# Department of Physician Assistant Studies

## Curriculum

(Subject to change)

## DIDACTIC YEAR

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## CLINICAL YEAR

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<td>8 Week: Primary Care/Family Practice</td>
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<td>4 Week: Emergency Medicine General Surgery Internal Medicine Obstetrics/Gynecology Pediatrics Psychiatry Electives (3)</td>
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Clinical Medicine I is the introductory course in a four part series covering primary care clinical medicine. It is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course is divided into lecture and lab sections that will be graded separately and will provide opportunities for the student to develop critical thinking skills essential to patient evaluation and management. The use of patient simulations is included. Introductory subject matter covered during this first course will include physical examination skills and use of medical instruments, patient history taking, patient counseling, patient education, interpersonal and communication skills, and epidemiology. Additional topics will include an introduction to behavioral medicine, professionalism, interprofessional education, medical research methods, introduction to medical literature, introduction to laboratory diagnosis and nutrition. Finally, medical and social topics addressed will include the primary care medical home, rural and medically underserved populations, social determinants of health, healthy people 2020, public health issues and community health.

Human Gross Anatomy
This course is designed to provide PA students with an understanding of the anatomy of the human body utilizing human cadavers and dissections. Emphasis is placed on the relationships between structure and function.

Physiology
Physiology is the scientific basis of medicine. This course will provide the PA student with sufficient in-depth knowledge of cellular and organ physiology necessary for understanding of normal and abnormal human body function and for advancement to courses in pathophysiology, pharmacology, and clinical medicine. This course is divided into six sections which present the basic scientific concepts of human physiology with clinical applications and relevance to disease states: 1) cellular, neuromuscular, autonomic, and cardiac physiology; 2) circulatory physiology; 3) respiratory physiology; 4) renal, electrolyte, and acid-base physiology; 5) gastrointestinal and metabolic physiology; and 6) endocrinology.

PA Issues in Health Care and Population Health I
PA Issues I is the introductory course in a four part series covering commonly encountered issues and their impact on physician assistant practice. This series is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies. Introductory subject matter covered during this first course will include factors affecting the development of the profession and the role of the PA in today's health care system, physician-PA team relationship, credentialing, political issues, policies and regulations governing the scope of PA practice; PA and other pertinent professional organizations; introduction to evidence-based medicine (EBM); introduction to the health insurance portability and accountability act (HIPAA); introduction to primary care medicine with a focus on rural and medically underserved areas (MUAs); introduction to interprofessional education and collaboration; introduction to principles and practice of medical ethics; introduction to blood borne pathogens and tuberculosis; and policies and procedures governing sexual harassment and harassment in the workplace.

Introduction to Infectious Disease
This course is designed to provide PA students a solid foundation in basic immunology, microbial genetics, structure, nutrition and basic host-parasite relationships. The course will place particular emphasis on the role and application of these subject matters in disease manifestations as well as use/development of diagnostic and treatment modalities. Vulnerability of special populations and interactions between various environmental, social and behavioral factors with the human host in relationship to infection control and treatment will also be emphasized.

Clinical Medicine II
Clinical Medicine II is the introductory course in a four part series covering primary care medicine and surgery topics. It is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course is divided into lecture and lab sections that will be graded separately and will provide opportunities for the student to develop critical thinking skills essential to patient evaluation and management. The use of standardized patients, patient simulations and horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies. Introductory subject matter covered during this first course will include factors affecting the development of the profession and the role of the PA in today's health care system, physician-PA team relationship, credentialing, political issues, policies and regulations governing the scope of PA practice; PA and other pertinent professional organizations; introduction to evidence-based medicine (EBM); introduction to the health insurance portability and accountability act (HIPAA); introduction to primary care medicine with a focus on rural and medically underserved areas (MUAs); introduction to interprofessional education and collaboration; introduction to principles and practice of medical ethics; introduction to blood borne pathogens and tuberculosis; and policies and procedures governing sexual harassment and harassment in the workplace.

Pathophysiology I
Pathophysiology I is the introductory course in a three-part series that covers the alterations in normal physiology that occur in human disease states. This course will provide the PA student with sufficient in-depth knowledge of pathophysiology necessary for understanding of abnormal human body function and for advancement to subsequent courses in pathophysiology, pharmacology, and clinical medicine. Topics will include an overview of cellular pathophysiology, followed by specific topics that align with the organization of the clinical medicine series: cardiovascular pathophysiology, EKG, pulmonary pathophysiology, and renal/GU pathophysiology.

