



**CARLOW**  
UNIVERSITY

Devoted to the Future of You.

MS in Physician  
Assistant

**PA Program Student Handbook**  
**2025 - 2026**  
**College of Health and Wellness**

**3333 FIFTH AVENUE**  
**PITTSBURGH, PA**  
**15213**



*As a Carlow University student in the Physician Assistant Program, you must adhere to all policies and procedures outlined in the Student Handbook. These policies and procedures may be subject to revision at any time. Students will receive notification in writing of changes or revisions. All students agree to be bound by all University and Program policies and procedures regardless of location.*

# Table of Contents

SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW .....	1
WELCOME.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
FACULTY AND STAFF.....	3
Alison Wix, MPA, PA-C.....	3
Alex Baumcraz, DPAS, MPA, PA-C.....	3
Afokoghene Zino Okpozo, MBBS, PhD.....	4
Kathleen Kail, MPAS, PA-C.....	4
Brooke Gall, MPAS, PA-C.....	5
Rachel November, PA-C.....	5
Emily Herman, PA-C.....	6
Nickolas Miller.....	6
Kristin Ross.....	6
INTRODUCTION TO CARLOW UNIVERSITY.....	7
HISTORY.....	7
MISSION.....	7
VISION.....	7
VALUES.....	7
Mercy.....	7
Hospitality.....	8
Service.....	8
Discovery.....	8
Sacredness of Creation.....	8
INTRODUCTION TO THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM.....	8
GOALS OF THE PA PROGRAM.....	9
MISSION OF THE PA PROGRAM.....	9
VISION OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM.....	9
PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES/COMPETENCIES.....	9
TECHNICAL STANDARDS POLICY.....	11
Sensory.....	11
Communication.....	12
Motor.....	12
Intellectual.....	12

Social/Emotional/Professional.....	12
CURRICULUM.....	12
REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT.....	12
PROGRAM-ASSOCIATED COSTS.....	13
Program-Related Costs.....	13
SECTION II: UNIVERSITY AND PROGRAM INFORMATION.....	14
CAMPUS MAP.....	14
COMMUTER, PARKING, AND SAFETY POLICY.....	14
INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY.....	15
Essential Offices.....	15
Internal Communication.....	16
Media Outlets.....	16
DISASTER STATEMENT.....	16
UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION.....	16
EQUAL EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY.....	17
TITLE IX COMPLAINTS.....	17
DISABILITIES SERVICES POLICY.....	18
IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS.....	18
DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION APPEALS.....	19
GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE POLICY.....	19
DISABILITY AND DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE POLICY.....	19
STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY.....	21
PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY.....	21
FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) POLICY.....	21
ACADEMIC CALENDAR.....	21
BRIGHTSPACE.....	22
COST OF ATTENDANCE POLICY.....	22
REFUND OF TUITION AND FEES IN THE EVENT OF WITHDRAWAL POLICY.....	22
Military Deployment and Refund Policy.....	22
Appeals.....	22
DRUG AND ALCOHOL STUDENT SCREENING POLICY.....	23
STUDENT URINE DRUG SCREEN (UDS) POLICY.....	23
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY.....	23
COMBINED AI USE POLICY.....	23
Ethical Use of Generative AI.....	23

Instructor Guidelines and Permissions .....	23
Academic Integrity and Reporting Violations.....	24
Use in Clinical Settings.....	24
Recommended Best Practices .....	24
GRADES AND GRADING POLICIES .....	24
ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE .....	24
HARASSMENT POLICY .....	24
Sexual Harassment .....	25
Sex/Gender-Based Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct Policy.....	26
COMPLAINT PROCEDURE .....	27
Physician Assistant Program Mistreatment Policy.....	27
Purpose.....	27
Definitions.....	27
Policy Statement.....	28
Reporting Procedures .....	28
Confidentiality.....	28
Timeframe for Reporting.....	28
Investigation and Resolution Procedures.....	28
Non-Retaliation .....	29
Review and Revision .....	29
SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICIES .....	29
SECTION III: ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESSION .....	31
ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESSION POLICY .....	31
REQUIRED ACADEMIC STANDARDS.....	31
REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS .....	32
PROFESSIONALISM POLICY.....	32
Integrity and Compassion .....	32
Respect and Civility.....	33
Confidentiality and Privacy .....	33
Communication.....	33
Emotional Intelligence, Self-Awareness, and Self-Care .....	33
Commitment to Service and Lifelong Learning.....	33
Sense of Duty.....	34
Social Responsibility.....	34
Teamwork.....	34

REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRESSION .....	35
Remediation Policy .....	35
Didactic course remediation .....	35
SCPE remediation.....	36
Professionalism remediation .....	36
Academic Warning .....	36
Professional Warning .....	36
PROBATION .....	36
ATTENDANCE POLICY .....	39
DRESS CODE POLICY .....	39
1. General Expectations .....	40
2. Didactic Phase Dress Code .....	40
3. Clinical Phase Dress Code .....	40
STUDENT IDENTIFICATION POLICY .....	41
STUDENT IMMUNIZATION, HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENT AND EXPOSURE HEALTH REQUIREMENTS POLICY .....	41
INFECTION CONTROL POLICY .....	43
EXPOSURE POLICY .....	44
LATEX ALLERGY POLICY .....	45
EMERGENCY CONTACT POLICY .....	45
ACCIDENT OR INJURY POLICY .....	45
STUDENT BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS POLICY .....	46
Criminal Background Check Requirement.....	46
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY .....	47
E-MAIL POLICY .....	49
STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POLICY .....	49
STUDENT ROLE POLICY .....	50
GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS .....	51
PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS.....	51
American Academy of Physician Assistants.....	51
Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant .....	52
National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants .....	52
Physician Assistant Education Association.....	52
Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants .....	53
SECTION IV: ACADEMIC SUPPORT.....	54
STUDENT ADVISEMENT AND MENTORING POLICY .....	54

CENTER FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (CAA) .....	54
IT AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY .....	55
CARLOW CARD .....	61
IT HELP! Services .....	61
FINANCIAL AID .....	62
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES POLICY .....	62
STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS POLICY .....	63
FACULTY AS THE STUDENT HEALTHCARE PROVIDER POLICY .....	63
ACCESS AND REFERRAL FOR SUPPORT POLICY .....	64
CAMPUS MINISTRY .....	65
GRACE LIBRARY .....	65
REGISTRAR .....	65
Change in Personal Information .....	65
Application for Graduation .....	65
BOOKSTORE .....	66
SECTION V: OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES .....	67
PROGRAM ACCREDITATION POLICY .....	67
ADMISSIONS POLICY .....	67
ADVANCED PLACEMENT POLICY .....	72
PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT POLICY .....	72
STUDENT FILES POLICY .....	74
SUPERVISED CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE POLICY .....	75
STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY .....	78
STUDENT HANDBOOK ATTESTATION .....	81

# **SECTION I: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

## **WELCOME**

Welcome, Class of 2027!

You are embarking on an incredible journey toward becoming a Physician Assistant, a path that will challenge and shape you both academically and professionally. The road ahead will be demanding, but it will also be one of the most rewarding experiences of your burgeoning career. As you begin mastering the foundations of medicine, you are working toward becoming a compassionate, competent, and knowledgeable healthcare provider—one worthy of the esteemed title of Physician Assistant.

From this moment forward, you stand for Carlow University, the Carlow University PA Program, and the PA profession. With that honor comes the responsibility to uphold the highest standards of ethics, integrity, and professionalism. Your future patients will place their trust in you, relying on your ability and commitment to their well-being. Let this inspire you to strive for excellence in everything you do. As a Carlow student, this also means embracing the mission of the PA Program and the values of the Sisters of Mercy.

The PA Program faculty and staff are here to support and guide you every step of the way. Success in this rigorous program requires dedication, organization, and understanding that no one achieves their goals alone. Your journey will be enriched by the encouragement of faculty, peers, friends, and family. Should you ever need guidance along the way, please refer to the resources in this Handbook. Faculty and staff are available to answer any questions and advise you along the way to your degree.

A lifetime of learning awaits you, and developing the mindset of a self-directed learner will be essential. In the years ahead, you will look back on your time at Carlow with pride—recognizing the challenges you’ve overcome and the strong foundation you’ve built to become an exceptional healthcare provider.

Welcome to this transformative experience. Your future starts now!

## **INTRODUCTION**

This handbook outlines the current policies and procedures specific to the Physician Assistant Program at Carlow University. It serves two primary purposes: (a) to assist students in planning their studies and (b) to communicate the program’s educational policies, expectations, and standards. As an evolving document, the manual is periodically revised and updated. By enrolling in the program, students agree to adhere to any policy or procedural changes, which will be implemented systematically and fairly. These policies apply to all students in the Carlow University PA Program, regardless of their location of study.

This document is intended to complement the policies found in the Carlow University Student Handbook, the Graduate Course Catalog, and other official university documents. These resources should be reviewed by students at the beginning of each academic year.

The PA Student Handbook serves as the official reference for policies and procedures applicable to PA students. It should be thoroughly reviewed before beginning coursework and revisited regularly throughout the program.

Students are encouraged to actively engage in their personal and professional development throughout their enrollment in the PA Program. This includes participating in professional organizations and networking opportunities, fully engaging in experiential learning activities within the curriculum, and aligning their growth with the Program Learning Outcomes. Faculty members of the PA Program uphold the *AAPA Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession* and the *NCCPA Code of Conduct for Certified and Certifying PAs and PAs with the PA-C Emeritus Designation*, while also respecting the rights and responsibilities of students.

## FACULTY AND STAFF

### **Alison Wix, MPA, PA-C**

Department Chair and Program Director

[anwix@carlow.edu](mailto:anwix@carlow.edu)



Alison Wix, MPA, PA-C is the Department Chair and Program Director for the Carlow University Physician Assistant Program. She received both Master of Physician Assistant Studies and a Bachelor of Health Science degree from Duquesne University. She has been in Physician Assistant Education since 2015. She has experience teaching all courses within PA education, including teaching in the clinical year. She has been nominated for an award in Faculty Excellence, and she has previous leadership experience as an Interim Program Director, an Assistant Program Director, an Assessment Coordinator and an Academic Coordinator.

Ms. Wix also has an interest in research. She has two publications related to Interprofessional Education (IPE) and received a grant for establishing a project on a Telehealth Patient Guild across multiple healthcare professions. She has also been a reviewer for a published series, *The Physician Assistant Student's Guide to the Clinical Year*, and she has a publication titled: *The Effects of Wildfires on the Mental and Physical Health of School-Age Children in North America: A Scoping Review*.

Ms. Wix is a member of the Physician Assistant Education Association and the American Academy of Physician Assistants. She is a certified practicing Physician Assistant, and she currently practices in a community pediatric setting. In addition to pediatrics, Ms. Wix also has clinical experience in both general and vascular surgery.

### **Alex Baumcratz, DPAS, MPA, PA-C**

Assistant Professor and Principal Faculty

[asbaumcratz@carlow.edu](mailto:asbaumcratz@carlow.edu)



Dr. Alex Baumcratz, PA-C, was first certified as a Physician Assistant in 1998, Dr. Baumcratz has broad experience in outpatient medicine, including Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, Emergency Medicine, and Occupational Health. She has precepted PA students clinically for over 25 years and in 2020, transitioned to full-time academia by joining the Carlow PA Program during its initial development. As Assistant Professor here, she is responsible for the Clinical Medicine series of courses, six sequential semesters that take the student from the acquisition of medical knowledge to its application in eight medical specialties.

As chair of the Student Progress Committee, she ensures individualized remediation of struggling students, providing each student the tools needed for success. In accordance with the Carlow mission, she is committed to providing a just and ethical learning environment for students, and prior scholarship has focused on faculty development in the recognition of racial essentialism in medical literature.

**Afokoghene Zino Okpozo, MBBS, PhD**

Associate Professor  
[azokpozo@carlow.edu](mailto:azokpozo@carlow.edu)



Dr. Okpozo is an Associate Professor dedicated to advancing academic excellence in Physician Assistant (PA) education within an ARC-PA-accredited curriculum. She is committed to training compassionate, confident, and competent healthcare providers, emphasizing a holistic approach to patient care.

