



Physician Assistant Studies Program Technical Standards

A3.13 The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include:
e) any required technical standards for enrollment.

Technical Standards

Physician assistants (PAs), as health care providers, must be able to integrate their acquisition of medical knowledge with their skills, behavior, and attitudes in order to deliver appropriate patient care. The University of Saint Joseph is committed to admitting the most qualified applicants for the PA Studies program which, in addition to academic criteria, include the following technical standards. These standards are a prerequisite for admission, progression, and completion of the program.

The University of Saint Joseph complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008 (see MY USJ Website, Student Life, and Accessibility Services for details). The Office of Accessibility Services at the University of Saint Joseph strives to provide equal access to programs, facilities and services in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to qualified students with documented disabilities.

It is the student's responsibility to contact the Coordinator of Accessibility Services (Jennifer Boylan, MAT, M.A., LPC, Coordinator of Student Accessibility Services. jboylan@usj.edu /Phone: 860 231-5481). Students will be required to submit a request, in writing, for reasonable accommodations for ADA/ADAAA recognized disabilities and support services each semester. Accommodations are not retroactive, therefore students are advised to disclose and request accommodations early in the semester. Reasonable accommodations for persons with documented ADA/ADAAA recognized disabilities will be considered on an individual basis. It is the student's responsibility to review the technical standards and report any needs to the program director.

Disclosure of Disability is voluntary; admitted students who wish to request accommodation must provide appropriate documentation. The Office of Accessibility Services is located in the Center for Academic Excellence and may be contacted at (860) 231-5481.

Technical skills/standards are grouped into six categories defined below: Observation; Communication, Sensory and Motor Functions; Intellectual Conceptualization, Integration, and Quantitation; Behavioral and Social Attributes; and Professional Responsibility. All students must be able to perform these skills independently. Therefore, third parties cannot be used to assist students in achieving these requirements. The PA Studies Program and the University will provide reasonable accommodations to assist students with ADA/ADAAA recognized disabilities in meeting these standards. Program Progression and Graduation Policies require students to meet these technical standards; the Program and University will make reasonable accommodations for a student who, during the course of their studies, is no longer able to meet the technical standards on account of an ADA/ADAAA recognized disability. Progression and Graduation may not be possible if a student is unable to meet these standards, despite reasonable accommodations.



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Observation

Candidates and students must be able to observe and actively participate in all demonstrations and exercises in the basic medical and clinical sciences, including in lectures, in the laboratory using standardized or classmate patient-models, and in clinical settings.

Candidates and students must be able to observe a patient accurately and completely both at a distance and up close at the bedside, noting both verbal and nonverbal signs.

Communication

Candidates and students must be able to comprehend written English at a level sufficient to adequately evaluate technical materials, medical reports, biomedical texts and journals.

Candidates and students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, families, peers and other health professionals in academic and healthcare settings during routine and emergent situations.

Candidates and students must be able to communicate, orally, written and electronically in English, the results of their examination to the patient and to their colleagues with accuracy, clarity, and efficiency.

Candidates and students must be able to accurately and legibly document observations and plans in a thorough and timely manner.

Sensory and Motor Functions

Candidates and students must have sufficient use of somatic sensation and the senses of vision, hearing and smell to perform the inspection, palpation, auscultation and percussion components of the physical examination.

Candidates and students must possess the gross and fine motor coordination skills necessary to learn and perform routine invasive and noninvasive diagnostic and therapeutic procedures, and to properly use clinical instruments and medical devices for therapeutic intervention (e.g. stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, venipuncture and intravenous equipment, gynecologic speculum, scalpel).

Candidates and students must be able to perform the physical activities needed to provide general and emergency care for patients. This may include, but not be limited to: negotiating patient care environments; moving between settings in the clinic, hospital and classroom; activities such as bending, lifting, carrying, prolonged standing; cardiopulmonary resuscitation; the application of pressure to stop bleeding; opening of the obstructed airway; suturing of simple wounds; and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Candidates and students must be able to tolerate long periods of sitting, standing or moving in classroom, laboratory and clinical experiences.



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Candidates and students must possess the motor and sensory ability to utilize a computer to access the internet to research medical articles, read and send email, complete on-line quizzes and tests, employ Blackboard to augment classroom instruction, perform word processing, and utilize clinical logging software.

