

LENOIR-RHYNE UNIVERSITY

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

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Grievance Policy

The University, the College of Health Sciences and the PA program are committed to providing an environment where the individual rights of all persons are protected and where concerns regarding these rights are promptly dealt with and resolutions are reached in a fair and just manner. The policy and procedure guidelines are designed to ensure that all students are afforded an opportunity to resolve their grievances in a timely manner.

Students with any issues should initially discuss the issue with their assigned PA faculty member. If the faculty advisor cannot resolve the issue the assistance of either the Director of Clinical Education or the Director of Didactic Education, depending on where the student is in their training should be sought.

If the issue is resolved a written record should be made using the student grievance form and placed in the program's files. If it cannot be resolved a formal written grievance can be submitted for review by the Program Progress Committee. Part of this process could require the committee to meet individually with all parties involved.

Every effort will be made to resolve grievances informally, i.e., by mutual agreement of all parties involved. Students are encouraged to attempt to resolve their grievance within the administrative structure of the program through mediation and/or consultation, before filing a written formal grievance.

If a suitable solution cannot be reached through the Program Progress Committee the grievance can be referred to the Program Director for solution and to the Dean to the College of Health Sciences who will make a good faith effort to assist the student in resolving the grievance confidentially.

Note: All grade grievances should start with the instructor and Course Director, if deemed necessary; grievances should be referred to the Student Progress Committee and the Program Director, if not resolved to the student's satisfaction. An additional appeal for review can be made to the Dean of the College of Health Sciences for final disposition. The same process should be followed for academic actions, including professional warning and probation.

If an issue cannot be resolved with the program or College the University grievance process is to be followed. For more information about *Lenoir-Rhyne University Grievance Policy* see website. ([ARC-PA Standard A3.11](#), [A3.17d](#))

Withdrawal Policy

Students who must interrupt the program for reasons of prolonged illness or compelling personal reasons must withdraw from the program. Requests for withdrawal must be submitted in writing to their faculty advisor, the Program Director, the Dean of the College of Health Sciences, and University the Registrar's office. A withdrawal is considered to be official when a student notifies the Program Director and initiates the withdrawal process.

Students should discuss this process with their faculty advisor prior to this action. Students who do not officially withdraw will be considered enrolled in courses until an appropriate academic participation verification point. If it is determined a student is no longer academically participating at the regular check points, the student will be officially withdrawn by the University, the College of Health Sciences and the program.

Program reentry requests must be submitted in writing to the Program Director, Dean of the College of Health Sciences and the University Provost. The request will also be referred to the Program Progress Committee for reentry consideration. There are no guarantees regarding reentry into the Physician Assistant program.

Reentry may be granted for a period of up to one year, based on the reason for withdrawal (medical and/or personal). The student will be required to repeat the didactic or clinical year course sequences in effect at the time of reentry, and the PA student must comply with all policies and requirements in effect at time of re-entry ([ARC-PA Standard A3.17e](#))

Sick Leave, Bereavement and Absenteeism Policy

Students are required to notify the PA Program whenever they are absent from any class or clinical learning rotation.

- ❖ If a student needs to be absent from class or didactic learning activity for illness or other reasons he/she must contact the Program's Administration Office prior to the scheduled class/activity, notify the Director of Didactic Services and the Course Director via email and phone.
- ❖ If a student needs to be absent from a clinical rotation for illness or other reasons he/she must contact the Preceptor prior to his/her regular reporting time, notify the Program's Administration Office and notify the Director of Clinical Services via email and phone.
- ❖ For absences during the didactic phase students are required to present a written note from their health care provider on the second day of their absence the Didactic Director or Course Director noting the reason for absence and date(s) of treatment for absences from class/activity.
- ❖ For absences during the clinical phase students are required to present a note from their health care provider on the second day of their absence the Clinical Director and Preceptor noting the reason for absence and date(s) of treatment for absences from the clinical rotation
- ❖ Failure to advise the PA Program of absences may result in the lowering of the rotation grade
- ❖ Absence from a clinical learning rotation in excess of five (5) days seriously jeopardizes the educational experience and academic requirements of the program.
- ❖ Students will be required to make up time missed due to sickness or to repeat the entire clinical learning rotation, if such absence(s) is/are felt by the program and/or preceptor to jeopardize the student's clinical competence or to compromise his/her professional responsibility.
- ❖ During the didactic phase students wishing to take an absence to attend a health care conference or for personal reasons must request advance written permission from the program via the Didactic Director. If the request is approved, the student must then notify the Course Directors of all classes that will be missed and arrange for make-up.
- ❖ During the clinical phase students wishing to take an absence to attend a health care conference or for personal reasons must request advance written permission from the Clinical Director. If the request is approved, the student must then notify their preceptor.
- ❖ If a student suffers the loss of a close relative at any time during the program he/she will be allowed 3 days of excused absence. If more time is needed the student is to contact the Program Director by phone and/or email to formally make this request. Faculty and Course Directors will be notified and arrangements for make-up will be made.