Pharmacology I
Pharmacology I is the course in gross anatomy of the human body systems utilizing human cadavers and dissections. Emphasis is placed on the relationships between structure and function.

Diagnostic Data and Interpretation I
Interpretation of Diagnostic Data and Studies I will introduce students to basic concepts of laboratory medicine including different methods of sample gathering and transport, basic phlebotomy, interpretation of blood counts and analysis of the differential blood counts, coagulation studies and anticoagulant monitoring, interpretation of metabolic panels, evaluating electrolyte abnormalities, and ordering and interpreting bacterial culture and susceptibilities. The course will focus on and correlate with laboratory assays and procedures taught during Clinical Medicine II.

PA Issues in Health Care and Population Health II
PA Issues II is the second course in a four part series covering primary care medicine and surgery topics. It is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies. Subject matter covered during this second course will include factors affecting diversity and inclusion; cultural competence; health care delivery systems; workforce shortage; health disparities; health literacy; public health, primary care medicine with a focus on veterans, rural and medically underserved medicine, evidence-based medicine, professionalism, social determinants of health, health promotion, disease prevention, health beliefs and patient expectations.

Clinical Medicine III
Clinical Medicine III is the third course in a four part series covering primary care clinical medicine and surgery topics. It is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course is divided into lecture and lab sections that will be graded separately and will provide opportunities for the student to develop critical thinking skills essential to patient evaluation and management. The use of standardized patients, patient simulations and clinical experiences are included. Topics will include a continuation of complete and focused physical examination skills, patient history taking, patient counseling, patient education, epidemiology, normal and abnormal development, history of the PA Profession, professionalism, interpersonal and communication skills, interprofessional education, medical research methods, and developing medical judgment. The course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies. Subject matter covered during this first course will include factors affecting the development of the profession and the role of the PA in today's health care system, physician-PA team relationship, credentialing, political issues, policies and regulations governing the scope of PA practice; PA and other pertinent professional organizations; introduction to evidence-based medicine (EBM); introduction to the health insurance portability and accountability act (HIPAA); introduction to primary care medicine with a focus on rural and medically underserved areas (MUAs); introduction to interprofessional education and collaboration; introduction to principles and practice of medical ethics; introduction to blood borne pathogens and tuberculosis; and policies and procedures governing sexual harassment and harassment in the workplace.

Clinical Medicine IV
Clinical Medicine IV is the final course in a four part series covering primary care medicine and surgery topics. It is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies. Subject matter covered during this first course will include factors affecting the development of the profession and the role of the PA in today's health care system, physician-PA team relationship, credentialing, political issues, policies and regulations governing the scope of PA practice; PA and other pertinent professional organizations; introduction to evidence-based medicine (EBM); introduction to the health insurance portability and accountability act (HIPAA); introduction to primary care medicine with a focus on rural and medically underserved areas (MUAs); introduction to interprofessional education and collaboration; introduction to principles and practice of medical ethics; introduction to blood borne pathogens and tuberculosis; and policies and procedures governing sexual harassment and harassment in the workplace.

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hematology/oncology, orthopedic medicine, gastrointestinal medicine, and psychiatric/behavioral medicine. Included in this course will be topics in infectious disease and diagnostic data that will align with the subject matter covered during this semester.

**PATHOPHYSIOLOGY II**
Pathophysiology II is the second course in a three-part series that covers the alterations in normal physiology that occur in human disease states. This course will provide the PA student with sufficient in-depth knowledge of pathophysiology necessary for the understanding of abnormal human body function and for advancement to subsequent courses in pathophysiology, pharmacology, and clinical medicine. Topics will align with the subject matter in Clinical Medicine II: neurology, rheumatology, endocrinology, hematology, oncology, gastrointestinal, and psychiatric disorders.

**PHARMACOLOGY II**
This course is the second of a three part pharmacology series that will continue to cover the basic scientific concepts of drug classification, mechanism of action, toxicity, and clinical use of drugs. Other topics will include drug interaction and the properties of drug molecules. Specific topics will align with the organization of the clinical medicine series.