Intellectual Conceptualization, Integration, and Quantitation

Candidates and students must be able to learn to quantify, calculate, analyze, integrate, synthesize, problem solve, and reach diagnostic and therapeutic judgments in a timely manner.

Candidates and students must be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of body structures.

Candidates and students must be able to search, read and interpret the medical literature.

Candidates and students must be able to use a personal computer to access the internet to research medical articles, read and send email, complete on-line quizzes and tests, employ Blackboard to augment classroom instruction, perform word processing and utilize clinical logging software.

Candidates and students must be able to collect, organize, prioritize, analyze and assimilate large amounts of technically detailed and complex information within a limited time frame. The information will be presented in a wide variety of educational settings including lectures, small group discussion, reading, self-directed research, on-line and in clinical settings.

Candidates and students must be able to learn and to demonstrate the ability to recognize limitations in their own knowledge, skills, and abilities and to perform self-directed learning or seek appropriate assistance with their identified limitations.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

Candidates and students must be able to work collaboratively with their classmates to sustain a non-competitive learning atmosphere and work with their colleagues and patients to develop collaborative professional relationships.

Candidates and students must possess the endurance to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. At times, this may require working for extended periods of time or with rotating shift schedules.

Candidates and students must possess the emotional health needed to fully use their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, and act promptly and appropriately in emergency situations.



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Candidates and students must be able to adapt to changing environments and to display flexibility in the face of uncertainties inherent in the training process and the practice of medicine.

Candidates and students are expected to willingly accept and invite constructive criticism and, if necessary, subsequently adopt appropriate modifications in their behavior.

Candidates and students must have compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity and awareness of social values. They must be able to interact positively with people of all levels of society, ethnic backgrounds and belief systems.

Professional Responsibility

Completion of Educational and Training Components

Candidates and students must be able to meet the challenges of any medical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems. This requires training for emergencies (e.g., CPR, ACLS).

Candidates and students in the first four semesters of the program are expected to attend all lectures and educational sessions, complete assigned reading, master physical exam skills, complete all laboratory exercises, and complete BLS, ACLS, PALS and other assignments.

In the clinical year, students must successfully complete all supervised clinical practice experiences, as well as call-back sessions, transitional classes and comprehensive evaluations.

Internet Access

Access to an adequate data plan and a reliable internet or Wi-Fi connection is required to complete assignments and assessments when not on campus. A data plan and reliable internet or Wi-Fi connection sufficient for active participation in lectures provided remotely (as necessary, via video-conferencing software) is also required.

Travel & Time Management

Reliable transportation is required, as candidates and students must be able to travel to and from classes and clinical assignments on time. Candidates and students must possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames, including frequent oral, written, and practical examinations.

Attendance/Absence

Due to the unique modular structure of the curriculum, mandatory attendance in class and participation at clinical rotation sites are essential requirements of the PA Studies program. As outlined in the *USJ PA Studies Student Handbook* program absence policies, during the didactic phase, students may incur a



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maximum of 3 total absences, with no more than 1 absence per semester. During the clinical phase of the program, only absences due to medical emergency, ADA accommodations, or familial death are permitted. These absences may not exceed more than 10% of the scheduled duration of the course in which they occur, and may not occur on more than one occasion per semester. Absences in excess of this policy, for any student, will require deceleration from the program.

Policies and Procedures

Professionalism as a student is demonstrated by adherence to policies of the University, the PA Studies Program, and various clinical sites, including policies regarding professional grooming, dress, and behavior in both the academic and clinical settings. Students must adhere to the PA Studies Program academic schedule, which may differ from the University's academic calendar and is subject to change at any time.

PA Professional Conduct

Students and candidates must demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the [Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession](#). They will take initiative to direct their own learning and will work cooperatively and collaboratively with other students on assigned projects, and participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation of abilities and reasoning skills.

Students and candidates will be expected to perform physical examinations on male and female peers along with being examined by both male and female peers during laboratory instruction. They will be expected to perform male and female genital and breast examinations on appropriate models in the classroom, standardized patients in a simulated clinical environment, and on patients in the supervised clinical practical experience setting.