Dismissal Policy and Procedure

The Program, College of Health Sciences and the University reserves the right to dismiss at any time a student who, in its judgment, is undesirable and whose continued enrollment is detrimental to him/herself or fellow students or whose presence is disruptive to the learning environment or its orderly operation.

Students are subject to dismissal from the Physician Assistant Studies Program when:

- A student fails any didactic course or clinical rotation (grade below a 70%)
- A student has three or more course grades of "C"
- If a student's GPA falls below 3.0 on a 4.0 scale two or more times
- A student earns an unsatisfactory "U" in any clinical rotation
- A student is absent from twenty-five percent or more of a course or clinical rotation
- A student fails to achieve the plans and outcomes delineated for remediation
- A student fails to achieve the plans and outcomes delineated for deceleration
- A student fails to successfully complete the Didactic Summative review and Clinical Summative Review, with a minimum grade of 80%
- A student's conduct violates the Program's professional behavior policy and code of conduct, the LR University Student Code of Conduct, state or federal law, or for moral turpitude, unprofessional behavior, criminal activity, or other reasons as defined by the University

Note: Students will be dismissed for failure to comply with academic, clinical, or professional standards. The faculty has the option on a case-by-case basis to determine if remediation or deceleration is an option for any student facing dismissal. Dismissals from the program must be reviewed and approved by the Dean of the College of Health Sciences. If a student disagrees with the approved dismissal he/she can file for an appeal following the University's grievance process found under Section 5: Special Campus Policies of the University Student Handbook which can be found at <https://www.lr.edu/student-life/student-handbook> (ARC-PA Standard A3.17e)

Refund Policy

Students in the PA program are not permitted to withdraw from a course. Withdrawal from a course is equivalent to withdrawal from the program.

For students who withdraw completely, the refund percentage is based on the official withdrawal date (date on which the student initiated the withdrawal from the University through the Division of Enrollment Management). (ARC-PA Standard A3.14g)

After a student withdraws from Lenoir-Rhyne, a fair and equitable refund will be calculated according to the University Refund Policy as follows:

- ❖ For 16 Week Courses:
 - 100% During the Drop/Add period (the first week of classes in the semester)
 - 85% During second week of classes
 - 75% During third week of classes
 - 60% During fourth week of classes
 - 25% During weeks five through eight
 - 0% After eighth week of classes
- ❖ For 8 Week Courses:
 - 100% During the Drop/Add period (the first week of classes in the semester)
 - 60% During second week of classes
 - 25% During weeks three and four
 - 0% After fourth week of classes

Prior to a refund check being issued to a withdrawn student, the University must first determine if any funds are due for return to the Title IV Financial Aid Programs. According to the Federal Guidelines, the amount of refund due to the financial aid programs must be repaid before a refund check will be made to the student. The University reserves the right to modify the refund policy to comply with federal, state, and other regulatory bodies.

Refunds to Title IV Financial Aid Programs are distributed in the following order:

- ❖ Unsubsidized Federal Direct Loan
- Subsidized Federal Direct Loan
- Federal Perkins Loan
- Federal PELL Grant

The program website will be continually monitored by the Program Director to ensure program information is accurate and readily available to enrolled and prospective students.

The policy/procedure for student withdrawal is found in the Lenoir Rhyne University online catalog https://www.lr.edu/uploaded/Registrar/Catalogs/Graduate_Catalogs/12-13_Graduate_Catalog.pdf Page 5.

Policies and procedures for refunds of tuition and fees are found in the University online catalog https://www.lr.edu/uploaded/Registrar/Catalogs/Graduate_Catalogs/12-13_Graduate_Catalog.pdf Page 6.