With a strong background in PA education, she collaborates with multidisciplinary teams to ensure comprehensive learning and successful student outcomes. Before joining Carlow University, she spent eight years as an Assistant Professor at Duquesne University and previously taught anatomy and physiology at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore.

Passionate about teaching, Dr. Okpozo enjoys guiding students through anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, and cadaveric dissections.

**Kathleen Kail, MPAS, PA-C**

Instructor  
[kkail@carlow.edu](mailto:kkail@carlow.edu)



Kathleen Kail, PA-C, has been a practicing Physician Assistant for 18 years, with clinical experience in Emergency Medicine, Urgent Care, and Pediatric Primary Care. Passionate about educating the next generation of healthcare providers, she emphasizes the importance of strong patient relationships and high clinical standards as essential steps toward creating a more just and compassionate world.

She earned her *Master of Physician Assistant Studies* from Chatham University in 2008 and a *Bachelor of Science* from St. Joseph's University in 2000. Ms. Kail is a member of Alpha Sigma Nu, the National Jesuit Honor Society, and Sigma Delta Pi, the National Spanish Honor Society

**Brooke Gall, MPAS, PA-C**

Instructor

[bhgal@carlow.edu](mailto:bhgal@carlow.edu)



Brooke Gall, PA-C is dedicated to preparing future Physician Assistants at Carlow University, ensuring they are well-equipped to interview and examine patients with confidence and competence.

She earned her Master of Physician Assistant Studies and Bachelor of Science in Biology from Seton Hill University. Brooke is an active member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA), reflecting her commitment to excellence in PA education and professional development.

**Rachel November, PA-C**

Clinical Coordinator

[rnnovember@carlow.edu](mailto:rnnovember@carlow.edu)



Rachel November begins her first year at Carlow in Fall 2025, joining the University as the Clinical Coordinator, guiding students through their rotations and attendant learning. She is an affable physician assistant with a commitment to continuing an academic career in education and promoting inclusive leadership in the classroom, creating an environment where every student feels empowered to perform to their highest potential.

She holds a MS in PA Studies and a BS in Health and Physical Activity from the University of Pittsburgh, while also finishing her Doctorate in Medical Science at the same institution. She holds a Certificate in Palliative and Serious Illness Care from the CSU Shiley Haynes Institute and has vast clinical experience in Internal Medicine, Hematology/Oncology, and as a Hospitalist.

**Emily Herman, PA-C**

Instructor

[eeherman@carlow.edu](mailto:eeherman@carlow.edu)



Emily Herman, PA-C, joins our program as new faculty in Fall 2025, after serving as an adjunct professor and specializing in remediation for struggling students. She is a certified Physician Assistant with the NCCPA and holds a New York State License. Ms. Herman graduated from Duquesne University with a BS in Health Sciences in 2011 and an MPAS in 2012. She has extensive clinical experience, including with Medalliance and The Resource Center Primary Care Clinic. Her professional associations include AAPA, AAFP, and PSPA, where she presented her work "Patient Centered Medical Home: Teamwork Advocacy."

**Nickolas Miller**

Program Coordinator

[nmiller5727@carlow.edu](mailto:nmiller5727@carlow.edu)



Nickolas Miller completed his BA in Liberal Studies at California University of Pennsylvania (PennWest) and is currently completing his MS in Sports Management at Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Nick joined the Physician Assistant program in July 2025 as the Program Coordinator. Prior to joining the PA program, he worked in the Occupational Therapy department where he played a key role in program coordination, accreditation support, and student services. Nick also serves as the Men's Basketball Assistant Coach here at Carlow University. He is dedicated to creating a positive and supportive environment for students as they work toward their goals of becoming healthcare professionals.

**Kristin Ross**

Administrative Assistant II

[kkross@carlow.edu](mailto:kkross@carlow.edu)



Kristin Ross serves as the administrative staff member for the Physician Assistant Program and is an administrative professional with experience in writing and editing. She has over twenty years of experience in Executive and Academic assistance and administration. She's proud to be a part of the support staff at Carlow and is dedicated to helping the PA Program's students and faculty.

# INTRODUCTION TO CARLOW UNIVERSITY

## HISTORY

In 1843, the Sisters of Mercy arrived in Pittsburgh from Carlow, Ireland, with a mission to serve the poor, the sick, and the uneducated. On September 24, 1929, after establishing multiple schools, an orphanage, and the Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh, the Sisters founded Mount Mercy College. In 1969, the college was renamed Carlow College.

In 2004, in recognition of the outstanding faculty and commitment to innovative, diverse, and competitive programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels, Carlow was granted university status.

Today, Carlow University continues to fulfill the Sisters' mission through a learner-centered teaching environment, nurturing the individual for a lifetime of learning. Carlow University is accredited by the Commission on Institutions of Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools.

## MISSION

Carlow University, rooted in its Catholic identity and embodying the heritage and values of the Sisters of Mercy, offers transformational educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners and empowers them to excel in their chosen work as compassionate, responsible leaders in the creation of a just and merciful world.

## VISION

Carlow University will be a preeminent, innovative, Catholic university, renowned for providing transformational learning experiences in which students realize their full potential and become career-ready ethical leaders committed to a just and merciful world. Based upon the Carlow Commitment, in 2019 Carlow University adopted a strategic vision to "unleash imagination to transform lives in pursuit of a just and merciful world."

## VALUES

### **Mercy**

The identifying value of Carlow University is Mercy, encompassing all that we are and do as a university. Inspired by our God of Mercy, this value urges us to open our hearts to our students, our colleagues, and our world. In the tradition of action and contemplation, we seek practical ways of addressing need, and we engage in reflection to understand and integrate our experiences. Education offers us the tools to address unjust structures and dehumanizing situations. Each discipline provides a lens through which we can envision our place in our own personal transformation and that of the global community. The values of Service, Discovery, Hospitality, and the Sacredness of Creation further expand our understanding of the power of Mercy to

change our world.

### **Hospitality**

In Hospitality we welcome the wholeness of each person, creating a space in our campus community for all individuals with their varied beliefs, cultures, orientations, and abilities. Openness to the gifts and perspectives of all creates a community that is rich in diversity and committed to inclusion.

### **Service**

The value of Service calls us beyond ourselves to prioritize the needs of others over our own self-interest. Our efforts to identify and respond to the needs we see around us lead us to interact with people and institutions in ways which are transformational. Our spirit of compassion leads us to practical action on behalf of those in need.

### **Discovery**

Through Discovery we open ourselves to the totality of our human experience, to the educational enterprise, to our relationship with the Divine, and to the wonders of the world in which we find ourselves. Discovery energizes our intellectual curiosity and desire to learn. It leads us ever deeper into engagement with our chosen discipline and engenders a spirit of awe at the complexity and variety of creation.

### **Sacredness of Creation**

This value leads us to respect each person and for all of creation. In gratitude for the beauty and variety of our world and its inhabitants, we commit to a culture of sustainability and to the preservation of a world where all are revered and all may thrive.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

The Physician Assistant Program at Carlow University provides academic and clinical training that prepares graduates to be certified and licensed to practice as advanced practice providers, working in collaboration with physicians, especially primary care physicians, in a competent and reliable manner.

The PA program is housed in the College of Health and Wellness, one of two colleges at Carlow University, providing bachelor's, master's and doctoral-level study in nursing and healthcare disciplines.

The Physician Assistant Program is part of Carlow University's commitment to provide inter-professional collaborative health professions education to maximize learning, engage students in meaningful alliances, and ultimately improve the quality of clinical care. Education is provided in a learning environment where educators and students

from many healthcare disciplines learn together, with the goal of developing inter-professional collaborative competencies to ultimately deliver high quality, effective and efficient healthcare as a contributing member of the healthcare team.

## **GOALS OF THE PA PROGRAM**

The goals of the PA program are to:

1. Matriculate a diverse and highly qualified student body who are academically qualified and possess relevant experience for the physician assistant program.
2. Prepare students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively practice medicine as a physician assistant.
3. Achieve a NCCPA PANCE examination pass rate at or above (greater than) the national average.
4. Foster cultural awareness and responsiveness to the needs of diverse patients and communities.
5. Graduate physician assistants who demonstrate strong interpersonal communication abilities and collaborate effectively within healthcare teams.

## **MISSION OF THE PA PROGRAM**

The mission of the Physician Assistant Program at Carlow University is to offer transformational educational opportunities for a diverse community of learners who are prepared as health care professionals to contribute to the quality and safety of healthcare for all. Consistent with the heritage and values of the Sisters of Mercy, graduates are expected to excel as compassionate, responsible leaders in the creation of a just and merciful world.

## **VISION OF THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

The Physician Assistant Program at Carlow University will be renowned for educating healthcare professionals who are career-ready, innovative, forward-thinking, ethical leaders, and scholars committed to the creation of a just and merciful world.

## **PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES/COMPETENCIES**

Program Learning Outcomes designate the core competencies that all graduates of the Carlow University Physician Assistant Program are expected to have attained by

successfully completing the curriculum and all its requirements:

- Graduates will accurately elicit a medical history incorporating effective use of communication skills, which foster trust and patient rapport. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, CLINICAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS, INTERPERSONAL)
- Graduates will perform an appropriate physical examination based on patient presentation and formulate a differential diagnosis and problem list. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, CLINICAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS, CLINICAL REASONING/PROBLEM SOLVING)
- Based upon a clinical presentation, graduates will select, perform and/or interpret appropriate diagnostic and/or therapeutic procedures associated with the diagnosis and management of common medical and minor surgical conditions. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, CLINICAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS, CLINICAL REASONING/PROBLEM SOLVING)
- Using an evidence-based and patient-centered approach, graduates will develop, implement, and monitor a treatment plan and recommend or prescribe appropriate pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic therapeutic interventions, including referring patients to other health care professionals. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, CLINICAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS, CLINICAL REASONING/PROBLEM SOLVING)
- Graduates will provide patient information in an organized and effective manner that facilitates patient understanding and compliance, and allows for patient- focused shared decision making, while recognizing and minimizing barriers to treatment and promoting positive outcomes. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, CLINICAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS, INTERPERSONAL, CLINICAL REASONING/PROBLEM SOLVING)
- Graduates will apply the principles of public and community health toward enhancing the health status of individuals and the community in which they live. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, INTERPERSONAL)
- Graduates will accurately and effectively document and report medical information in a variety of formats. (MEDICAL KNOWLEDGE, CLINICAL/TECHNICAL SKILLS, INTERPERSONAL)
- Graduates will engage in inter-professional and collaborative patient-centered care. (INTERPERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS)

- Graduates will practice medicine while maintaining the professional and personal standards and responsibilities consistent with the PA profession and values of Carlow University and work to ensure the trust of patients, the community, and the medical profession. (INTERPERSONAL, PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS)
- Graduates will approach clinical encounters with respect and inclusivity for all persons of diverse beliefs, cultures, orientation, and abilities with a commitment to providing care to those in need. (INTERPERSONAL)

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS POLICY

All applicants must meet the essential functions outlined in the Technical Standards.

The PA Program has established and publicizes the technical standards for all potential applicants via the website and Student Handbook. For questions, applicants are directed to [Carlow University Disability Services](#).

The definition of Technical Standards (a.k.a. “*Essential Functions*”) is: *Nonacademic requirements for participation in an educational program or activity. They include physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and for entry into the profession.* These are the abilities required of individuals who matriculate into the Carlow University PA Program.

Students must have the mental, physical, emotional capacities and professional disposition essential to successfully complete all aspects of the curriculum and enter and practice successfully in the profession. Students are expected to have abilities upon matriculation, in five realms including **sensory, communication, motor, intellectual, and social/emotional/professional**. These abilities allow students to perform functional tasks required to meet graduation and professional requirements as measured by national certification requirements as well as state licensure and credentialing processes.

### **Sensory**

All individuals must have functional sensory capacity including visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile capacity to observe and actively participate in various academic settings as well as the sensory capacity to perform appropriate examinations and interactions as deemed appropriate in the role as a student and graduate PA. They must always maintain a clear sensorium and not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

**Communication**

All individuals must be able to communicate effectively and professionally in all academic and clinical settings and be able to demonstrate accuracy, clarity, and proficiency in both verbal and written English.

