



Saint Louis University
Doisy College of Health Sciences
Clinical Health Sciences Department

PA Program

A summary of relevant policies is shared here for the benefit of individuals who are considering applying for admission to the SLU PA Program.

A. Required Academic and Professional Standards to Maintain Enrollment and Progress in the Curriculum

1. Academic - GPA Requirement

- As SLU graduate students, PA students must maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above.
- University academic probation occurs when a student's end-of-semester cumulative GPA (CGPA) is less than 3.0 but above 2.7. In this case, students are allowed two semesters in which to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 and failure to do so results in dismissal from the program.
- A student whose CGPA falls below 2.7 will be dismissed from the program.

2. Academic - Course Grade Expectations

- In order to progress in the program, final course grades cannot fall below a 'C-'. Therefore, a student with a course grade of 'D' or 'F' will be dismissed from the program.

3. Academic - Score Expectations for Graded Components

- Students are expected to score at or above 70% on coursework throughout the curriculum. This means 70% or 'C' is the minimum expectation for course grades and for performance on clinical evaluations, supplemental course components, OSCEs, quizzes, tests/exams, assignments, presentations, write-ups, cases and all other student assessments. Exceptions to the 70% minimum are outlined below in Section C.
- Students who fail to meet minimum scores on written/electronic or practical assessments earn an Academic Remediation, meet with a faculty member, sign a remediation form, and are assigned a remediation activity/exercise which may include re-testing. See details below in Section C.

4. Academic - Remediation

- Remediation details are outlined below in Sections C1, C2, and C3. Throughout the program there is a limit to the number of remediations a student can earn. If this limit is met, the student is dismissed. Students are dismissed if they earn the following number of remediation:
 - Semester One: Four remediations

- Phase I (didactic): Seven remediations
- Phase II (clinical)
 - Four remediations on End of Rotation exams
 - Five remediations on ANY Phase II exam

5. Professional – Overview

- As health care professionals, PAs must prioritize and be sensitive to the value of human dignity. This value is manifested in behaviors and attitudes which demonstrate respect, inclusivity, and sensitivity to the well-being of others, and honesty and integrity in all endeavors.
- Saint Louis University PA students are held to a high standard of professional behavior/conduct including academic integrity, attendance, punctuality, attire, clinical site requirement completion, non-discrimination, title identification, personal integrity and ethical conduct in both the didactic and clinical phases of the Program. Throughout all aspects of the PA Program, students must demonstrate behaviors consistent with the professional expectations and responsibilities.
- Students are expected to maintain professional behavior and adhere to professional standards as outlined in the Student Handbook and Policy Manual. If students consistently do not uphold these standards, points may be deducted from a student's final course grade, not to exceed an overall decrease of 5%. In the case of egregious unprofessional behavior, the student may receive a professional warning, or professional probation or dismissal may occur.

6. Professional – Counseling, Warning, Probation, and Dismissal

- **Professional counseling** is a program designation of professional concern about a student. It warrants a documented meeting with the student and appropriate PA program faculty member/s to discuss the professional concern and/or provide resources for improved professionalism. The professionalism concern is brought to the full faculty for discussion and input.
- **Professional warning** is a notice by a PA Program faculty member, instructor, clinical preceptor that the student did not meet acceptable Standards of Professional Performance, as outlined in this Student Handbook and Policy Manual.
 - A PA Progressions Committee meeting is convened to discuss the nature and implications of the professional concern.
 - If it is determined that a professional warning is warranted, a documented meeting is convened with the student and appropriate faculty member/s.
 - At the discretion of the PA Program faculty, a professionalism remediation exercise may be required.
 - A student who earns two professional warnings will automatically be placed on Professional Probation.
 - A student who earns three professional warnings will be dismissed from the program.
- **Professional probation**
 - Students whose professional performance is considered consistently and/or significantly unacceptable according to the standards of professional performance outlined in the Student Handbook and Policy Manual, will be placed on probation by the Program.
 - The following situations will result in professional probation:
 - A student earns two professional warnings
 - An unprofessional judgment or behavior by the student that is considered too egregious for a professional warning. In this instance, the PA Progressions Committee meets to discuss the concern and

- determine whether probation or dismissal is warranted.
 - The Program Director, in consultation with the Progressions Committee, will determine the duration and terms of the probationary period and convenes a documented meeting with the student and an additional faculty member. Supplemental activities to remediate unprofessional behavior/s will be required.
 - A probationary agreement outlines the professionalism concern and required next steps. If a student does not adhere to the terms outlined in the probationary agreement or receives an additional professional warning, the student will be dismissed from the Program.
- **Professional Dismissal** is outlined below in Section G2.