Remediation Policy and Procedure

The Student Progress Committee has the responsibility for reviewing each student's scholastic achievement record, clinical learning progress, and professional behavior at the end of each semester.

If a student is not performing up to standards academically, the Course Director or Instructor will notify the student's advisor and Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education. The advisor, in consultation with the course director and Director of Didactic Education or Director of Clinical Education, will devise a plan for remediation.

Students who require remediation are identified by any assessment score less than 70% on a graded activity within a course.

Students may be allowed or required to retake any evaluation/assessment/assignment *except for a midterm and final exam* and must make a grade of 80% or higher in order to raise the failing grade for the activity to a passing grade of 70%

Note: This policy is not intended to allow a student to remediate any and all graded activities or multiple assessment activities in multiple courses. Remediation will be allowed for only two graded activities in no more than three courses in any given semester during the didactic phase of the program. During the clinical phase only one EOR graded assessment activity will be remediated per EOR session.

Those who require remediation are referred to their faculty advisor. The faculty advisor provides guidance in time management, study skills, evaluation of learning styles and individual tutoring referral services. Designated principal faculty will actively participate in the process of remedial instruction.

To foster better coordination and communication of student performance in all classes, the following remediation policy will be implemented to assure that students receive prompt academic assistance remediation and referral for special accommodations if necessary.

Didactic Academic Remediation Process:

- ❖ The Course Director notifies the student's faculty advisor and the Director of Didactic Education.
- ❖ The student's faculty advisor meets with the student, discusses academic difficulties and intervention options, completes the student advising form and sets out a plan for remediation after consultation with the Course Director.
- ❖ Both student and academic advisor should complete the Student Academic Advisement form.
- ❖ The Director of Didactic Education and the student's faculty advisor meet to review the remediation plan.
- ❖ The Director of Didactic Education reports information to the Student Progress Committee.

Intervention plan may contain any or all of the following:

- ❖ Study skills: Topics including study tips, study skills, time management, note taking, stress management, lifestyle modifications and others, as identified
- ❖ Learning Interventions: Topics include applied student learning, mastery based learning, and reflective learning integrated with course content
- ❖ Content: this includes reinforcement of course content and subject matter through tutoring with the course instructor(s)
- ❖ May be allowed or required to retake any evaluation/assessment/assignment except for a midterm or final exam and must make a grade of 80% or higher.

- A maximum of a 70% score will be recorded in place of the assessment score less than 70% that required the remediation.

❖ Follow up in 2 weeks

Clinical Rotation Remediation Process

- ❖ If a student scores below 70% on a graded activity during the Clinical year, the student and Director of Clinical Education will fill out the Clinical Remediation Form.
- ❖ The Director of Clinical Education will provide the student with a list of topics that were missed on the exam or other assessment tool.
- ❖ The student will be issued a remediation plan and a deadline for completion of his/her plan.
- ❖ After the remediation plan has been completed, the student will be re-examined based upon the nature of his/her deficiency.
- ❖ On re-examination, the student is expected to achieve a minimum grade of 80%.
- ❖ Failure to adhere to deadlines and/or failure to achieve a minimum grade of 80% will result in referral to the Student Progress Committee.
- ❖ Copies of the Clinical Remediation Form and any correspondence will be made for the Chair of the Student Progress Committee, the Course Director, the Director of Clinical Education, the Director of Didactic Education, the student's faculty advisor, and the student's file. (ARC-PA Standard A3.17f)

Clinical Year EOR Remediation

Failure of one EORE: The student is required to remediate the exam consists of a written explanation of the "Keyword Feedback" provided on the student's individual **PAEA EOR Exam Performance Report**. The student will select 25 bullet points (if there are less than 25 bullets, the student must answer all bullets). For each bullet point, the student must expand on the topic listed, focusing on the TASK identified (i.e., Clinical Intervention, Clinical Therapeutics, Diagnosis, Diagnostic Studies, etc.). **References must be provided for EACH answer.** After remediation the student is required to re-test and pass with a score of 80% within one week of the original exam. A grade of 70% will be recorded as the final grade.

Failure of two EOR exams: The student is required to remediate the second exam using the "keyword Feedback" from the PAEA Exam Performance Report.

- The student is required to re-take the exam and receive a passing score or 80%. If a passing score is not achieved on the re-take exam, the student will be presented to the PA program Student Progress Committee to determine the next course of action. The re-take exam must be completed within one week of taking the original exam.