**Motor**

All individuals must have the physical ability to participate in basic physical maneuvers and procedures. Students must be able to negotiate patient care environments. All individuals must possess manual dexterity. Physical stamina and endurance sufficient are a requirement to complete the course of didactic and clinical study. Prolonged periods of sitting, standing, or moving are required in a variety of learning and clinical environments.

**Intellectual**

All individuals must have the cognitive ability sufficient to understand and interpret information, as well as be able to calculate, reason, assess and integrate information, critically think and problem solve. Students must be able to read and comprehend graduate level written course materials.

**Social/Emotional/Professional**

All individuals must possess the social, emotional, and professional maturity to function appropriately and effectively in the academic and clinical setting, based upon social, societal, and professional norms, maintaining mature and effective relationships with peers, faculty, patients, and others in the health care environment. All individuals must demonstrate good judgement, emotional stability and regulation, and an overall awareness of acceptable behaviors in the classroom, clinical setting, and public environments. Students must demonstrate compassion and empathy.

All students will be required to sign off confirming that they are able to meet the above technical requirements for the program prior to matriculation into the program. The Program Director is responsible for monitoring compliance with the policy.

**CURRICULUM**

The curriculum of the Carlow University PA Program spans 24 months (6 semesters). It consists of an initial "didactic phase", followed by a "clinical phase" and ending with a "transition to practice" course during the final semester of the "clinical phase." The Curriculum Guide is available digitally: [PA Program Curriculum Guide](#).

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND EQUIPMENT**

Please refer to the Syllabi for Required Textbooks and Equipment.

## **PROGRAM-ASSOCIATED COSTS**

### **Program-Related Costs**

## **SECTION II: UNIVERSITY AND PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **CAMPUS MAP**

You can view or download the Campus Map online.

### **COMMUTER, PARKING, AND SAFETY POLICY**

Carlow University is located on Fifth Avenue in the Oakland section of Pittsburgh. [Pittsburgh Regional Transit](#) provides easy access to and from vantage points in the Pittsburgh area.

Bus stops are located along Fifth Avenue in front of the University. Students are eligible for the [U-Pass](#), which provides fare-free rides on Pittsburgh buses. Students are responsible for providing and paying for transportation and parking during both the didactic and clinical phases of the curriculum. This includes transportation and parking to and from clinical sites during the Clinical Year.

For commuters who drive to the University, there are [on and off-campus options for parking](#). Students are responsible for fees associated with parking during didactic and clinical phases of the Program. The Parking and ID Center can address questions related to on-campus parking options. The Center is located on the 3rd floor of Francis Warde Hall (412) 578-6005. Parking permit applications and other transportation information are available online.

Carlow University is committed to the safety and security of students, faculty, and staff. The Carlow University Police Department provides 24-hour service to the Carlow community. The University uses a card access system for entry into campus buildings. Emergency telephones are located throughout the campus. There are seventy-five monitored surveillance cameras. A campus-wide system provides for emergency notification to students, faculty/staff in the event of an incident on campus or in the surrounding area.

A Crisis Response Team provides additional assistance to the Police Department in the event of an emergency. The Campus Police also utilize CUAlert powered by Omnilert, an online app that allows for quick response from the Police force in the event of an emergency. Students may also request police escorts on campus with this app or by calling the police dispatch office, located at the entrance to Frances Warde Hall. For more information, [see the student life page](#).

The Police phone number is (412) 578-6005. For emergencies, call (412) 578-6007.

Students at off-campus clinical sites must follow the safety guidelines of their assigned facility. The supervising preceptor is responsible for providing information on safety and security while at the clinical site. Students should never place themselves in danger and should always err on the side of caution should a potential safety concern exist.

## **INCLEMENT WEATHER POLICY**

During certain periods, weather conditions or other emergencies arise that require the university to determine if it is prudent to offer classes or require employees to report to work. In those instances, upper administration will make class cancellation decisions. The President will make university closure decisions to determine if nonessential employees are to report to work.

Faculty will adjust their on-ground lesson plans and communicate with their students accordingly. For those classes that cannot be delivered virtually/remote during the regularly scheduled meeting times, faculty are asked to communicate the plan with their students as the requisite learning hours are to be made up. NOTE: Students reporting to Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SCPE) locations will follow the direction of their Director of Clinical Education.

Each person should consider their individual circumstances when deciding if it is safe to commute during bad weather and use their best judgment regarding safety. Faculty must provide reasonable accommodation for absences in these situations. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty member and make up any missed assignments.

It is the responsibility of the faculty, Program Director and Director of Clinical Education to monitor policy compliance and investigate any student reports of violations.

Issues of attendance will be informally addressed throughout the entire program. Formal assessments occur following each semester during advisement, as well as at the conclusion of the program.

Program policies apply to all students, principal faculty, and the program director regardless of location except in circumstances where discrepancies exist at SCPE locations. SCPE policies may supersede those of the program.

### **Essential Offices**

Essential offices of the University must remain open if classes are cancelled and/or the university is closed for bad weather or for any other reason. The essential offices of the University include Food Services (dining services for resident students will continue), Facilities, and Campus Police. Please know that

we will do everything possible to ensure the safety and security of our students, faculty, and staff during bad weather. If there is an emergency during such times, please contact Campus Police at 412-578-6007.

### **Internal Communication**

Carlow's Campus alert system will provide status information. Carlow's Web Site Home Page will announce closure and provide a link if more information is necessary. The following number will have recorded status messages: 412-578-6677 (Oakland Campus).

### **Media Outlets**

If severe weather forces class cancellation or closure of the university, the following media outlets will be notified:

- KDKA-TV, Radio, and Website - [www.kdka.com](http://www.kdka.com)
- WTAE-TV and Website – [www.thepittsburghchannel.com](http://www.thepittsburghchannel.com)
- WPXI – TV

Please note: Cancellation of classes at the Carlow Campus School *IS SEPARATE FROM AND DOES NOT* affect classes at the University.

Students should not attempt to travel under unsafe weather conditions or take unnecessary risks, especially when at a clinical rotation out of the region. Should inclement weather prevent travel while locally or at a distant clinical site, the student is to notify his/her supervising preceptor and Director of Clinical Education as soon as possible.

Should official action be taken by the University, the PA Program will also send out an email to all students and faculty of the program. Rescheduling of class sessions, alterations in schedule, or rescheduling of testing will be announced later.

### **DISASTER STATEMENT**

If there is a natural disaster that interrupts a student's long-term participation in a course(s), Carlow University will apprise students of the options available to complete their academic coursework.

### **UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION**

The President of Carlow University is Kathy W. Humphrey, PhD. In Fall 2025, the position of Interim Provost is shared by Dean Rhonda Maneval, D.Ed., RN, ANEF, FAAN from the College of Health & Wellness, and Dr. Matthew E. Gordley, PhD, from the College of Arts & Sciences. For a complete listing of University Administration, [please refer to the administration page](#).

## **EQUAL EDUCATIONAL AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

One of the core values of Carlow University is the Sacredness of Creation. We revere each person and all creation, and the diversity they embody. The University, as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity, and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. We are called to respect our diversity in both the university's mission and core values. Our commitment to inclusivity, respect, and acceptance informs every aspect of the university community.

Accordingly, the university prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment based on race, color, religion, sexual orientation, handicap or disability, sex, age, pregnancy, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, genetic information, gender identification, veteran's status, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law. This policy applies to all programs and activities, [with respect to both admissions and employment](#). Questions and concerns about equal opportunity should be directed to the University's Title IX Coordinator or EEOC Coordinators.

### **TITLE IX COMPLAINTS**

#### **Sex Discrimination Reporting, Support, and Response**

Carlow University is committed to creating a learning environment free from sex discrimination including, but not limited to, sex based-harassment; domestic and dating violence; sexual assault; stalking; and other forms of sex-based harassment, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

The Carlow Equal Opportunity, Harassment, and Non-Discrimination Policy designates all faculty and staff members, including teaching assistants, as Mandatory Reporters. Under Carlow University policy, all Mandatory Reporters must report all disclosures of sex discrimination, including those made in relation to an assignment and/or educational prompt, to the University Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator will reach out to the Impacted Party to provide resources, support, and information after receiving a report. The Impacted Party is not required to respond to such outreach. Reported information will remain private.

If you have (or someone you know has) experienced any form of sex discrimination and wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact Health and Counseling Services 412-578-6474 or [hcs@carlow.edu](mailto:hcs@carlow.edu).

For more information regarding Carlow University's Title IX procedures, reporting, or support measures, please visit <https://www.carlow.edu/title-ix/>

Jamie Edwards-Pasek  
Interim Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
[titleIX@carlow.edu](mailto:titleIX@carlow.edu)

412-578-6050

Sara Oliver-Carter  
Title IX Coordinator  
titleIX@carlow.edu  
412-578-8897

## **DISABILITIES SERVICES POLICY**

Carlow University makes reasonable accommodations to provide qualified students with disabilities the opportunity to take full advantage of programs, activities, services, and facilities. Carlow does so in response to legal directives such as those set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, but also as part of its mission to create a community of learners who “respond reverently and sensitively to God and to others and to render competent and compassionate service in personal and professional life.”

For more information including policies and guidelines regarding accommodations, refer to information at [services/disability-services/](#) or contact the Office of Disabilities Services: (412) 578-6257.

For the University to respond appropriately to requests for accommodations, students are expected to follow certain guidelines and assume certain responsibilities. The University will engage in an interactive process with the student, carefully review information and documentation provided by a student, analyze each student’s individual needs, and determine what accommodations may be reasonable and appropriate under the circumstances.

To request accommodations, students should provide the University with current documentation from a licensed medical professional. A school plan such as an IEP may not be sufficient for this purpose.

While documentation from professionals may include specific recommendations for accommodation, the University reserves the right to determine what accommodations are reasonable and appropriate within the University and clinical settings and within technical and academic requirements of the program. Students requesting accommodations must meet with the Disabilities Services Representative to discuss their upcoming schedule of classes, update any documentation, if necessary, and discuss accommodations.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF APPROVED ACCOMMODATIONS**

The University has a reasonable amount of time to review documentation which is submitted seeking accommodation, to interview the student, and to take other necessary steps before approving and providing accommodations. Documentation and information regarding a disability are considered confidential and will be revealed only with prior

written student permission, unless otherwise required by law.

The University need not provide accommodations that would **fundamentally alter** the **essential characteristics or nature** of a program. The University may provide alternate accommodations as long as they are reasonable and appropriate to make the University's programs, activities, services, and facilities accessible to that individual.

Accommodations are not retroactive; that is, they do not impact tests or work completed prior to the student's submission of documentation and the University's determination of any necessary accommodations. Students with disabilities have the same responsibility as other students to meet the University's academic, technical, and behavioral standards and to follow the University's general policies and guidelines regarding standards of conduct.

### **DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION APPEALS**

Students have the right to appeal the University's decisions regarding requests for accommodation through the University's grievance procedures described below.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE POLICY**

Faculty and staff cooperate with the Disabilities Services Office to provide authorized accommodations in a reasonable and timely manner and meet with the student who provides a letter of request for accommodations to determine the means of implementing the accommodation.

If the student does not have a letter of request for accommodation or if the student has not yet contacted the Disabilities Services Office, the faculty or staff member shall refer the student to that office to process the student's request.

Students whose concerns about the application or administration of policies do not fall under any specific grievance procedure may file a general student grievance. In such cases, a complaint should be directed as soon as possible to the person(s) whose action or inaction has given rise to the complaint and not later than ten (10) business days after the event. Every effort should be made to resolve the problem fairly and promptly at this level.

If the issue cannot be resolved in this way, a student may bring the concern to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. The Vice President may or may not act directly to resolve the issue but will assist the student in bringing the concern to the appropriate party for resolution.

