and closing statements, present and reasonably question any witnesses, and rebut any adverse information. However, the student shall not have the right to be present during deliberations of the Committee.
3. The PA-SPC members shall have the right to invite and question any witnesses, to question the student, and to question the student's witnesses.
4. The portion of the meeting during which the student is present shall be recorded on audiotape. A transcript of the proceedings shall be made available to the student upon request within a reasonable period of time.
5. At the meeting, the student's adviser shall be permitted to counsel the student. The adviser shall not be permitted to question or examine witnesses or Committee members.
6. The meeting shall be closed; only the student and the student's adviser shall be admitted. With the exception of Committee members who may be asked to appear as witnesses, witnesses may be present only while they are being questioned.

E. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall submit the recommendation of the Committee to the PA Program Director in writing and without undue delay. The PA-SPC may review a transcript of the meeting prior to submitting its recommendation. The recommendation will specifically address the question of student dismissal from the PA program and shall set out in reasonable detail the reasons underlying the recommendation. When the decision is not unanimous, a minority report may be submitted.

F. After completion of action by the PA-SPC, all documents and records in the matter shall be forwarded to the PA Program Director.

G. The PA Program Director shall consider the recommendations of the PA-SPC, as well as the entire record in the matter, and shall render a decision as promptly as possible. Copies of the decision shall be forwarded to all principal parties and the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine.

H. Academic Appeal

1. An appeal may be made to the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine. Such appeal must be submitted in writing within 15 working days of the receipt of the decision by the PA Program Director. The appeal must specify:
 - a. The original complaint.
 - b. The grounds for appeal; and
 - c. Recommendations(s) for resolution of the complaint.
2. The appellant, after consultation with the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine will loom adjudication:
3. The Dean of SIU School of Medicine will review the matter with each of the parties involved and render a decision in writing within 30 working days of the review.
4. When a decision is reached, the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine will notify each of the parties of the decision in writing. A copy of the decision will be filed with the student's permanent record in the SIU School of Medicine.

I. Further appeal

1. Further appeal shall be directly to the Chancellor of Southern Illinois University, Carbondale and shall be filed within fifteen (15) days of notice of the final decision of the Dean.

2. The appeal shall be submitted in writing and shall contain all relevant information, including reference to all prior decisions in the case, the recommendations of the PA-SPC and the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine, the grounds for appeal, any additional argument, and a description of the relief sought.
3. A copy of the appeal shall be sent to all principal parties. Upon receipt of a copy of the appeal, the Dean of the SIU School of Medicine shall direct that the record in the case be promptly forwarded to the Chancellor for review.
4. Further appeal rights shall be strictly governed by the applicable Bylaws, Statutes and Policies of the Board of Trustees of Southern Illinois University.

Section 6.3 - Dismissal Procedures Relating to Matters of Professional Conduct

- A. Charges of unprofessional conduct shall be brought to the attention of the PA Program Director. If appropriate, these charges shall be forwarded to the Chair of the PA Student Progress Committee (PA-SPC) within twenty (20) working days (barring unusual circumstances) of the alleged conduct.
- B. The PA Program director shall conduct a preliminary investigation which shall include, but not be limited to, a conference with the student named in the charge and a conference with the person(s) who filed the charge. The student shall be informed in writing of the right to select and be accompanied by an adviser at the conference. The student's adviser shall be permitted to counsel the student.

1. In the event the student admits to the charge, the PA Program Director shall so inform the Chair of the PA- SPC in writing. Upon receipt of such written notification, the Chair of the PA-SPC shall request the named student to submit a written response which must be provided to the PA-SPC Chair within five (5) working days. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall convene the Committee to discuss the matter. The student shall be given the opportunity to discuss with the Committee any and all aspects of the charge. The student has the right to be accompanied by an adviser, who shall be permitted to counsel the student. The PA-SPC Chair also may require the person(s) filing the charge and any witnesses to be present during the PA-SPC meeting to answer questions from Committee members. Subsequently, the Committee shall forward a report consisting of findings of fact and a recommendation as to sanction, if any, to the PA Program Director. The PA Program Director shall consider the report of the PA-SPC, as well as the entire record in the matter, and render a decision as promptly as possible. Copies of the PA-SPC's recommendation and the PA Program Director's decision shall be forwarded to the student.
2. In the event the student denies the charge and the PA Program Director decides the charge is frivolous, the PA Program Director shall promptly forward written notification to the Chair of the PA-SPC. The charge shall be dismissed and all records relating to the charge shall be forwarded to the PA Program Director. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall then forward written notice of the dismissal of charges to the student named in the charge and the person(s) filing the charge.
3. In the event the student denies the charge and the PA Program Director decides the charge is not frivolous, the PA Program Director shall promptly forward written notification to the Chair of the PA-SPC. The PA Program Director shall proceed with a formal investigatory meeting.

