



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

Technical Standards

PAs must be able to integrate their acquisition of medical knowledge with their clinical skills, behavior, and attitudes to deliver appropriate medical care. The University of Saint Joseph is committed to selecting 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.

Technical skills/standards comprise six categories, described below. All students must be able to perform these skills independently. Therefore, third parties cannot 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 their studies, is no longer able to meet the technical standards due to an ADA/ADAAA recognized disability. Progression and Graduation may not be possible if a student is unable to meet these standards, despite reasonable accommodations.

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 enough to evaluate technical materials, including, but not limited to, 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, in written form 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.



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

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 use clinical instruments and medical devices properly 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 is not limited to: negotiating acute, urgent and emergent 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.

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 (learning management system) 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 (learning management system) 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



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

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 emergencies.

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 must 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,



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

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 periods, 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 maximum of three (3) total absences, with no more than one (1) absence per semester. During the clinical phase of the program, the only absences permitted are due to medical emergency, ADA accommodations, or familial death. 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 exceeding this policy, for any student, will require deceleration from the program.

Student Professionalism

Students demonstrate professionalism by adhering to the policies of the University, the PA Studies Program, and various clinical sites, including policies regarding professional grooming, dress, attendance, participation 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.

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

Students are required to perform physical examinations on male and female peers, and to be



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

examined by both male and female peers during clinical laboratory instruction. They will also perform male and female genital and breast examinations on anatomic teaching models in the classroom, standardized patients in a simulated clinical environment, and on patients in the supervised clinical practical experience setting.

Risk Management

Students enrolled in the USJ PA Studies program 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 ongoing 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 University, as well as 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 and personal protective equipment (PPE) and/or documentation of full vaccination, including against the COVID-19 virus. The PA Studies program will provide training on control of the spread of infectious disease and proper use of PPE prior to student participation in clinical/patient care or similar services at a clinical site.

Accreditation standards require student experiences in specified medical disciplines and settings. As such, the components of Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences, as designed by the program to meet 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. The Program Director communicates updates or amendments to students if/as they occur, via Blackboard email announcements, in the classroom, 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]

While the University of Saint Joseph (USJ) is no longer requiring students to submit proof of COVID-19 vaccination or receive an approved exemption as a condition of enrollment, please be aware that certain programs and learning/clinical sites require students to be vaccinated against COVID-19. It is the



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

responsibility of the student to understand how their vaccination status may impact timely completion for programs that require clinical/practicum experiences.

Currently, the [Connecticut Hospital Association](#) requires a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose, in addition to a COVID-19 vaccine primary series, for hospital and health system employees and clinical staff. As such, students enrolled in the USJ PA Studies program will be required to confirm COVID-19 vaccination and booster requirements to comply with program-specific clinical placement policies that may differ from USJ policies. Clinical placement policies supersede any instances in which the University of Saint Joseph may grant vaccination exemptions, because the university cannot guarantee alternate clinical placements if a student does not comply with the clinical partner’s vaccination/booster requirements or other policies. Students who do not comply with these policies risk their eligibility for assignment to a clinical site, and therefore continuation and/or completion of their program of study.

The USJ PA Studies Program is currently not requiring students, faculty or staff to wear KN95 masks in the classroom, but KN95 masks are required when conducting physical examination skills and procedures in the lab, in accordance with current practice in the healthcare settings in the State of Connecticut. Should community health conditions or directives change, the University and the PA Program will adjust policies accordingly. Students, faculty or staff may choose to wear a mask at any time. At their discretion, a faculty member may require that students wear masks during their classroom or lab sessions.

Office of Accessibility Services

The University of Saint Joseph is committed to providing an equal educational opportunity for students with disabilities. At USJ, the Office of Accessibility Services ensures a university experience that gives individuals with disabilities the same access to programs, opportunities, and activities as all others. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, USJ provides reasonable accommodations to eligible students. The services offered by the Office of Accessibility Services at USJ are designed to meet the unique educational needs of all students with documented permanent and temporary disabilities.

It is the student’s responsibility to review the technical standards and report any needs to the program director. Disclosure of Disability is voluntary; if an admitted student has a disability that may impact their academic achievement in the program requiring accommodation, appropriate documentation must be provided to the Office of Accessibility Services. Please note that academic accommodations cannot be provided prior to the PA program’s receipt of an Accommodation Letter from the USJ Office of Accessibility Services, and are not retroactive for work previously completed. Therefore, students are



PA Studies Program Technical Standards and Student Responsibilities

[A 3.13e: The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include any required technical standards for enrollment]

advised to disclose and request accommodations, as soon as possible, before the semester begins.

Please visit the [Office of Accessibility Services](#) page on the USJ website for information about registering for services. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the Office of Student Accessibility Services (Email: Accessibility@usj.edu/ Phone: 860 231-5730). Students will be required to submit a request, in writing, for reasonable accommodations for ADA/ADAAA recognized disabilities and support services. Reasonable accommodations for persons with documented ADA/ADAAA recognized disabilities will be considered on an individual basis.

.....

Acknowledgement and Attestation

I, _____ attest that I meet all Technical Standards, as
(Print Name)

established by the University of Saint Joseph PA Studies Program, with or without accommodations.

I have had an opportunity to have any questions answered regarding the PA 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: _____

*Please email the **entire document** (7 pages), including the signature page, to the PA Program at PAStudiesProgram@usj.edu.