### **DISABILITY AND DISCRIMINATION GRIEVANCE POLICY**

Carlow has a complaint procedure to deal promptly and fairly with concerns and complaints about discrimination based on disability, as well as other areas of discrimination. Anyone may bring forward information or concerns about discrimination

or harassment. Complaints are handled as confidentially as possible to protect the rights of both the complainant and the person accused, consistent with an appropriate investigation. Retaliation against anyone who makes a complaint or participates in a complaint process will not be tolerated.

All Section 504 disability complaints, excluding those filed against the Disability Services Representative, should be addressed to:

Disability Services  
Carlow University  
3333 5th Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

All complaints filed against the Disability Services Representative should be addressed to:

Vice President for Student Affairs  
Carlow University  
3333 5th Avenue  
Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Complaints must be filed in writing as soon as possible and not more than 30 days after the complainant becomes aware of the alleged violation. The complaint should contain the name and address of the person(s) filing the complaint, and a description of the alleged violation.

An investigation, as may be appropriate, shall follow the filing of the complaint. The Disability Services Representatives or the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students, or their designees, depending upon the nature of the grievance, shall conduct the investigation. All interested persons will have an opportunity to share information relevant to the complaint with the investigator. The investigator can assist any party in finding a support person from the campus community to assist them with this process. Students are expected to speak on their own behalf with the investigator and to cooperate in any investigations.

The investigator will issue a written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution. A copy will be forwarded to the student who made the complaint no later than thirty (30) working days after receipt of the complaint. Likewise, persons accused of violating the University's policies will also receive notice of the conclusion of the investigation, where appropriate.

Upon receipt of the decision, if the student is not satisfied, he/ she may file a written appeal to the Vice President for Student Affairs and Dean of Students. (If the decision to be appealed was made by that Vice President, the appeal would go to the Provost). The Vice President for Student Affairs must receive the appeal within thirty working days after the date of the written determination. The Vice President for Student Affairs

and Dean of Students, as may be appropriate, shall conduct an investigation and shall issue a written determination as to the validity of the complaint and a description of the resolution. A copy will be forwarded to the complainant no later than thirty (30) working days after receipt of the complaint. This decision is final.

### **STUDENT HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY**

All students in the PA Program are required to carry health insurance coverage for the duration of the program. The student may select the policy and coverage that suits their budget and needs. All students, at a minimum, should have basic coverage that provides for general and emergent needs.

All students are required to provide evidence of health insurance coverage to the program on an annual basis. A photocopy of the insurance card will be maintained in the student's file.

Clinical sites may require evidence of health insurance coverage. Students are responsible for providing proof of insurance to the clinical site.

### **PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE POLICY**

Physician Assistant students are liable for their own actions, judgments, omissions, errors, or negligence when engaged in both direct and indirect clinical (e.g., care of patients/families, preceptor supervised clerkships and practice hours) experiences in healthcare settings. Because of the grave responsibility this liability carries, the requirements of our practice agencies, and to ensure the adequacy of liability protection, all PA students enrolled in Carlow supervised clinical practice must carry current Student Professional Liability Insurance (coverage at the \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000 level is required), this is purchased through the Carlow University group coverage policy. The liability fee is pro-rated across the program's clinical practice/clerkship courses and charged on the student's bill each semester the student is enrolled in an identified program's clinical/practice course.

Students are advised that their liability protection is only for care of clients or indirect practice opportunities offered during Physician Assistant course-related clinical/clerkship experiences (i.e., only when in the student role, not for care performed while working at one's place of employment). Students who may be working in other capacities will need to determine and obtain the appropriate liability protection for that care on their own.

### **FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA) POLICY**

Please refer to the Graduate Course Handbook using the above link for information regarding the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) Policy.

### **ACADEMIC CALENDAR**

The University publishes an academic calendar annually. Due to requirements

associated with didactic courses and clinical rotations, with permission of the Dean and the Office of Academic Affairs, the Program calendar supersedes that of the University. The Program retains the right to revise the schedule and will notify students as soon as any changes are confirmed. You can view and print the [Carlow Academic Calendar](#).

## **BRIGHTSPACE**

Brightspace, also known as D2L, is the learning management system used by Carlow University. This software application is a portal for administration, documentation, tracking, reporting, and delivery of educational courses or training programs. BrightSpace allows students to access course content, submit assignments, participate in discussions, communicate with the instructor and classmates, take quizzes and exams, and more. For more information and training opportunities, visit [BrightSpace](#).

## **COST OF ATTENDANCE POLICY**

For prospective students seeking to make an informed decision about the cost of attending the Carlow University PA Program, the tuition, fees, and estimated program costs are publicly disclosed and published on the PA Program website. The tuition and fee schedules are set annually by the University. All changes will be made public to prospective students and announced to matriculated students once they are announced by the University. Information regarding tuition, fees, and any associated costs can be accessed here: [PA Program Tuition and Fees](#).

## **REFUND OF TUITION AND FEES IN THE EVENT OF WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

### **Military Deployment and Refund Policy**

#### **Appeals**

Changes to registration status resulting from injury to student or immediate family member, death in immediate family, sudden severe illness, accident, or exceptional trauma that is affecting the student's emotional and physical health may be cause for an appeal of change of registration deadlines and/or charges. Student must complete an appeal form, attach appropriate documentation, and submit [appeals@carlow.edu](mailto:appeals@carlow.edu) to the Appeals and Grievance Committee consisting of a representative from Academic Affairs, Admissions, Financial Aid, Registrar, Student Accounts, Student Affairs, and the faculty. The student will receive a written response within 30 days of the appeal submission.

Request for refund of tuition and fees signifies an intent to withdraw from the Program. Please see the Academic Performance and Progression Policy

regarding withdrawal and dismissal.

## **DRUG AND ALCOHOL STUDENT SCREENING POLICY**

### **STUDENT URINE DRUG SCREEN (UDS) POLICY**

As a prerequisite for participating in patient care, many clinical agencies require the submission of a negative UDS within a prescribed time, prior to the initiation of the SCPE by all students. Additionally, students may be required to undergo one or more random drug screens at various points throughout their didactic or clinical year. UDS will consist of a minimum of a 10-panel drug screen with a secure chain of custody and read by a certified medical officer. Students will upload their results into the EXXAT platform for clearance and/or further guidance.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY**

Please refer to the Graduate Course Handbook using the above link for information regarding the Academic Integrity Policy, Student Code of Conduct and Academic Grievance Procedure.

### **COMBINED AI USE POLICY**

At Carlow University, we recognize that generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, offer powerful resources to support learning and exploration. However, their use must align with academic integrity, ethical conduct, and the spirit of intellectual development central to our mission of fostering well-educated, ethical leaders. The following guidelines clarify the proper use of AI in both academic and clinical environments:

#### **Ethical Use of Generative AI**

Generative AI may be used to support learning, such as constructing outlines, explaining concepts, or creating supplemental materials, as long as its use aligns with the course's learning objectives. However, submitting AI-generated material as your own work is a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, akin to plagiarism. Students must engage deeply with their coursework to master the necessary skills for post-graduation success, and AI use should not undermine this.

#### **Instructor Guidelines and Permissions**

The use of generative AI tools is subject to the approval of each course instructor, who will outline acceptable and unacceptable uses in the course syllabus. These guidelines may differ across courses, programs, and disciplines depending on professional standards and career path expectations. Students are responsible for adhering to these rules and must discuss any AI usage with their instructor before incorporating it into assignments or clinical work.

If permitted, AI usage should be properly acknowledged and cited following the

specific citation style required by the instructor (e.g., MLA, AMA, or APA).

### **Academic Integrity and Reporting Violations**

Students must use AI tools transparently, engaging in open communication with instructors about their intended use. This transparency is an essential component of academic integrity. Misuse of AI, such as using it in ways not authorized by the instructor, will be handled in accordance with Carlow's Academic Integrity Policy. Consequences for violations may include disciplinary action or academic remediation.

### **Use in Clinical Settings**

In clinical or practicum environments, the use of AI tools must be approached with additional caution due to ethical and legal concerns, such as compliance with HIPAA. Under no circumstances should confidential client or patient information (e.g., names, addresses) be entered into AI systems, as this would constitute a violation of both privacy laws and professional ethics.

### **Recommended Best Practices**

- Always seek instructor approval before using AI tools in your coursework or clinical activities.
- Cite AI-generated content as required by your instructor's guidelines.
- Avoid entering confidential or sensitive information into AI systems.
- When in doubt, consult university resources, such as the Writing Center or your instructor, for guidance on the appropriate use of AI tools.

AI is a rapidly evolving field with both educational potential and ethical challenges. Carlow University encourages the thoughtful and responsible integration of AI tools into the learning process while upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, intellectual growth, and professional conduct. By fostering honest communication and clear expectations, we aim to prepare our students to navigate the future responsibly and effectively.

## **GRADES AND GRADING POLICIES**

Please refer to the Graduate Course Handbook using the above link for information regarding Grades and Grading Policies, which includes Grade Appeals.

## **ACADEMIC GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

Please refer to the Graduate Course Handbook using the above link for information regarding the Academic Grievance Procedure.

## **HARASSMENT POLICY**

In keeping with the values of the University, no employee, student, or other members of

the University community should be subjected to verbal or physical abuse of any nature. All forms of harassment, including sexual harassment, are prohibited. The University will not tolerate retaliation for any good faith complaints of alleged harassment or discrimination or for cooperating in the investigation of such complaints.

Harassment consists of unwelcome conduct, including verbal, physical or visible conduct that denigrates or shows hostility or aversion toward an individual because of the individual's race, color, religion, sexual orientation, handicap or disability, sex, age, pregnancy, ancestry, national origin, place of birth, genetic information, gender identification, veteran's status, or any other category protected by federal, state, or local law. Such conduct is unprofessional, unproductive, and often illegal. Consequently, Carlow University prohibits all conduct of this nature whether such conduct violates any applicable laws. Examples of Harassment when related to a person's protected status or when the conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's educational opportunities or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive atmosphere include the following:

- Name calling or slurs
- Joking or teasing
- Negative stereotyping
- Threats or intimidation
- Hostile written or graphic material posted on or circulated on campus
- Physical contact

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment means conditioning terms of employment on sexual favors or creating a hostile work environment. The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) defines sexual harassment as unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature, when, (1) submission to the conduct is either an explicit or implicit term or condition of employment; (2) submission to or rejection of the conduct is used as the basis for employment decisions; or (3) the conduct has the purpose or effect of (i) unreasonably interfering with an individual's work performance or (ii) creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive work atmosphere. All employment actions such as hiring, evaluation, promotion, transfer, salary adjustment, and termination are to be based upon the individual's qualifications and/or job performance, and not upon the individual's response to sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to: unwanted sexual advances; demands for sexual favors in exchange for favorable treatment or continued employment; verbal abuse of a sexual nature; graphic commentary about an individual's body, sexual prowess, or sexual deficiencies; leering; whistling; touching; pinching; assault; coerced sexual acts; suggestive, insulting or obscene comments or gestures; stalking; and displaying sexually suggestible objects or pictures. Carlow University prohibits all conduct of this nature whether or not such conduct violates any

applicable laws.

### **Sex/Gender-Based Harassment, Discrimination, and Sexual Misconduct Policy**

In keeping with its core value of the sacredness of creation, Carlow University strives to create and maintain a safe and supportive climate where the inherent dignity of everyone is celebrated. Grounded in the Catholic Mercy heritage, we honor the Catholic belief that sexual relationships, interaction, and intimacy should only occur within committed marital relationships in which persons have mutually committed, legally and spiritually, to honor and enhance another's dignity and worth. Members of the university community, guests and visitors have the right to be free from all forms of sex/gender harassment, discrimination and sexual misconduct, examples of which can include acts of sexual violence, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Sexual misconduct in any form (harassment, rape, sexual battery, etc.) undermines Carlow's core values and will not be tolerated within our campus community. All members of the campus community are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not infringe upon the rights of others.

The university takes all allegations seriously and investigates them thoroughly. All Carlow University students, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, are protected under this policy, as are third parties on Carlow property or participating in Carlow- sponsored or related activities.

This policy is applicable regardless of the sexual orientation and/or gender identity of individuals engaging in the interaction.