C. Formal Investigatory Meeting Pursuant to Denial of a Charge Deemed Not Frivolous

1. The PA Program Director shall promptly set a date, time, and place for a formal investigatory meeting. The PA Program Director may form an Investigatory Team. The Investigatory Team members shall be notified of this information in writing. It shall be required that all Investigatory Team members be in attendance at the meeting.

2. The PA Program Director shall request that the student named in the charge, the person(s) filing the charge, and any witnesses be present before the Investigatory Team at the appointed time and place to provide information pertinent to the charge. The student named in the charge may be accompanied by an adviser who shall be permitted to counsel the student.
3. The formal investigatory meeting shall be closed. The student named in the charge, the person(s) filing the charge, and any witnesses called before the Investigatory Team shall be present only while being questioned and may present information to the team either in response to questions or in narrative form. Other information may also be presented to the team during the formal investigatory meeting.
4. After completion of the formal investigatory meeting, the Investigatory Team shall determine whether, based upon available information, there is reasonable basis to justify the submission of a Formal Complaint against the student charged with unprofessional conduct. Such determination of “Cause” shall be made by a vote of the majority. A vote less than a majority shall constitute a finding of “No Cause”.
 - a. In the event of a finding of “No Cause”, the PA Program Director shall promptly forward written notification of the team’s finding to the Chair of the PA-SPC. The charge shall be dismissed and all records relating to the charge shall be forwarded to the PA Program Director. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall then forward written notice of the dismissal of charges to the student named in the charge and the person(s) filing the charge.
 - b. In the event of a finding of “Cause”, the PA Program Director shall promptly forward written notification of the team’s finding to the Chair of the PA-SPC. The PA Program Director shall, at the same time, submit to the PA-SPC Chair a Formal Complaint against the student named in the charge, specifying the alleged violation(s) of the standards of Professional Conduct set forth in the PA Conduct Code and the facts upon which the Formal Complaint is based in sufficient detail that a proper response can be made. The PA Program Director shall represent the interests of the PA program before the PA-SPC.

D. Actions Pursuant to Filing of a Formal Complaint

1. Status of Student. Pending action on the Formal Complaint, the status of a student shall not be altered nor shall the right to be present on the campus and to attend classes be suspended, except under special circumstances as determined by the PA Program Director. Upon receipt of the notice of “Cause” finding and the Formal Complaint, the Chair of the PA-SPC shall promptly notify the student named in the Formal Complaint of the pending matter and attach therewith a copy of the Formal Complaint. The written notification shall include a request for a written response to the allegations contained in the Formal Complaint. This response shall be forwarded to the PA-SPC Chair within five (5) working days of the request. The written notification shall further state that a hearing will be scheduled at a time and place to be specified in a later notice from the PA-SPC Chair.
2. Upon receipt of the response, if any, the Chair of the PA-SPC shall forward a copy of the same to the PA Program Director. The PA-SPC Chair shall also promptly notify the student named in the charge of the names of all voting PA-SPC members and a proposed date for review and challenge of PA-SPC membership. If the student desires to make challenge, the student shall so notify the PA-SPC Chair in writing at least five (5) working days before the challenge and review date. The notice shall contain the name(s) of the person(s) challenged and the reason(s) therefore. If no such notification is received by the PA-SPC Chair, the right to challenge will be deemed to have been waived.
 - a. On the appointed date for review and challenge, and subject to prior receipt by the PA-SPC Chair of the notice of intent to make challenge, the PA-SPC shall meet with the PA Program Director, the student named in the Formal Complaint, and the student’s adviser, at which time the student shall have the right to challenge any voting member of the PA-SPC for cause.

- b. Challenges shall be presented and decided one at a time. Nonchallenged members of the PA -SPC shall decide by majority vote whether adequate cause exists for each challenge. If the PA-SPC Chair is successfully challenged, the Committee shall then elect a substitute PA-SPC Chair from the Committee membership.
 - c. Members of the PA-SPC shall have the duty to disqualify themselves if they are unable to serve with fairness or objectivity.
 - d. The PA Program Director shall have the authority to appoint substitute PA-SPC members as necessary or appropriate under these procedures.
3. After withdrawals and challenges have been completed, the Chair of the PA-SPC shall set a date, time, and place for hearing on the Formal Complaint. The hearing shall be held at the earliest date convenient to the principal parties; however, every effort will be made to convene the hearing within fifteen (15) working days of the date previously set for challenge and review. The principal parties shall be given written notice of the hearing date, time, and place at least ten (10) working days in advance.
4. Conduct of Hearing and Student Rights
- a. The PA-SPC shall conduct a hearing on the Formal Complaint at the appointed place and time. It shall be required that not less than a majority of voting members of the PA-SPC be present.
 - b. The hearing shall be conducted in an orderly fashion and in a manner reasonably consistent with basic concepts of fairness.