B. Requirements and Deadlines for Completion of the Program

1. Requirements for Program Completion

- Mastery of all program competencies, as evidenced by successful completion of each component of the Summative Evaluation
- Successful attainment of all learning outcomes, including the successful completion of any applicable remediation or completion requirements
- Cumulative GPA of 3.0
- Completion of all required didactic and clinical coursework with a grade of C- or above
- A minimum of 24 hours of community service
- Successful completion of or compliance with all academic and/or professional obligations and assignments

2. Deadlines for Program Completion

- If circumstances specific to a student dictate a delay/leave of absence, the student must complete all program requirements within 39 months of the start of semester one (27 months + 12 months) in order to graduate from the SLU PA Program.
- At the discretion of the PA Program faculty, truly exceptional circumstances may be considered to allow an additional 3-month extension.

C. Policies and Procedures for Remediation

1. Remediation - Overview

- Academic remediation is a designation that student performance on assessments (exams/tests) is below the defined minimum criteria. The PA Program curriculum is competency-based and requires a minimum standard of academic and clinical competency or mastery. If students do not meet the minimum standards set forth within the curriculum, then they have failed to demonstrate competency/mastery, and remediation is initiated.
- The remediation process involves a documented meeting with a faculty member, a signed remediation form, and an assignment or activity designed to identify and address deficiencies in student knowledge/skills and to better prepare them for future assessments and progression through the curriculum. It may also require re-testing.
- The remediation form outlines requirements for successful completion of remediation and is also signed by the Program Director or Associate Program Director. Academic remediations are not reflected in University records or on student transcripts.

2. Remediation - Initiation

- Students have an obligation to communicate with the course director/s as soon as they become aware of substandard performance on a graded component.
- Remediation occurs in each of the following circumstances:
 - Phase I – Didactic: Remediation occurs if a student earns the following scores:
 1. <70% on any written/electronic exam, practical exam, or OSCE
 2. <65% on any test or exam in the Human Gross Anatomy course
 3. <90% on physical exam (PE) competency testing including the comprehensive PE
 - Phase II – Clinical: Remediation occurs if a student earns the following scores:
 1. <70% on an Autonomous Clinical Exam (ACE)
 2. <70% on an End-of-Rotation exam (EORE), <65% for the student's first EORE
 3. <70% on supplemental or other required course assignments
 4. <70% on a preceptor-completed evaluation
- The following assessment items do not fall under Academic Remediation. However, for any score below minimum, a completion assignment/re-test is initiated:
 - <3.0 on any clinical learning outcomes or any other component of the final preceptor-completed evaluation
 - <70% on any component of the Summative Evaluation (End of Curriculum Exam and each station of the Summative OSCE)
 - <80% on a didactic Medical Terminology Exam

3. Remediation - Process

- During Phase I, a faculty member has a documented meets with the student within two weeks of the original notification of the substandard score, to discuss the academic concern and the specific remediation assignment. The assignment is based on exam questions missed and/or specific content for future exam preparation. The activity assigned for remediation is determined by the course director. For the gross anatomy course, exam remediation assignments require students to meet with anatomy faculty, attend lab office hours, and attend faculty office hours.
 - The original score earned on the assessment is the score used in the course grade calculation.
 - A student may have more than one remediation per course.
 - For OSCEs representing two courses ('combined OSCEs'), students scoring <70% on either course component will earn a remediation. Students scoring <70% on both course components of one OSCE will earn just one remediation.
- During Phase II, the remediation meeting between the student and the faculty member typically occurs on the day of the end-of-rotation exam (EORE) or soon thereafter. Remediation for an EORE includes re-testing. The re-testing and remediation assignment are due the Monday after the EORE. In some circumstances with approval of the Director of Clinical Education or designee, the Phase II remediation and retesting timeframe may be extended by a maximum of two weeks.
 - The assignment is based on the exam questions answered incorrectly.
 - In the case of remediation for an EORE, students begin their next scheduled clinical rotation as planned but are also required to re-test with a different version of the EOR exam. The re-test is typically taken and proctored remotely by a professional proctoring service.

- The original EORE score earned is the score used in the course grade calculation.
- Students may have more than one remediation per course.
- Should a student also fail the second version of an end-of-rotation exam, an additional remediation is not added but the student will be required to repeat a four or six-week clinical completion experience, to begin in January after graduation, or after all other coursework is complete if a student is already on an extended timeline.
 - The clinical completion experience is determined by the Director of Clinical Education and will typically impact degree conferral date and program completion date.
 - Following the clinical completion experience the student needs to successfully complete a program-assigned assessment.
- Autonomous clinical exam (ACE) and supplemental component remediation assignments are remediation is determined by the course director based on content answered incorrectly or inadequately and is typically also due the Monday following the EOR exam day.
- For an overall score of <70% on an end-of-rotation preceptor-completed evaluation (PCE), students earn a remediation and are required to meet with the Director of Clinical Education.
 - The meeting may also include the faculty advisor, course director, or other appropriate faculty member.
 - After the initial meeting (typically within two weeks), the PA Program faculty will convene to determine next steps in the remediation process. These may include a clinical or professionalism assignment and/or additional clinical experience. Depending on individual circumstances, this will typically delay degree conferral date and program completion date.
 - Students may also receive a Counseling or Warning after faculty members have discussed the situation with the student and at a Progressions Committee meeting.