The university supports a zero-tolerance approach for sex/gender-based misconduct. Zero tolerance means that when an allegation of misconduct is brought to an appropriate administrator's attention, protective and supportive measures will be used to reasonably ensure that such conduct ends, is not repeated, and the effects on the victim and community are remedied as much as can be achieved, including imposing sanctions when a responding party is found to have violated this policy.

This policy has been developed to reaffirm these principles and to provide recourse for those individuals who believe their rights have been violated. The intention of this policy is to define community expectations and policy standards as well as the procedures which establish a mechanism for determining to the extent possible when those expectations have been violated.

The university's commitment to academic freedom suggests that this policy is

not meant to inhibit or prohibit educational content or discussions, inside or outside of the classroom, that include controversial or sensitive subject matters. Academic freedom extends to topics that are pedagogically appropriate and germane to the subject matter of courses or that touch on academic exploration of matters of public concern. In these discussions, the teachings of the Catholic Church should be honored.

The university uses the preponderance of the evidence (also known as “more likely than not”) as a standard for evaluating whether a violation occurred. The university never assumes a responding party is in violation of university policy. During campus resolution proceedings, the university reviews the totality of all available evidence from relevant sources and applies a fundamentally fair approach to determine if a policy or policies have been violated.

### **COMPLAINT PROCEDURE**

Any employee who believes that he or she has been the subject of harassment, including sexual harassment, should report the alleged act immediately to his or her supervisor or the Director of Human Resources. Promptly after learning of a complaint, the University will investigate the allegations with the purpose of determining whether prohibited harassment is occurring. The University will ask witnesses and participants in the investigation to respect confidentiality to the extent consistent with the goal of conducting an appropriate investigation. Employees who initiate or participate in such investigations in good faith will be protected against work-related retaliation. If an investigation confirms the allegations, Carlow University will take prompt corrective action, which may include discipline up to and including discharge.

[Please see the University website for more details.](#)

### **Physician Assistant Program Mistreatment Policy**

This policy addresses mistreatment that may occur within the Physician Assistant (PA) Program. It does not cover discrimination or harassment based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, or other legally protected characteristics, which are governed by Carlow University Title IX Office and related policies on sex/gender harassment, discrimination, and misconduct.

#### **Purpose**

The Physician Assistant Program is committed to creating and maintaining a professional, respectful, and inclusive learning environment. This policy establishes guidelines for addressing allegations of mistreatment to ensure all students, faculty, and staff are treated with dignity and respect.

#### **Definitions**

Mistreatment: Any behavior that undermines the dignity of individuals, interferes with their educational or work environment, or creates a hostile atmosphere. Examples of mistreatment include, but are not limited to:

- Verbal abuse, threats, or intimidation.
- Unjustified exclusion from educational opportunities or activities.
- Exploitation of power dynamics, such as requesting personal favors or unfairly assigning tasks.
- Public humiliation or belittlement.
- Retaliation for reporting mistreatment or cooperating with investigations.

### **Policy Statement**

#### Zero Tolerance for Mistreatment

The PA Program maintains a zero-tolerance policy toward any form of mistreatment. All community members are required to uphold the highest standards of professionalism, integrity, and respect in their interactions.

### **Commitment to Reporting and Resolution**

The PA Program encourages the prompt reporting of mistreatment. Retaliation against individuals who report mistreatment or participate in investigations is strictly prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

### **Reporting Procedures**

Reports of mistreatment may be submitted to any of the following:

- PA Program Director/PA Assistant Program Director
- Student Affairs Office
- Reports may be made verbally, in writing, or anonymously through the university's designated online portal.

### **Confidentiality**

All efforts will be made to protect the confidentiality of individuals involved. However, confidentiality cannot be guaranteed if disclosure is necessary to ensure a thorough investigation or comply with legal requirements.

### **Timeframe for Reporting**

Reports should be made promptly to enable timely investigation and resolution. Complaints filed after significant delays may be more challenging to investigate effectively.

### **Investigation and Resolution Procedures**

#### *Initial Assessment*

Upon receiving a report, the designated Student Affairs official will conduct a preliminary review to determine if further investigation is warranted.

#### *Investigation*

The Student Affairs investigator will gather evidence, conduct interviews with involved parties, and review relevant documentation.

Investigations will typically be concluded within 30 business days. Extensions may be granted in extenuating circumstances, with notification provided to all parties.

### *Resolution*

If mistreatment is substantiated, appropriate action will be taken. Measures may include, but are not limited to:

- Counseling, mediation, or training.
- Disciplinary action, up to and including dismissal or termination.
- Both the complainant and respondent will be informed of the investigation's outcome in writing.

### **Non-Retaliation**

Retaliation against anyone who reports mistreatment, participates in an investigation, or opposes mistreatment is strictly prohibited. Acts of retaliation will be treated as independent violations of this policy and may result in disciplinary action.

### **Review and Revision**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the PA Program leadership in collaboration with the Dean to ensure compliance with Carlow University policies and legal requirements. Any updates will be communicated to all stakeholders.

## **SAFETY AND SECURITY POLICIES**

In addition to the safety and security policies above, students assigned to clinical placements outside of their primary residential area are solely responsible for securing safe and reliable housing for the entire duration of the clinical rotation. Students are expected prior to relocation to research the geographic area of the assigned clinical site, including transportation options and proximity to the clinical facility. Students should utilize reputable sources to review local safety information and identify any potential risks associated with the area.

Upon arrival at the distant clinical site, students must promptly obtain and maintain readily accessible contact information for local emergency services, including fire services, law enforcement, local hospitals, and urgent care facilities. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the nearest emergency department and established evacuation routes from their housing location.

The Program does not arrange or assume responsibility for housing accommodations for distant placements. All housing decisions and related expenses are the sole responsibility of the student. Students are expected to use sound judgement in

securing accommodations that prioritize personal safety, reliability, and compliance with all applicable local laws and regulations.

## SECTION III: ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESSION

### ACADEMIC AND PROFESSIONAL PERFORMANCE AND PROGRESSION POLICY

The PA Program is responsible for providing clearly defined rules, processes, and procedures for academic and professional progression through the PA Program. The policies and procedures set forth by the program to do so are in alignment with Carlow University's policies and procedures for academic performance and progression for graduate-level study.

### REQUIRED ACADEMIC STANDARDS

To remain in academic good standing, students must complete all required courses and achieve a passing letter grade of C (75%) or better in all courses. Failure of any course will result in dismissal from the Program. The following is the scale for all PAS-designated courses. Syllabi for IPE required courses indicate the designated scale for each. In some cases, established scales may differ from the PA Program's scale.

Letter Grade	GPA	Percent Grade
A+	4.00	98-100
A	4.00	92-97.99
A-	3.75	90-91.99
B+	3.25	88-89.99
B	3.00	82-87.99
B-	2.75	80-81.99
C+	2.25	78-79.99
C	2.00	75-77.99
<b>Below a C (&lt;75%) is not passing; resulting in failure of the course and dismissal from the program.</b>		
C-	1.75	70-74.99
D+	1.25	68-69.99
D	1.00	62-67.99
D-	0.75	60-61.99
F	0	59.99 and lower

Students must maintain a 3.0 semester and cumulative GPA to remain in good

academic standing, and a 3.0 cumulative GPA at the conclusion of the program to graduate. Failure to obtain and maintain good academic standing will result in academic probation status, with possible dismissal from the program. If your 1<sup>st</sup> semester GPA is below 3.0, you will be placed on probation. If a second semester follows with the same low GPA, it will result in dismissal. Please refer to Requirements for Progression.

## **REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS**

In addition to achieving and maintaining minimal academic standards, students must also meet professionalism standards set forth in the PA Professionalism Policy, other Program policies, and abide by Carlow University Policies and Code of Conduct Policies.

Failure to do so will result in professional probation status, with possible dismissal from the program. Please refer to Requirements for Progression.

## **PROFESSIONALISM POLICY**

Professionalism is a critical attribute for physician assistants, grounded in ethical behavior and demonstrated through respect for oneself and others, including peers, faculty, patients, clinical preceptors, and staff. Carlow University and the PA Program adhere to a policy of professionalism, reflected in both appearance and behavior. Professionalism encompasses ethical conduct, respect for oneself and others, and appropriate verbal and nonverbal communication.

Students are representatives of the University and the PA Program and are expected to present themselves in a manner that fosters trust and respect from peers, faculty, patients, clinical preceptors, and staff. Professionalism is assessed throughout the program, with faculty providing formal and informal feedback on performance.

Professionalism involves adherence to University Code of Conduct, Program Policies, and the Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the PA Profession (<https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/16-EthicalConduct.pdf>) Failure to follow these guidelines constitutes unprofessional or unsafe practice. Continued violations after corrective action may result in disciplinary measures, including dismissal from the program.

The following attributes represent professionalism and are expected of students enrolled in the Carlow University PA Program.

### **Integrity and Compassion**

- Adhere to all University and Program policies;
- Maintain accuracy and honesty in documentation, communication, and clinical reporting.
- Report any observed unethical or dishonest behavior through appropriate channels.

- Students will maintain appropriate boundaries with others. Students will recognize their position as a potential role model for others and act accordingly.
- Students will be compassionate about learning and their work in healthcare, demonstrate empathy towards others, listen attentively and respond humanely to the needs of patients and others. Students will treat patients and families with respect and dignity in all situations.

### **Respect and Civility**

- Demonstrate respect for peers, faculty, staff, patients, preceptors, and the broader community.
- Exhibit courteous behavior and constructive communication, especially during conflict or feedback.
- Students will respect the property of all others and treat all donors, items and equipment with care.
- Refrain from discrimination, harassment, or any form of abusive behavior.

### **Confidentiality and Privacy**

- Uphold HIPAA and institutional privacy regulations at all times.
- Protect patient and peer confidentiality during discussions, written work, and on social media.

### **Communication**

- Use professional language and tone in verbal, written, and electronic communications.
- Respond to emails and other communications from program faculty/staff promptly and respectfully.
- Avoid inappropriate or unprofessional use of social media, including discussing patients or clinical encounters.

### **Emotional Intelligence, Self-Awareness, and Self-Care**

- Accept and incorporate feedback constructively. Students will accept personal responsibility for mistakes and learn from them.
- Recognize personal limitations and seek help when appropriate.
- Demonstrate resilience, empathy, and adaptability in challenging situations.
- Students will seek advice, counsel or support when recommended by others for personal and professional betterment. Students shall avoid harmful behaviors and manage themselves to prevent burn-out and high levels of anxiety.

### **Commitment to Service and Lifelong Learning**

Students acknowledge their primary responsibility for successful completion of the program while demonstrating a commitment to continuous learning and self-improvement. As such, students will attend all educational sessions and be fully

prepared to actively engage in learning. Students will participate in learning and be supportive of the learning of others. As a self-directed learner, the student will seek out opportunities to learn and will be willing to ask for assistance and support when needed. Students will also be expected to participate in service-learning, volunteerism, and professional development as required by the curriculum.

### **Sense of Duty**

Students will complete assigned duties fully, to the best of their ability. Students will set and work to achieve realistic goals. Students will follow all policies. Students will take pride in good work. Students will volunteer skills and talents for the welfare and benefit of others. Students will put patient needs above those of themselves.

### **Social Responsibility**

Students will demonstrate an altruistic attitude. Students will actively advocate for others regarding access to and quality of health care. Students will advocate for reducing disparities in health care.

### **Teamwork**

Students will work well with others in a collaborative and inter-professional manner, contributing to the greater good of the team. Students will be respectful of authority and chain of command. When asked, students will provide honest feedback.

1. All students will be formally assessed for professionalism attributes throughout the program. Formal feedback will be provided to the student by their academic advisor a minimum of once a semester.
2. Should a student's actions violate any professional principle, including but not limited to the attributes identified in section 3 and the Carlow University Student Code of Conduct, a step-wise process may occur.
  - a. A first offense shall cause a professional warning to be issued to the student.
  - b. A second offense will cause referral to the Student Progress Committee, resulting in issuance of professional probation status and/or other disciplinary actions.
  - c. Students may be required to participate in a remediation process for any issues of professionalism.
  - d. In cases of unethical or illegal behavior, the student may bypass the stepwise process and be referred to the Student Progress Committee and be placed directly on probation or dismissed from the program.