- a. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall act to ensure that the principal parties have a reasonable opportunity to be heard and to present relevant oral and documentary evidence.
- b. The Chair of the PA-SPC shall determine the order of the proceeding during the hearing and shall make any necessary procedural rulings.
- c. The principal parties shall have the right to provide to the PA-SPC oral and documentary evidence in support of their respective positions, to present and reasonably question witnesses, and to examine and reply to any evidence.
- d. The burden of proof, by a greater weight of the evidence, shall be upon the PA Program Director. The rules of evidence that are utilized in a court of law shall not be applied; however, the PA- SPC Chair shall make a reasonable effort to ensure that the admitted evidence is relevant.
- e. At least five (5) working days before the hearing, the principal parties shall notify the Chair of the PA-SPC and the other principal party or parties of the identity of the witnesses to be presented and of the documents to be submitted in evidence. It shall be the responsibility of the parties to contact and arrange for the appearance of any witnesses they intend to present. If either party has difficulty contacting or arranging for the appearance of a witness, then either party may contact the PA Program Director, who may provide reasonable assistance. The PA-SPC shall have the right to call unnamed witnesses if the Committee, by majority vote, deems such action advisable. Any member of the Committee may also question witnesses.
- f. The PA-SPC Chair shall establish and announce at the outset of the hearing a reasonable time limit for opening and closing statements which shall be equal for all principal parties.
- g. The PA-SPC may adjourn or recess as necessary or appropriate in accordance with the determination of the PA-SPC Chair.
- h. The hearing shall be recorded on and a transcript hereof shall be made available to the principal parties upon request within a reasonable period of time.

- i. A student against whom a Formal Complaint is made is entitled to be present at the hearing before the PA-SPC. The student may, however, elect not to appear, which election shall represent a waiver of those rights that attend the student's actual presence at the hearing.

The student named in the Formal Complaint shall have the right to select and be accompanied by an adviser during the hearing. The adviser shall be permitted to counsel the student at the hearing and may be given reasonable opportunity to speak on the student's behalf by the Chair of the PA-SPC. The adviser shall not be permitted to question or examine witnesses.

- j. The hearing shall be closed; only the principal parties and their advisers, if any, shall be admitted to the hearing. With the exception of Committee members who may be asked to appear as witnesses, witnesses for either party shall be present only while they are giving testimony.

5. Promptly after the conclusion of the hearing, the PA-SPC, through the Chair, shall submit a written report to the Dean of the School of Medicine. The Committee may request and review a transcript of the hearing prior to submitting its report.

The report shall include the following:

- a. Findings as to the allegations contained in the Formal Complaint, including, but not limited to, the facts relating to the unprofessional conduct.
 - b. Recommendation(s) as to the sanction, if any, to be imposed, including the reason(s) underlying such recommendation.
 - c. When the decision of the PA-SPC is not unanimous, a minority report may be submitted.
6. After completion of action by the PA-SPC, all documents and records in the cause shall be forwarded to the Dean of the School of Medicine.
 7. The PA Program Director shall consider the report of the PA-SPC, as well as the entire record in the cause, and shall render a decision as promptly as possible. Barring compelling reasons to the contrary, the decision of the PA Program Director shall reflect the recommendation of the PA-SPC. Copies of the decision shall be forwarded to all principal parties, and the PA Program Director shall implement the decision of the PA-SPC Committee.

E. Appeal

1. See Section 6.2 I., Division VI - PROCEDURES

DIVISION VII – AMENDMENTS

Any member of the Physician Assistant community may submit a request for an amendment to this Student Progress System to the Student Progress Committee through the PA Program Director. The request shall be written and shall include a rationale and a description of the amendment in reasonable detail. If, after due consideration, the Committee considers the request to have merit, it shall assign the task of writing the amendment to a Subcommittee, as appropriate. The subcommittee shall report the amendment back to the full Committee, which shall make recommendations to the PA Program Director concerning adoption. In approving an amendment, the PA Program Director shall designate the effective date thereof, following which the amendment shall be binding upon all students.