4. Remediation - Maximums

- There is a limit to the number of remediations a student may earn. If this limit is met, the student is dismissed. Refer to Section A4 for additional details.

D. Policies and Procedures for Deceleration

1. Deceleration - Overview

- The program permits deceleration only in the case of an official/approved [University Leave of Absence \(LOA\)](#). These are rare occurrences and are typically taken due to unforeseen illness or personal/family concerns. Deceleration allows a student who is no longer part of their entering cohort to remain matriculated in the program. Deceleration is not an option for academic concerns or for a student who is dismissed from the program.
 - In general, if a didactic student requires more than two consecutive weeks off, this will almost always require a leave of absence and deceleration to the next cohort. There is no online curricular option.
 - Due to the nature of the Phase II curriculum, clinical year students may only require a short leave of absence and, if so, may typically remain as a member of their original cohort. In all cases, all course requirements must still be met and may require additional rescheduling.
- The maximum allowable time for a leave of absence is one year. In exceptional circumstances, a student may utilize more than one LOA over the course of their

education, but these may not occur consecutively. See information under Section B2 for additional deadline information.

2. Deceleration - Impact on Tuition and Program Completion

- Typically, a leave of absence will delay graduation, program completion date, degree conferral date, and, depending on circumstances and timing, will increase the total tuition required.
- If a student needs to request a University LOA, the student should contact the Program Director or Associate Program Director to discuss the circumstances and the LOA process. LOA details are documented and reviewed with the student.

E. Policies and Procedures for Withdrawal

1. Withdrawal - Overview

- The curriculum of the Saint Louis University PA Program is competency-based and logically sequenced in a manner designed to provide the greatest understanding of the foundations of clinical medicine and the provision of quality patient care. In addition, enrolled students are expected to progress through the Program as a cohort and follow the sequence of the curriculum as outlined.
- With the exception of a registration error or an approved Leave of Absence, students are not allowed at any point to withdraw from coursework and remain in the program.
- A student withdrawing from the Program, after registering for any semester, whether a voluntary withdrawal, requested by the Program, or for any other reason, must complete the appropriate [forms](#) in a timely manner.

2. Withdrawal - Impact on Tuition and Fees

- Regardless of reasons for leaving the program, most fees are non-refundable, and tuition refunds usually cannot be granted due to the timing and sequencing of our curriculum.
- In the exceptionally rare circumstance in which a tuition refund is applicable, the student is directed to the [Office of Student Financial Services](#). See [University policies on withdrawal and enrollment changes](#) for more information.

F. Policies and Procedures for Dismissal

1. Dismissal - Academic

- Students whose academic performance is below minimum requirements according to the Standards of Academic Performance outlined in the Student Handbook and Policy Manual will be dismissed from the Program.
- Each of the following circumstances is cause for dismissal from the program:
 - A final grade of 'D' or 'F' in any course.
 - An end-of-semester cumulative GPA <2.70.
 - A student on probation with a CGPA between 2.7 and 3.0 who is unable to emerge from probation by increasing the CGPA to 3.0 after two semesters.
 - A student who has exceeded the maximum number of remediations for any portion of the program, as outlined in Section A4 above.
- The PA Program Director communicates to the Department Chair that the student has met criteria for academic dismissal from the Program.
 - The student will be provided with a written notification of the academic dismissal by the Department Chair within 5-7 business days.

- Unless declined by the student, a meeting is scheduled to take place with the student, the Program Director, and the Department Chair. The dismissal letter and process are reviewed and discussed at the meeting. The dismissal documentation is placed in the student's program file and copied to the Doisy College of Health Sciences Dean's Office.
- The student has the right to file a grievance with the Dean of the Doisy College of Health Sciences within ten (10) business days of receipt of written notification of dismissal. The grievance must provide documentation that policies and procedures were not adhered to.