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRESSION**

Due to the sequential nature of the curriculum, students must successfully complete all didactic courses in a semester prior to enrolling in subsequent semesters.

Didactic year courses must be successfully completed prior to progressing to the clinical phase of the program. All students who are on probation status for academic or professional issues must successfully resolve their probationary status (based on the terms of the status); students will have one full semester to resolve the probationary status and return to good standing.

Students who fail one SCPE must repeat the rotation. The repeat SCPE will be as soon as possible. You may only repeat one rotation; failure of a second rotation will result in dismissal from the program.

### **Remediation Policy**

The process of remediation addresses deficiencies in student's knowledge, skills, and professional behaviors, such that correction of these deficiencies is measurable and can be documented.

### **Didactic course remediation**

Student progress is monitored by course faculty, as well as the student's advisor and PA Program Student Progress Committee. For IPE courses, course instructors will conduct remediation according to the syllabus.

Students are expected to achieve passing scores of 75% or higher on examinations. For those who do not, the following process is employed:

- Should a student achieve less than 75% on an examination, they are required to meet with the course faculty, at which time the contributing factors that led to the failure will be discussed and identified.
- The faculty will assess and make recommendations to improve performance.
- Should a student achieve less than 75% on any subsequent examination in the same course, they are required to meet with the course faculty to establish a written remediation plan, with outcome measures to indicate successful completion of the process. This plan is provided to the faculty advisor.

Remediation plans may include, but are not limited to:

- Additional reading assignments;
- Written exercises;
- Mandated Tutoring;
- Research of selected course objectives or exam topics;

- Possible referral to the Student Progress Committee.

### **SCPE remediation**

Remediation of SCPE is determined by the Director of Clinical Education and may consist of required completion of additional rotation hours and repeat or additional multiple choice exams. Students will complete remediation before receiving a grade for SCPE. Remediation may prevent students may delay graduation.

### **Professionalism remediation**

Remediation may include, but is not limited to:

- Reading assignments;
- Mandated tutoring;
- Research of the professionalism issue;
- Written exercise including self-reflection essay;
- Other assignments as indicated.

Following the remediation for professionalism concerns, the student will be evaluated with any of the following: Completion of a professionalism task or exercise, Assessment of remediation writing. Other assessments are determined by the faculty/faculty advisor.

### **Academic Warning**

Academic warning is a formal warning to a student who is in danger of being placed on probation due to academic issues. An academic warning may result from individual course(s) or semester performance. Formal academic warnings originate (in writing) from the Program Director after consultation with faculty and the advisor.

### **Professional Warning**

A professional warning is a formal warning to a student who is in danger of being placed on probation due to professional behavior or conduct issues. Professional warning results from an infringement of the professionalism policy. See PA - Professionalism Policy. Formal professional warnings originate (in writing) from the Program Director after consultation with faculty and advisor.

## **PROBATION**

### **Academic probation**

Academic probation is a designation for students whose cumulative GPA and/or semester GPA is less than 3.0. Students on probation have one semester to correct probationary status (by achieving a semester GPA of 3.0 or greater and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or greater). A student may be placed on academic

probation only once in the graduate program. After being removed from probation, students who are unable to achieve a 3.0 semester GPA and/or maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.0 will be dismissed. Academic probation status may impact a student's ability to receive financial aid.

### **Professional probation**

Professional probation is a designation for students who demonstrate an infringement of the PA Professionalism Policy, Carlow University policies, and Student Code of Conduct policies (as outlined in the [Carlow University Student Handbook](#)).

A student may be placed on professional probation only once in the graduate program. After being removed from probation, students who demonstrate a second violation of professionalism shall be dismissed. Probation status of an academic or professional nature may impact a student's ability to graduate on time.

### **Leave of Absence**

Although the University authorizes a Leave of Absence for a range of 1-3 semesters for students, with the student returning and resuming their studies, because of the nature of the PA program curriculum design and requirements and the offering of courses only once a year this cannot be accommodated. For an absence request of one or more semesters, students may need to withdraw, and/or reapply to the Program in the future.

### **Deceleration**

Deceleration is defined as "the loss of a student from an entering cohort, who remains matriculated in the physician assistant program." During a period of deceleration, the student is not enrolled in program courses or participating in the curriculum in any way. A leave of absence may result in deceleration if the student's return requires joining a different cohort than the one originally matriculated in. The program does not offer deceleration.

### **Withdrawal**

Students may withdraw from the PA program at any time. Written notice of intent to withdraw should be provided to the Program Director, outlining desire to withdraw, date of withdrawal, and reason for withdrawing. Students must officially withdraw by notifying the Office of the Registrar and completing Withdrawal Form. Students who are considering withdrawal are advised to investigate the financial and student aid implications prior to any official action by contacting the Financial Aid and/or Student Accounts Office. Grades of students who do not complete a course and who have not withdrawn officially will be listed as F on the transcript.

Refunds of tuition and associated fees are subject to the University policies related to refunding tuition and fees. A final determination of tuition and fee refund amounts will be made by the Office of Student Accounts and is based on the date that the student initiated the withdrawal process by contacting the Office of the Registrar or by submitting the Withdrawal Form. Students are advised to review the Federal Title IV Aid Return of Funds Policy to determine how loans and grants will be recalculated. Students who withdraw and want to return at any time in the future must complete the application process for the PA Program.

### **Dismissal for Academic Infractions**

Students may be dismissed from the PA Program for academic violations, including, but not limited to:

- Failure to maintain semester and/or cumulative GPA at 3.0 or above for two semesters;
- Failure of a didactic course (<75%); Failure of 2 SCPEs;
- Failure to meet or sustain technical standards of the Program;
- Failure to complete all program requirements in the period allotted (three years).

Any student found cheating/academic dishonesty is subject to automatic dismissal. (Refer to the University Academic Integrity Policy found on page xx of this document.)

Additionally, a student may be placed on probation only once during their enrollment in the program. Two or more probationary actions, whether academic, professional, or a combination of both, will result in dismissal from the program.

### **Dismissal for Professional Infractions**

Students may be dismissed from the PA Program for professional violations, including, but not limited to:

- When their behavior poses a threat to the standards of orderly operation, scholarship, and conduct;
- When violations of academic integrity or plagiarism occur, based upon Carlow University Policies;
- When behavior poses a threat to the mental or physical well-being of students, faculty and staff, patients, or others;
- For any gross violation of professional conduct as determined by the PA Program Student Progress Committee;
- Conduct that renders them ineligible to participate in clinical rotations; or
- Additional professional violations following a period of professional probation.

Additionally, a student may be placed on probation only once during their enrollment in the program. Two or more probationary actions, whether academic, professional, or a combination of both, will result in dismissal from the program.

Students who have been officially dismissed from the PA Program for academic or professional reasons have the right to appeal. Please see the PA Student Grievance and No Harassment Policy for more details.

Students who have been dismissed from the PA Program for academic or professional reasons may seek re-entry by re-applying to the PA Program. Re-admission is not guaranteed.

### **ATTENDANCE POLICY**

All students are required to attend all scheduled sessions and functions of the PA Program. Class sessions are not optional, except at the discretion of the course instructor. Missing any session or function without prior authorization is considered a breach of professionalism and any work or exams/quizzes missed may not be made up.

Due to the intense nature of the academic program and rapid pace of information dissemination, all students are required to attend all sessions and functions of the PA Program. All classes and labs are held in-person unless otherwise specified by the instructor.

Students are not permitted to make other commitments during the hours of 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday, unless the time slot has been designated as free time. The Program has the right to schedule sessions throughout the semester; notification will be provided as much as possible in advance of the session or event. Some evening sessions may be required; students will be given notice of these scheduled events.

All absences will be recorded and considered unexcused. Students remain responsible for all material, assignments, and assessments.

Students must be present and prepared at the scheduled start time for all sessions. Oversleeping, arriving late, or being otherwise unprepared is unacceptable. Such instances will be treated as an unexcused absence and/or a professionalism concern, and students may be asked to leave the classroom or laboratory setting.

Students are expected to arrive on time for all scheduled examinations. If a student arrives late or fails to attend an examination at the scheduled start time—regardless of the reason—the highest possible score they may earn will be 75%. Points lost for incorrect responses will be deducted from this maximum score.

### **DRESS CODE POLICY**

The College of Health & Wellness and the Physician Assistant Program adhere to a dress code policy, as professionalism is first reflected in our appearance.

Professionalism reflects positive attributes, demonstrating self-respect and respect for others, as well as how we present ourselves in verbal and non-verbal ways. As a part of professionalism, students will be assessed on professionalism (including proper dress) throughout the program, with faculty providing formal and informal feedback regarding expectations and performance.

Professionalism is demonstrated by respect for ourselves and others, including peers, faculty, and administrators, campus visitors, patients, clinical preceptors, and clinical staff. Dress and presentation are one aspect of overall professionalism. Failure to meet the basic standards of professionalism may result in dismissal from the program.

Students are representatives of the University and the PA Program and have a responsibility to present themselves in a respectable and professional manner. These guidelines promote a professional image while also ensuring safety and infection control. Failure to adhere to guidelines on professional appearance constitutes unprofessional and/or unsafe clinical practice. Continued violations following remediation may be grounds for dismissal from the program.

### **1. General Expectations**

Students must maintain a **clean, neat, and professional appearance** at all times. Clothing must be **modest, well-fitting, and free of wrinkles, stains, tears, or fraying**. Hairstyles, makeup, and accessories should be **conservative and professional** in style. Strong fragrances (perfume, cologne, scented lotions) should be avoided due to sensitivities. Visible tattoos must be covered if they are offensive, contain inappropriate language/images, or are prohibited by the clinical site. Body piercings should be limited to small, conservative jewelry; facial piercings may be prohibited in clinical settings.

### **2. Didactic Phase Dress Code**

- Students should wear comfortable clothing that is appropriate for the classroom and laboratory settings. Clothing should not be revealing.
- Closed-toe shoes are required in the laboratory setting.
- Program-issued or approved lab coats must be worn when required.
- Business casual clothing should be worn when required.
- Scrub sets must be worn when required.

### **3. Clinical Phase Dress Code**

- Scrubs and/or business casual as directed by preceptor. Clothing should not be revealing.
- Closed-toe shoes are required in clinical areas.
- Program-approved lab coats must be worn when required.
- Hair should be neat; jewelry and accessories minimal and safe; tattoos/piercings

- should be discreet.
- Fragrances should be minimal.

In addition to these basic guidelines, students are expected to follow any additional provisions of a facility's dress code while in clinical practice.

*The Dress Code is a minimum standard set forth by the PA Program. Each faculty and/or course within the Program has the liberty to set forth and enforce a stricter dress code. Similarly, many clinical sites may also have their own dress codes that must be followed precisely.*

## **STUDENT IDENTIFICATION POLICY**

Carlow University PA students must be clearly identified to distinguish themselves from physicians, medical students, or other healthcare students and professionals.

All students will introduce themselves by name (first and last name) and state that they are "a Physician Assistant student from Carlow University" to physicians, healthcare staff, patients and their families, and others. All students are required to wear a clean and ironed white lab coat (waist length, blazer style) with identifiers including an official Carlow University PA Program name tag/ID on left upper pocket, as well as a Carlow University school patch, unless otherwise directed by their preceptor.

If the student is required to wear an identification badge from the clinical site, they must also always wear their program-authorized identifiers.

If a student is in a clinical situation that warrants the removal of their coat (such as while dressed in scrubs to enter the operating suite), the student must continue to wear their Carlow University name tag/ID and any site-specific identification badges.

## **STUDENT IMMUNIZATION, HEALTH SCREENING REQUIREMENT AND EXPOSURE HEALTH REQUIREMENTS POLICY**

To ensure the health and safety of the Carlow University community as well as clinical site placements and the public, all College of Health and Wellness students, including PA students, must meet the specific health and immunization requirements (including all appropriate documentation) required by Carlow University and the PA program. Determination of these requirements is based on the current Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for health professionals and other state-specific mandates.