Risk Management

Students understand that participating in a clinical/practical placement at a healthcare facility or related institution entails certain risks, including the risk of exposure to infectious disease and other personal injuries. This risk is enhanced during the current COVID-19 pandemic. Students understand that those risks are beyond the control of the University. Students freely and voluntarily accept those risks.

Students must comply with policies and procedures in place at the clinical/practical site, including those intended to mitigate the spread of infectious diseases, such as COVID-19. Sites may require students to provide their own facemasks, personal protective equipment (PPE) and/or documentation of full vaccination, including against the COVID-19 virus. Students will be provided training on control of the spread of infectious disease and proper use of PPE prior to participating in clinical/patient care or similar services at a clinical site.

Accreditation standards require student experiences in specified medical disciplines and settings, and as such, the components of Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences, as designed by the program to meet



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these mandates, are essential requirements of the program. Students who have a health condition that may increase risk of contracting an infectious disease should contact the Office of Accessibility services to begin the process of determining if an accommodation is possible.

Students receive the Technical Standards upon admission and are required to sign an Acknowledgement and Attestation Statement prior to matriculation. The Technical Standards are posted to the USJ website; updates or amendments are communicated to students if/as they occur via Blackboard email announcements and in the *USJ PA Student Handbook* available in Blackboard.

COVID-19

[A1.02 The sponsoring institution is responsible for: g) documenting appropriate security and personal safety measures for PA students and faculty in all locations where instruction occurs]

In keeping with the University's Core Values of hospitality and respect, and to enhance the safety of the entire USJ community, USJ has implemented COVID-19 pandemic mitigation strategies, in accordance with State of Connecticut and/or City of West Hartford, and Department(s) of Public Health & guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), including, but not limited to:

Masks and Face Coverings:

In response to updated guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and a request from the Town of West Hartford, USJ will require both vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals to wear a face-covering indoors as of Monday, Aug. 9, until further notice. Face coverings are not necessary for vaccinated individuals when alone in a private office, actively eating or drinking, or in private residential spaces. Unvaccinated individuals must continue to wear a face-covering at all times in campus buildings except when in a private, fully-enclosed office or when actively eating or drinking. We hope that this requirement can be lifted very soon, but until COVID transmission rates decrease, face coverings will be one way (along with being vaccinated) to protect our community and ensure a safe and healthy learning environment.

Vaccination (as of August 25, 2021):

All USJ students, staff, and faculty (including part-time and adjunct) who work or take classes in-person at any USJ site must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 or obtain an approved medical or religious exemption. This policy is intended to promote the health and safety of the USJ community by reducing the risk of COVID-19 transmission and being consistent with federal, state, and local efforts to minimize virus outbreaks.

- Affected employees and students must submit verification of received an initial dose of the vaccine or an approved medical or religious exemption by **September 15, 2021**. Verification



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of full vaccination must be submitted by **October 15, 2021**.

- Remote attendance of classes conducted in-person is not an option for unvaccinated students.
- Students and employees who receive an exemption from the COVID-19 vaccination requirement will be required to comply with preventative measures and restrictions as deemed necessary by the University.
 - Note that an exemption approved by USJ may not be accepted by an external agency, such as rotation sites at health care facilities for required supervised clinical practice experiences, which may result in a delay in completion of required program components and graduation, and/or inability to successfully complete the program.
- While USJ will continue to encourage participation by providing education regarding vaccination, access to the vaccine, and instruction on receiving an approved exemption, failure to comply with the vaccination or exemption requirement will result in loss of privileges and/or sanctions.
- This policy and any attendant procedures and/or rules may be amended as necessary based on factors such as the status of the COVID-19 pandemic and guidance from governmental authorities. Updates are provide online at <https://www.usj.edu/student-life/covid/>.



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Acknowledgement and Attestation

I, _____ attest that I meet all of the Technical Standards, as
(Print Name)
established by the University of Saint Joseph Physician Assistant Studies Program, with or without
accommodations. I have had an opportunity to have any questions answered with regard to the
Physician Assistant Studies Technical Standards described herein. I understand that the Program and the
University are willing to make reasonable accommodations for ADA/ADAAA recognized disabilities to
meet these standards, should I provide reasonable notice and the required documentation to the Office
of Accessibility Services.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

SAMPLE