**DIAGNOSTIC DATA AND INTERPRETATION II**
Interpretation of Diagnostic Data and Studies II, will focus on ordering and interpretation of laboratory tests and imaging studies associated with diseases of the urinary tract system including basic and advanced urinalysis and their interpretation, laboratory tests and imaging studies associated with diseases of the gastrointestinal tract to include liver, pancreas, small intestine and colorectal regions, basic and advanced immunohematology and imaging to investigate autoimmune disorders, and advanced genetic testing and procedures. This course will advance the students knowledge of laboratory medicine and will focus on those laboratory assays relevant to the topic covered in Clinical Medicine III.

**PA ISSUES IN HEALTH CARE AND POPULATION HEALTH III**
Physician Assistant (PA) Issues III is the third in a four part series covering commonly encountered issues and their impact on physician assistant practice. This series is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course will utilize a variety of teaching strategies. Introductory subject matter covered during this third course will include topics on coding and billing, medical documentation, spirituality and health, epidemiology, transition from didactic to clinical year, health care cost, Advanced Directives End of Life Issues, interprofessional team-based patient-centered care, healthcare in various clinical settings (homelessness, migrant, correctional, inner city), and primary care medicine with a focus on veterans, rural and medically underserved medicine, evidence-based medicine, medical documentation and professionalism.

**CLINICAL MEDICINE IV**
Clinical Medicine IV is the final course in a four part series covering primary care clinical medicine and surgery topics. It is designed to incorporate and integrate topics and content both horizontally and vertically throughout the didactic and clinical curricula. The course is divided into lecture and lab sections that will be graded separately and will provide opportunities for the student to develop critical thinking skills essential to patient evaluation and management. The use of standardized patients, patient simulations and clinical experiences are included. Topics will include a continuation of complete and focused physical examination skills, patient history taking, patient counseling, patient education, interpersonal and communication skills, epidemiology, normal and abnormal development, history of the PA Profession, professionalism, interprofessional education, medical research methods, and researching medical literature, the primary care medical home, rural and medically underserved populations, social determinants of health, healthy people 2020, public health issues, and community health care. Specific topics covered include geriatric medicine, pediatric medicine, surgery, OB/GYN medicine, emergency medicine, ACLS, and clinical year transition. Included in this course will be topics in infectious disease and diagnostic data that will align with the subject matter covered during this semester.

**PATHOPHYSIOLOGY III**
This course is the third of three sections of pathophysiology. The course will provide students with an understanding of abnormal body functions including an overview of cellular pathophysiology followed by specific topics that align with the organization of the clinical medicine series.

**PHARMACOLOGY III**
This course is the third of a three part pharmacology series. The course will continue to cover the basic scientific concepts of drug classification, mechanism of action, toxicity, clinical use of drugs, drug interaction and the properties of drug molecules. Specific topics will align with the organization of the clinical medicine series.

**DIAGNOSTIC DATA AND INTERPRETATION III**
Interpretation of Diagnostic Data and Studies III, will introduce students to basic radiology concepts by teaching fundamentals of radiology, basic imaging techniques (ultrasound, vascular imaging, advanced imaging techniques (CT Scan and MRI with and without contrast), and PET scan. The course will hone student knowledge of all diagnostic modalities through intensive case-based approach to the interpretation of laboratory assays.

**SUMMATIVE EVALUATION**
Summative Evaluation is designed to evaluate student learning at the end of the 27 month PA training program. The assessments used in this course will help determine the level at which students achieved the expectations for their learning as prescribed and to identify instructional areas that may need additional attention. The summative assessments include: 1) comprehensive examination, 2) OSCE with standardized patient, 3) on-line board review, 4) Capstone Project, and 5) PACKRAT, PA clinical knowledge rating assessment test. A comprehensive written examination will be administered as a final evaluation of the student’s progress. This test is also designed to prepare the graduate for the NCCPA exam.

**CLINICAL ROTATIONS**
The student is assigned to a clinical setting to obtain knowledge, skills and attitudinal/behavioral professional components. These competencies are to be obtained while engaging in all aspects of patient care through: the medical interview, history and physical exam, critical thinking, knowledge base, diagnosis, treatment plan, and patient education, as well as appropriate health maintenance and disease prevention measures. Rotations include: Emergency Medicine, General Surgery, Internal Medicine, OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Primary Care/Family Practice, Psychiatry, Electives.

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