*Students must meet the following requirements and provide documentation prior*

to matriculation:

- a. **Current History and Physical Examination with documentation**
  - All students must complete a history and physical examination prior to matriculation and prior to the start of the clinical year. Documentation must be uploaded into EXXAT.
  - Students should maintain a copy of records.
  - The physical examination provides evidence that the student is in good general health and not at-risk for contracting illness associated with clinical rotations, nor are they at-risk for causing illness to patients under their care.
- b. **Technical Standards Attestation** - All students must sign a statement confirming they are able to meet the technical requirements for the program prior to matriculation, using the form provided.
- c. **Tuberculosis Screening** - Annual QuantiFERON blood test with documentation of negative results. Students with a documented history of a positive result or students who have received the BCG vaccination must provide a chest X-ray report confirming no active disease.
- d. **Immunizations** - All PA students must provide evidence of immunization for the following upon matriculation into the PA Program:
  - **Diphtheria, Tetanus, and Pertussis (Tdap):** Documentation of one dose within the past ten years.
  - Proof of immunity for the following:
    - **Rubella**
    - **Rubeola (Measles)**
    - **Mumps**
    - **Hepatitis B**
    - **Varicella (Chickenpox)**
  - **Meningococcal vaccine(s)**
  - **Yearly Influenza vaccination:** Required annually every fall.
- e. In addition, updating of documentation, a urine drug screening, and/or other health screening procedures may be required by clinical sites and must be completed as per their request to proceed with SCPEs.
- f. **Exemptions** - Students may be granted exemptions from immunizations for the following reasons:
  - **Medical Exemption:** Granted upon receipt of a written statement from a physician (or designee) indicating that immunization may be detrimental to the student's health.
  - **Religious Exemption:** Granted upon submission of a written objection based on religious beliefs or a strong moral or ethical conviction comparable to a religious belief.
- g. **Additional Health, Immunization and other Requirements as a Condition of Participating in SCPEs**
  - Some agencies and practices may require additional medical testing requirements (such as drug testing) as a condition of participating in SCPEs. Students will be made aware of these requirements; completion

of said testing shall be done by 10 days before the scheduled start date of the SCPE, to allow time for testing results to be received and provided to the agency.

- The student is responsible for all costs associated with testing.

**h. Declination of Vaccination**

- If a student declines any of the vaccinations, they are required to sign a vaccination declination form. This declination will be maintained in the student vaccination file and notification will be provided to clinical placement sites requiring documentation of immunization status. The site has a right to refuse unvaccinated students or may require additional safeguards such as wearing a face mask. Exemptions accepted by the University related to vaccination requirements do not transfer or otherwise apply to clinical placements. Each student must also comply with the vaccination requirements for all clinical sites to which such student is assigned, and students are hereby advised that many clinical sites will not accept or approve exemptions to their vaccination requirements for students. Questions about vaccination requirements for clinical placement sites should be directed to the Director of Clinical Education. Students not complying with clinical rotation site requirements regarding vaccinations for health care workers may have their graduations delayed and/or may not be able to complete the program. In addition to delays in graduation, students may face a professionalism review. Student participation in Supervised Clinical Practice Experience (SPCE) is required to complete the Program and the University must satisfy certain requirements imposed by training sites as a condition of student participation.

Maintenance of immunization status provides health protection for students, as well as others in the academic setting. In addition, it provides protection for at-risk individuals such as patients and others in healthcare settings. Clinical settings will provide a list of requirements; in some instances, due to patient populations, a site may have additional requirements. The student will cover all costs of required immunizations.

## **INFECTION CONTROL POLICY**

Upon matriculation, all students will receive instruction in CDC Standard Precautions and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) training.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Standard Precautions are defined as “the minimum infection prevention practices that apply to all patient care, regardless of suspected or confirmed infection status of the patient, in any setting where healthcare is delivered. These practices are designed to both protect the healthcare provider and prevent the healthcare provider from spreading infections among patients.”

Standard Precautions include:

- Hand hygiene
- Use of personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves, masks, eyewear)
- Respiratory hygiene / cough etiquette
- Sharps safety
- Safe injection practices (i.e., aseptic technique for parenteral medications)
- Sterile instruments and devices
- Clean and disinfected environmental surfaces

Students will receive instruction in CDC Standard Precautions upon entering the PA Program (prior to being placed in situations of potential exposure and risk) and ongoing assessment of skills associated with Standard Precautions as a part of any skills competency examination for the duration of the program.

Instruction will include Standard Precautions to prevent the spread of coronavirus in all settings.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) assures the safety and health of America's workers through establishment of standards, training, outreach and education. Students will receive instruction in the following areas:

- Culture of safety
- Infectious diseases including instruction regarding blood-borne pathogens and needle stick injuries
- Safe patient handling
- Workplace violence
- Other hazards including chemical exposures, hazardous drugs, allergens, radiation and physical agents

Students will receive instruction upon entering the PA program (prior to being placed in situations of potential exposure and risk) and receive a second formal instruction prior to entering the clinical phase. Instruction includes, but is not limited to, post-exposure protocol for exposure to blood and/or other body fluid or a needle stick injury. Please refer to the Exposure Policy below.

## **EXPOSURE POLICY**

In the event of exposure to blood and/or other body fluid or a needle stick injury:

1. Wounds and skin that have been in contact with blood or body fluids should be washed with soap and water; mucous membranes should be flushed with water. There is no evidence that the use of antiseptics for wound care or expressing fluid by squeezing the wound further reduces the risk of HIV transmission. However, the use of antiseptics is not contraindicated. Use of caustic agents (e.g., bleach) is not recommended.

2. The student should notify his/her supervisor immediately. The students should seek immediate medical attention for evaluation and treatment.
3. Completion of a medical assessment should take place immediately following exposure as treatment decisions must be made within two hours of exposure. HIV prophylaxis for high-risk exposure appears most effective if started within two to four hours. It is also extremely important to evaluate the donor's risk status immediately.
4. The student should report to the nearest emergency room whether the incident occurred on- campus or at a clinical rotation site.
5. Incident reports for the site and Carlow University must be completed as soon as possible, within six hours of the incident, and provided to the respective representative.
6. For Carlow University, the incident report shall be sent to the Program Director via email or fax. The Director of Clinical Education shall be notified as soon as possible.

Students are responsible for all costs incurred due to compliance with this policy.

### **LATEX ALLERGY POLICY**

Some students may have a documented allergic response or sensitivity to latex. According to OSHA, 8-12% of healthcare workers are latex sensitive, with reactions ranging from irritant contact dermatitis and allergic contact sensitivity, to immediate, possibly life-threatening, sensitivity.

It is the practice of the PA Program to purchase latex-free equipment and provide latex-free gloves and other disposables for student and faculty use.

The Program will work with the Office of Disabilities Services to identify and provide alternative materials to reduce exposure, as well as mitigate risk within the environment, should a student have a history of immediate, life-threatening sensitivity.

### **EMERGENCY CONTACT POLICY**

All PA students are asked to complete an emergency contact form, which will remain on file for the duration of their enrollment in the PA Program.

### **ACCIDENT OR INJURY POLICY**

In the event of accident or injury, faculty, program director, and medical director may provide care to the student in an emergency.

In the event of accident or injury, the student's emergency contact will be notified, should the student request this and be able to provide consent.

Should the student be unable to provide consent due to the nature of an accident or injury, the emergency contact will be notified.

In all cases of accident or injury requiring additional evaluation and treatment, 911 and/or campus police will be contacted; the student will be transported to the nearest local facility.

The student is responsible for all costs associated with medical transport and medical care.

## **STUDENT BACKGROUND CHECK REQUIREMENTS POLICY**

Carlow University and the PA Program must provide for the safety of the public and the student by establishing criteria that meet the requirements of potential clinical sites that may be utilized by the students, as well as protect other students and patients with whom contact would be established in the academic setting. As such, all students will provide evidence of current background checks and will undergo child abuse reporting training.

### **Criminal Background Check Requirement**

Students must complete a criminal background check. If the criminal background check raises concerns about participation in the program, the student will be contacted by the College/Program designee, who will schedule a meeting with the student to review the findings. The student will have an opportunity to correct any inaccurate information.

A criminal background check that shows evidence of a positive criminal history may be a basis for dismissal from the program. **Students with pending charges, charged with a crime, undergoing court-ordered treatment, or on probation are prohibited from participating in the program.**

Students must report felony or misdemeanor charges (excluding minor traffic violations) that occur during enrollment within ten (10) business days of occurrence to the associate dean, or designee. **Failure to report requisite information will constitute grounds for immediate dismissal.**

One Month prior to matriculation, all students must complete the following background checks and provide official documentation of results to the Program at time of matriculation. These include:

- Act 33: Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance

- Act 34: Pennsylvania Criminal Records Check
- Act 73: FBI Clearance Fingerprint Record Check (via MorphoTrust LLC System)

Should the background check reveal evidence of prior arrests and convictions, this may impact the ability of the student to be scheduled for clinical rotations with certain agencies. In addition, the Program cannot guarantee that the student may qualify for licensure as a PA upon graduation. Legal council may be consulted by the student in this case.

Unless otherwise requested by the clinical agency, all background checks obtained at matriculation are suitable for the 25-month duration of the PA Program. Students must comply with requests of clinical agencies to repeat background checks, per the agency policy. Should students decelerate, they may be required to complete additional background checks by the Program.

Prior to initiation of the PA Program, all students must complete a three-hour mandated [Reporter Child Abuse Training](#) with a Department of Human Services–approved vendor and provide official evidence of successful completion of the Program.

The criminal background check is a **mandatory** component of the PA Program. Students are responsible for all fees associated with all background checks and re-checks.

## **SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**

The use of social media may position students towards a variety of potential civil and criminal issues, based upon posting information, pictures, and images that may violate HIPAA and other regulations. As a representative of Carlow University and its PA Program, students have a responsibility to monitor all electronic postings and utilize good judgement in all postings. Guidelines provide standards of conduct for the use of social media.

Social media refers to a group of online communication tools that allow for information sharing and interaction with others. The improper use of social media can have a negative impact on one's personal and professional reputation. Information that is posted remains in an electronic format in perpetuity and cannot ever be entirely deleted or erased. Social media communications, whether they be of a personal or professional nature, are subject to the same laws and regulations as if the communication was in a verbal or other written format. As a student, your social media postings may directly or indirectly identify you as a student; you therefore become a representative of Carlow University and the

Carlow University PA Program. It is important to represent Carlow University in a fair, accurate and legal manner while protecting the reputation of Carlow University. While Carlow University supports freedom of speech, it is important to recognize and maintain the following guidelines:

1. Patient information: Removing a patient's name does not automatically de-identify the information.
  - a. Patient descriptions: Descriptions of a patient, medical issue or other circumstance may be a violation of HIPAA and can easily be traced back to the original patient by a number of techniques. Patients who may view your site may actually be able to identify and recognize themselves, based on seemingly vague or harmless descriptions that are posted. Violations may carry both civil and criminal penalties.
  - b. Photographs and diagnostic imaging: it is strictly prohibited to take photographs of patients in any setting, even if the patient is not identified. Posting photographs or other diagnostic imaging on social media is a violation of regulations, including HIPAA, and is strictly prohibited. Photography for purposes of medical education or research requires strict consent procedures; for further information, follow the written procedures of the agency/clinical site.
2. Posting comments regarding others: Students may face a variety of professional sanctions for posting materials that are defamatory, profane, threatening, harassing, hateful, or humiliating to or regarding patients, students, hospital staff, preceptors, or Carlow University, including faculty, staff, and administrators.
3. Inappropriate use and/or disclosure of patient information is potentially a civil and criminal violation. Students may also be held personally liable for proprietary, defamatory or libelous material posted on any form of social media. The student may also be sued for defamation, invasion of privacy or harassment.
4. Violations: Violation of this policy will result in referral to the Program and possible dismissal from the program. Witnessing any violation of this policy should be immediately reported to the Program Director. Receiving these postings and thus having these postings on one's site may also make one liable for the content. Similarly, private postings on Facebook or any other form of social media regarding program personnel, including faculty, staff and fellow students, may be subject to disciplinary action. Assume all postings are public and may be viewed by program faculty, staff or University administration at any time.
5. "Think Before You Post": Students are advised to use good judgment when posting and avoid incomplete, inaccurate, threatening or harassing, vulgar, or profane posts.
6. Social networking by students to faculty, staff, preceptors, rotation staff, patients

- or others connected with the program is strongly discouraged.
7. Social networking or use of social media during scheduled class time, rotation time, or other program-related activities is strictly prohibited.
  8. Students may not present themselves or their comments as representing Carlow University or Carlow University PA Program in any posting. Students may not fundraise or solicit funding or other support as an agent of Carlow University.

