



USJ PA Studies Graduate Competencies

A3.12g) The program must define, publish and make readily available to enrolled and prospective students general program information to include: program required competencies for entry level practice, consistent with the competencies as defined by the PA profession]

The Physician Assistant Studies Program will ensure that its graduates have attained a set of professional competencies required for entry level PA practice. Influenced by the [Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession \(2020\)](#) adopted by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the American Academy of PAs (AAPA), the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), as well as the [PAEA Core Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates](#), the USJ PA Studies Graduate Competencies include:

- I. **Knowledge:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to synthesize core basic and medical science knowledge and appropriately apply it to patient care
 - a. Apply knowledge of human anatomy and physiology to patient care
 - b. For selected medical and surgical conditions, apply knowledge of:
 - i. Pathophysiology
 - ii. Epidemiology and risk factors
 - iii. Presenting symptoms
 - iv. Physical examination findings
 - v. Differential diagnosis and establishing the diagnosis
 - vi. Pertinent diagnostic and/or laboratory study findings
 - vii. Treatment including indications, contraindications, complications, risks, benefits and techniques for pertinent procedures as well as the mechanism of action, indication, contraindications, side effects and adverse reactions of pharmacologic treatments
 - viii. Strategies for risk factor modification and patient education
- II. **Interpersonal skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the interpersonal and communication skills required to collaborate with patients, their families, peers, physicians, and other healthcare professionals.
 - a. Effectively elicit and exchange information using clear language to patients and families through verbal, nonverbal and written means
 - b. Create and sustain therapeutic and ethically sound relationships with patients
 - c. Adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction
 - d. Relay appropriate and complete patient historical information in traditionally accepted written and oral formats to an interdisciplinary team of caregivers.
 - e. Accurately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes
 - f. Model compassionate service to others, a core value of the University



- III. **Patient care, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-solving Skills:** Graduates will demonstrate the ability to obtain a detailed, accurate patient history, sensitive to the individuality of the patient, perform an appropriate physical exam, develop a comprehensive differential diagnosis, order and interpret necessary diagnostic studies, make the correct diagnosis and institute appropriate care.
- Accurately obtain the appropriate history in comprehensive and focused interviews
 - Perform comprehensive and focused physical exams, identifying pertinent information
 - Recognize normal and abnormal anatomy and physiology
 - Relate pathophysiologic principles to specific disease processes
 - Accurately develop a comprehensive differential diagnosis and arrive at the most likely diagnosis
 - Use diagnostic equipment safely and appropriately
 - Select, collect and interpret appropriate diagnostic or laboratory studies
 - Employ clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities in patient care scenarios
 - Determine the appropriate pharmacologic therapy for selected medical conditions
 - Monitor pharmacologic regimens and adjust as appropriate
 - Recognize and initiate treatment for life-threatening emergencies
 - Counsel and educate patients and their families
 - Employ information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education
 - Perform medical and surgical procedures essential to the specialty of practice
 - Provide culturally competent, patient-centered, quality medical care to patients across the lifespan in a variety of settings.
 - Utilize information resources to locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to a patient's health
 - Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness
 - Utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support education
- IV. **Professionalism:** Graduates will demonstrate professionalism in their interactions with patients, peers, and other healthcare professionals.
- Recognize personal and professional limitations
 - Be unimpaired by substance, mental illness and cognitive deficiency
 - Demonstrate respect, compassion, integrity and a sensitivity to cultural, ethnic and generational specifics
 - Incorporate the principle of patient autonomy to patient care
 - Demonstrate knowledge and obedience of legal and regulatory requirements as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant
 - Develop professional relationships with physician supervisors and other



- health care providers
- g. Show accountability to patients, society, and the profession
 - h. Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety while maintaining life balance and healthy behaviors
 - i. Develop a plan for maintaining excellence and on-going professional development
 - j. Employ insight to assess and improve clinical skills, patient care and professional interactions.
 - k. Employ ethical principles pertaining to the provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices
 - l. Utilize self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative
 - m. Recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in oneself and others
 - n. Seek and accept constructive criticism pertaining to judgement and performance
 - o. Employ appropriate professional communication skills in verbal, written and electronic formats
- V. **Systems and Problem-based Improvement:** Graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the American healthcare system as well as the role of other healthcare professionals and strive to improve the health care system.
- a. Apply knowledge of beneficence, non-maleficence, quality, efficacy and cost to provide patient-centered care within the greater health system
 - b. Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team
 - c. Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities
 - d. Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of health care and patient outcomes
 - e. Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care
 - f. Recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to health care disparities
 - g. Utilize information resources for the purposes of practice-improvement.
 - h. Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care
 - i. Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care

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