2. Dismissal - Professional

- A student who does not meet the Standards of Professional Performance is dismissed from the Program. The following circumstances require dismissal:
 - The student receives three professional warnings.
 - The student is on Professional Probation and does not meet the terms of the professional probation agreement.
 - The student receives a professional warning while on professional probation.
 - The student is found guilty of any act as outlined in the [Saint Louis University Student Handbook](#) published by the Office of Student Life for the University. These acts include illegal and violent activities and other serious offenses.
 - Some behaviors are so inherently unprofessional, blatantly dishonest or unethical that the professional warning and probationary status may be bypassed, and a student may be dismissed from the Program. Such behaviors cannot be enumerated in detail but would be those that epitomize conduct unbecoming of a health care provider (see the Standards of Professional Performance in the PA Student Handbook and Policy Manual).
- The procedure for Professional Dismissal begins when the facts and reasons in support of the recommendation for dismissal, are presented by the faculty member(s) to the Program Director or Associate Program Director. The PA Professions Committee will convene to review the behavior and determine if the student should be dismissed from the Program.
 - The student will be provided a written notification of the decision by the Chair of the Department within 5-7 business days of the Progressions Committee decision.
 - Unless declined by the student, a meeting will be scheduled with the student, the Program Director or Associate Program Director, and the Department Chair to review the conditions surrounding the dismissal and finalize the dismissal process.
 - The student has the right to file a grievance with the Dean of the Doisy College of Health Sciences within ten (10) business days of receipt of written notification of dismissal. The grievance must provide documentation that policies and procedures were not adhered to.

G. Policies and Procedures for Student Grievances and Appeals

1. Academic Grievance and Appeal

- Course grade appeal
 - This grievance, or appeal, involves a student who believes published policies or procedures were not followed for course grade determination.

- If a student believes that a final grade for a course has been assigned unfairly, the student must initiate the appeal within ten days after final grades have been posted. The process is as follows:
- A student discusses with the course director/s the concerns about the grade and reasons they believe the grade is incorrect. The course director renders a decision regarding the grade appeal as the instructor of record in that course.
- If the dispute is not satisfactorily resolved, the student may present their concerns to the PA Program Director. The Program Director reviews the case in consultation with relevant faculty and renders a decision regarding the grade appeal. If the course director is the Program Director, then the student will go directly to the Clinical Health Sciences Department Chair.
- If the dispute is not satisfactorily resolved at the departmental level, the student may follow the same policy and procedures described in the [DCHS Academic Appeals Policy](#).
- **Program dismissal appeal**
 - An academic grievance is an appeal a student can file if they believe published policies were not followed regarding their dismissal.
 - A student who has been dismissed has the right to file an appeal, or grievance, within ten business days after they are notified of a decision for dismissal.
 - The student must first address the grievance or concerns with the PA Program and Department of Clinical Health Sciences. The student may then file the grievance through the Associate Dean for Student and Academic Affairs in the Doisy College of Health Sciences.
 - The proceedings involved in the academic grievance process are not legal proceedings. Per the [DCHS Academic Appeals Policy](#), academic grievance must provide documentation that programmatic/departamental policies and/or procedures were not adhered to. It is not within the scope of the grievance process to determine if a student-associated academic decision, such as program dismissal, was fair or just, only if it was arrived at in the manner dictated by department policy.
- Further information on [University Grade Appeals](#) and Related Academic Grievances is available on the University's website.

2. Professional Grievance and Appeal

- A student may be dismissed from the program for professional reasons as outlined above in Section F2. If the student feels proper procedures and policies were not followed, they may choose to file a grievance.
- The student has the right to file a grievance with the Dean of the Doisy College of Health Sciences within ten (10) business days of receipt of written notification of dismissal.
- The grievance must provide documentation that policies and procedures were not adhered to. The process followed is the same as for academic grievances and appeals delineated above in Section G1.

H. Policies and Procedures for Student Employment While Enrolled in the Program

1. Student employment while enrolled in the PA Program is strongly discouraged due to the intense course of study required and the academic and clinical demands of the program. Additionally, the program attendance policy does not accommodate a regular work schedule.

2. Students cannot be required to work for the PA Program at any time. Additionally, students cannot serve as instructional faculty members for the program, nor can they serve as clinical or administrative support staff for any preceptor or clinical site.

I. Policy for Student Travel to Required Rotation Sites

1. Assigned Out-of-Town Rotations

- Students are assigned to out-of-town (OOT) clinical rotations. Typically, no more than three six-week OOT rotations are assigned per student, but additional distant placements may be required, particularly in the case of a scheduled rotation that falls through.
- i. Efforts are made to assign students to clinical sites in locations in which the student has housing. But this is not guaranteed, and students may need to find short-term rentals or other housing arrangements.

2. Travel and Housing Requirements

- ii. Students are required to secure and pay for transportation to and from all clinical rotations.
- iii. Regardless of where they are assigned, students are required to secure and pay for their own travel and housing for any and all out-of-town rotations. The PA program is not responsible for student transportation, travel, or housing arrangements or cost.
- iv. Financial planning for clinical transportation, travel and housing should be planned as part of students' budgets before they matriculate into the program.
- v. A small amount of scholarship assistance may be available to students whose clinical year costs exceed the normal amount; contact the Director of Clinical Education for more information on this scholarship.