Failure of three EOR exams:

- Placed on probation and will remain on probation throughout the clinical year.
- Presented to the PA Program Student Progress Committee to determine the appropriate course of action-(assignment, repeat rotation, dismissal)
- May require completion of all remaining SCPs in the local area.

Failure of four EOR exams:

- Dismissal from the program

Deceleration Policy

Deceleration may occur in the presence of a short-term extenuating circumstance that happens during the clinical year, resulting in a student making up the lost time at a later date or repeating the rotation.

Lenoir-Rhyne University PA program curriculum is designed to be delivered on a full-time basis to students in a cohort. There is no formal deceleration plan or option to complete the curriculum on a part-time basis. ([ARC-PA Standard A3.17f](#))

Sexual Harassment

Definition: Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of sexual nature when:

- ❖ Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic standing, or
- ❖ Submission to or rejection of such conduct is used as a basis for an employment or academic decision affecting that individual, or
- ❖ Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual's work or academic performance, or creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive working, learning or living environment.

Recognizing sexual harassment: When having to make this determination, ask yourself if the behavior is:

- ❖ Of a sexual nature and
- ❖ Offensive and / or unwanted.
- ❖ May interfere with job or academic performance.
- ❖ Causes unnecessary discomfort, humiliation or harm to an employee, student, customer, supplier or other guest

Inappropriate behavior may include:

- ❖ Sexual jokes, innuendoes, gestures
- ❖ Unwanted flirtation, advances, or propositions
- ❖ Pressure for sex
- ❖ Leering
- ❖ Display of sexually suggestive objects/visuals
- ❖ Display/transmission of sexually suggestive electronic content
- ❖ Any unnecessary, unwanted physical contact

Detailed information is available in the student handbook or on the student information page of the Lenoir-Rhyne University web site located [here](#). A pamphlet entitled, "What You Need to Know about Sexual Harassment: A Guide for Students, Faculty, and Staff" is also available. ([ARC-PA Standard A3.17g](#))

Sexual Assault

Lenoir-Rhyne University sponsors prevention, intervention and education programs specifically addressing rape, acquaintance rape and other forcible and non-forcible sexual offenses.

A formal sexual awareness program facilitated by professional trainers is offered to the general college population and is a required of the freshman population. Various other sexual awareness and prevention programs are conducted in the residence halls by Student Affairs personnel.

The University recognizes the importance of assisting students who are victims of sexual assault and helping them to regain a sense of personal control over their lives and the decisions they make.

Reporting a Sexual Assault: If you are sexually assaulted, you should do the following:

- ❖ Go to a safe place.
- ❖ Do not shower or bathe.
- ❖ Do not urinate, if possible.
- ❖ Do not eat, drink, smoke or brush your teeth if oral contact took place.
- ❖ Do not destroy or wash the clothes you were wearing. If you change, place your clothes in a paper bag.
- ❖ Contact your Resident Director / Area Coordinator, Campus Security and/or Hickory Police Department.
- ❖ Seek medical treatment

Victims of sexual assault are encouraged to file a report with campus security and the Hickory Police Department. The filing of a report does not obligate the victim to pursue charges if he/she does not want to pursue them, but does make filing of charges easier if the victim changes his/her mind at a later date. Following the above suggestions will ensure the preservation of evidence.

Pregnancy Policy

Enrollment of pregnant students may require careful planning of academic and clinical experiences in order to protect the health of mother and fetus. It is important that the student who suspects she may be pregnant informs the Program Director or her advisor as soon as possible, once the pregnancy is medically confirmed. The student should maintain communication with the program throughout the pregnancy.

- ❖ The pregnancy may result in a delay in progression or the need to take a leave of absence from the program
- ❖ The pregnant student that is in good academic standing, but must take a leave of absence, will be eligible for reinstatement following the conclusion of pregnancy and health clearance from her physician
- ❖ In general, a leave of absence usually results in a student being unable to continue the program until the following year.

Student Work Policy

Student Employment ([ARC-PA Standard A3.04](#))

The PA faculty believes that no student is capable of acquiring the level of knowledge needed to perform adequately as a Physician Assistant student if they engage in outside employment during the PA Program. Full time employment while in the didactic and/or clinical learning year of the program is strongly discouraged.

- ❖ At no time is a student to be substituted for a faculty member or clinician
- ❖ Students are not to be employed while on their clinical learning rotations by preceptors or health care facilities
- ❖ Students may not serve or perform as staff members of the program unless they are part of a specific federal, state, or College/University work-study program
- ❖ Work study students are not permitted to have access to confidential student records or student information and/or testing materials
- ❖ Students are apprised of this policy during the interview process, and are reminded that they are strongly discouraged from engaging in outside employment during the PA program

Volunteer and Work Experiences

- ❖ Students who are involved in, or commence, volunteer or paid work during the course of their Physician Assistant training, cannot use their affiliation with the Physician Assistant Program in any aspect of that job
- ❖ Work outside the Physician Assistant Program undertaken by the student, independent of the Program, is not covered by the liability offered for clinical work associated with the educational experience

Foreign Medical Graduate Policy

Applicants who are foreign medical graduates with foreign transcripts or non-grade transcripts must submit a degree equivalent evaluation (an original sealed report from a transcript evaluation service) with their CASPA application. A list of transcript evaluation service providers may be found at www.naces.org.)

Foreign-born non-U.S. or non-Canadian citizens must:

- ❖ Have attended a college or university in the United States for a minimum of one year prior to application
- ❖ Submit test scores with CASPA application for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), be able to express themselves clearly to others in spoken English, and have the ability to understand rapidly spoken colloquial English.

Foreign medical graduates, if accepted, must complete the Program in its entirety.

Immunization Policy

Students must show documented proof of the following immunizations or a copy of a positive blood titer.

- TB Tine Test/PPD (positive results will require the student to receive a chest x-ray and further evaluation)
 - *Students must also complete a 2 step PPD within 12 months prior to clinical rotations. The recommendation is for students to take the 1st step in November after matriculating into the program and the 2nd in February prior to starting clinical rotations.*
- Hepatitis B vaccine and positive Hepatitis B Antibodies
- MMR vaccine or immunity
- Varicella history, titer or vaccination.
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis vaccine
- Pneumococcal polysaccharide PPV vaccine
- Meningococcal
- Influenza Vaccine (annually)

Vaccines: Measles, mumps and rubella vaccines may be given in any of the following combinations:

- (M-M-R) Measles, Mumps, Rubella Rubella, Mumps (Biavax)
- (M-R) Measles, Rubella Measles Vaccine (Attenuvax)
- Mumps Vaccine (Mumpsvox)* Rubella Vaccine (Meruvax)
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis booster (needed every 10 years)
- Hepatitis B (Engerex B)-Series of three injections and Titer required

This will be annually updated as received from CDC (Center for Disease Control and Prevention). Please see list from CDC below.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/index.html>

Graduation Policy

Graduation Requirements

Matriculation, attendance and graduation from the University are privileges granted to the student in consideration of performance of specified assignments and the maintenance of established standards of personal and professional conduct.

The following criteria must be met in order to qualify for graduation with the Masters of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree:

Successful candidates for graduation must:

- Satisfactorily complete all the courses within the didactic and clinical learning phases of the Physician Assistant program with a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0
- Achieve a minimum grade of 70% in all didactic courses and clinical rotations;
- Successfully complete the ACLS and PALS courses
- Maintain BLS certification throughout the program
- Successfully complete the Didactic Summative Evaluation and Clinical Summative Review with a minimum grade of 80%;
- Abide by all University, College and Program rules and regulations, and settle all financial accounts with the University prior to graduation.
- Successfully adhere to the student and professional code of conduct established by the University, College and Program.
- Each candidate for the Masters of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree must be free of indebtedness to the University. The graduate degree and the academic transcript or certification of completion will not be given until all financial obligations to the University have been met.

Completion Deadlines for Curriculum Requirements

(ARC-PA Standard A3.17b, c)

Didactic Phase

Requirements for each course in the curriculum must be completed by the end of each semester.

Clinical Phase

Requirements for each clinical rotation must be completed by the conclusion of each End-of-Rotation (EOR) session.

Progress towards Degree

1. An academic grade point average of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale is required for the master's degree.
2. An application for graduation should be filed with the Registrar's Office two semesters prior to the student's anticipated graduation date. Forms may be found on the University's website at <http://www.lr.edu/academics/office-of-registrar>.