## **E-MAIL POLICY**

The use of e-mail for information and communication purposes is vital to the operation of the PA Program. Use of Carlow email is the University's official method of communication. Students, faculty, and staff must utilize Carlow University e-mail only for official business. All email communications shall be written in a professional, respectful nature and should be considered a permanent record of all communications.

Communication among faculty, staff, and students is vital to the smooth operation of the PA Program. All official email communications within the program shall be conducted using Carlow University email accounts only. Use of other business or personal accounts shall not be responded to, nor considered official communication.

1. All official Program announcements will be made via official Carlow University e-mail accounts, including individual faculty/staff accounts.
2. Responses to e-mails shall be expected within two business days of delivery.
3. Acknowledgement of receipt of email may be requested and provided by the sender and should be completed.
4. All email communications must be of a respectful tone and manner. Any threatening, harassing, or otherwise disrespectful and unprofessional e-mails may be considered a violation of the professionalism policy.
5. Any emails intended for official announcement directed towards the entire PA student cohort and/or faculty must be cleared with the Program Director prior to dissemination.
6. Any emails intended for official announcement directed towards the CHW or entire University community or outside agency must first be cleared with the Program Director. Approval of campus-wide dissemination is provided by the Office of Academic Affairs.

## **STUDENT EMPLOYMENT POLICY**

Due to the intensity of coursework and time commitment demanded of a PA student, all students are strongly discouraged from maintaining employment while in the PA Program. The Program will not make accommodations for any student regarding classroom attendance or scheduling of clinical sites secondary to employment or employment schedules.

PA education is one of the most intensive and time-consuming educational endeavors that a student can undertake. The demands on students are significant, whether it be from full-time classroom work, intensive studying, or full-time clinical rotations. Attention to family, a big source of emotional support for most students, requires additional time and focus. As students invest significant financial resources in their education, it is vital that the educational experience is taken seriously, and a full commitment is made to learning medicine in a limited amount of time. It is strongly recommended that students refrain from maintaining employment while in PA school. The Program will not make accommodations for any student regarding classroom attendance or scheduling of clinical sites secondary to employment or employment schedules.

## **STUDENT ROLE POLICY**

The primary role and responsibility of the PA student is that of a learner. As such, it becomes the responsibility of the PA Program to ensure that each student is afforded the optimal circumstances in which to achieve their academic potential, while protecting the student from distractions that may interfere with the learning process. As such, students (and prospective students) are not required to solicit clinical sites or preceptors. In addition, students are not permitted to work for the PA Program in paid circumstances. Students are not permitted to substitute as instructional faculty. Finally, students may not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practical experiences.

All students have the primary role and responsibility of learners. Certain distractions and potential obligations may negatively impact the student's ability to learn. The focus should be on learning clinical information; any distractions could have far-reaching clinical implications in the quality of patient care provided as a student and future clinician.

Please note the following guidelines:

- a. Students must not be required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. This is the responsibility of the PA Program and the Director of Clinical Education. The Program must assure, through extensive investigation and a vetting process, that the preceptor and site can provide a quality educational experience to the student. All sites and preceptors will be provided to students. Students may, however, RECOMMEND a site or preceptor to the Director of Clinical Education through a "Student Preceptor Request" form. Once a student identifies a potential site or preceptor, the Director of Clinical Education will then assume all contact to assess the site/preceptor.

- b. PA students are not permitted to work for the PA Program in a paid capacity. However, students may, but are not required to, volunteer for the Program. For example, students may be invited to participate in specific activities, such as the Interview Day for prospective new students. Failure to volunteer shall have no negative impact on the student's standing in the Program. Any student who feels coerced to participate in a non-academic activity should report this to their advisor or the Program Director.
- c. Students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty. While students may possess a variety of applicable clinical skills and knowledge, their primary role remains as a learner. Students may voluntarily wish to share their knowledge with others in the class, once this is coordinated with the course instructor. However, students should never be given the responsibility of an instructional faculty to provide instruction or assessment of other students.
- d. Students must not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practical experiences. Again, the role of the student is as a learner. In the clinical setting, students must not substitute as staff or be delegated non-clinical roles and responsibilities. It is the responsibility of the Agency to properly staff their facilities with the necessary individuals to run the practice. Students who feel this is an issue should notify the Director of Clinical Education.

## **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

For students to progress to graduation, students must fulfill the following obligations: Students must successfully complete all coursework according to program defined academic standards and have no outstanding incomplete grades. Students must achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. Students must successfully complete and pass all components of the summative evaluation process. Students must be in good academic and professional standing at the time of program completion. Students must complete the application for graduation process with the Office of the Registrar.

Students must resolve any financial, library, or other program or University obligations. Students must complete all requirements for graduation within 3 years of the original date of matriculation, unless otherwise specified by the program or university.

## **PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS**

### **American Academy of Physician Assistants**

The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), founded in 1968, is the national professional society for PAs. It represents a profession of more than

131,000 PAs across all medical and surgical specialties in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, US territories, and the uniformed services. AAPA advocates and educates on behalf of the profession and the patients PAs serve. They work to ensure professional growth, personal excellence, and recognition of PAs. They also enhance their ability to improve the quality, accessibility, and cost-effectiveness of patient-centered healthcare. Major activities to accomplish this goal include government relations, public education, research and data collection, and professional development.

Most practicing physician assistants are members of AAPA. Members are graduates of accredited physician assistant programs and/or those who are nationally certified.

Students at accredited programs are also eligible for membership.

The AAPA's Physician Assistant Foundation (PAF) provides funds for scholarships and research on the PA profession. The website for AAPA provides a variety of information on the profession. For more information: [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org)

#### **Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant**

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) is the recognized accrediting agency for PA educational programs. ARC-PA defines the standards for PA education and evaluates PA Programs to ensure compliance.

For more information: [www.arc-pa.org](http://www.arc-pa.org)

#### **National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants**

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) is the only certifying organization for physician assistants in the United States. Established as a not-for-profit organization in 1974, NCCPA is dedicated to assuring the public that certified PAs meet established standards of clinical knowledge and cognitive skills upon entry into practice and throughout their careers. The initial examination (PANCE) and the recertification examination (PANRE) are designed to test the medical knowledge of PAs. All US states, the District of Columbia and the US territories have decided to rely on NCCPA certification as one of the criteria for licensure or regulation of PAs. As of Dec. 31, 2019, there were more than 139,000 certified PAs. For more information:

[www.nccpa.net](http://www.nccpa.net)

#### **Physician Assistant Education Association**

The Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) is the only national organization representing physician assistant educational programs in the United States. Currently, all the accredited programs in the country are members of the Association. PAEA works to ensure quality PA education through the

development and distribution of educational services and products specifically geared towards meeting the emerging needs of PA programs, the PA profession, and the healthcare industry. PAEA provides services for faculty at its member programs, as well as to applicants, students, and other stakeholders. For more information: [www.PAEAonline.org](http://www.PAEAonline.org)

**Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants**

The Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants (PSPA) was established in 1976 to act as a representative of all physician assistants within the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The PSPA is the recognized state organization of the AAPA that provides leadership and advocacy for the physician assistant profession at the state level. For more information: [www.pspa.net](http://www.pspa.net)

## **SECTION IV: ACADEMIC SUPPORT**

Carlow University provides comprehensive academic support to all students. Support services include academic advising to all students, a graduate student preparation program, resources and support through the Center for Academic Achievement, and guidance and support through the Hopkins Communication Lab.

### **STUDENT ADVISEMENT AND MENTORING POLICY**

Each student is assigned an academic advisor. The role of the academic advisor is to provide students with educational planning and support throughout the duration of the program. Advisors assist with registering for classes, monitoring academic progress, and providing support and insight into resources available on campus and in the community that can help students navigate through the educational process.

The role of the academic advisor is to facilitate and advise the student regarding academic issues, including registration, application for graduation, obtaining academic and personal resources on campus and in the community, and overseeing any remediation that the student must complete.

The academic advisor typically will advise the student until they complete the program. The advisor will be a faculty member in the PA Program. If a student would like to change their advisor, they may do so by completing a Change of Advisor Form found in the Registrar's Office or Program office and notifying the Program Director.

The advisor acts as a mentor for students regarding professional and personal issues. The PA Program will hold regularly scheduled, small group mentoring meetings in which a series of personal (for example: wellness, time management, study habits) and professional (for example: career counseling, resume design, current events in healthcare) issues will be discussed. The mentors will change periodically throughout the duration of the program for students to work closely with the various faculty members in the program.

To change your advisor, please see the Registrar.

### **CENTER FOR ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT (CAA)**

The Center for Academic Achievement, located on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of University Commons aids student success. The CAA provides individual and group tutoring, support for writing, research, as well as learning and study/test-taking strategies.

The CAA also provides academic coaching services to work one-on-one with students to address any issues standing in the way of academic achievement.

## **IT AND TECHNOLOGY POLICY**

There are several technology services available on- or off-campus to all Carlow University students to support academic endeavors. Communication with all students is supported by a robust email system. Self-Service provides support to register for classes, check grades, and other services. Isadora provides access to campus directories, policies, services, and the most up-to-date information on activities and events. Celtic Online is the University's Learning Management System, supporting all courses for students and faculty. The Omnilert system provides emergency information in real time to students, faculty, and staff across campus.

Access to all technology is supported by a wireless network throughout the campus. Students are encouraged to have a laptop computer available for the duration of the Program. Use of laptops in the classroom is permitted and encouraged to reduce the use of paper and aid in efficiency of learning. Wireless Internet access is available on campus and in classrooms. Students can access BrightSpace, and other academic resources as needed in the classroom. Each course's faculty of record may have specific rules or requirements regarding the use of laptops during classes or labs; these will be outlined in the course syllabus. The use of laptops during class time is limited to academic endeavors; students are discouraged from using laptops to check personal emails, texting others, or viewing personal material for entertainment.

The following system requirements are recommended by Carlow University Information Technology Department.

- **Technical Specifications:** The following minimum specifications are recommended for learners enrolled in online courses and programs. For better performance, we strongly suggest exceeding these specifications.
- **Internet Access:** Internet access is required to participate in Carlow's online learning environments. We strongly recommend a fixed-point high-speed connection (cable, FiOS) although satellite or mobile broadband (4G) may also be usable. Your connection speed should be at least 10 Mbps. Please note that Wi-Fi connections may be problematic with media-rich content.
- **Personal Computer**
  - Operating System: Windows 10 or Latest Mac OS
  - Memory: 16GB
  - Processor: Intel Core i5 or Greater

- Hard drive: 256GB
- Anti-Virus (Windows Defender is fine)
- Graphics card and monitor capable of 1024x768 or greater resolution
- Stereo sound card
- **Additional Hardware**
  - USB headset with microphone - required for programs or courses with synchronous (live) sessions
  - Webcam
  - Speakers may be desirable for viewing/listening to pre-recorded audio/video but are not recommended for synchronous (live) sessions
- **Software and Applications**
  - Registered Carlow students can get discounted prices on software (and other technology) through the Carlow Bookstore and through the myPortal Technology Purchasing and Discounts page. Some vendors may require specific documentation.
  - Microsoft Office: Carlow University provides free access and software downloads of Microsoft Office (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, etc.). Each registered student's Office 365 (email) account includes free computer installations and free use of web-based versions of Microsoft software.
  - Google Chrome is the most compatible browser available for accessing CelticOnline and most other sites for online programs.
- **Security Requirements**
  - Students must ensure their computers are secure and free from viruses and spyware to ensure safe communication with classmates and instructors. Students should check their security 'toolkit' for updates on vendors' recommended schedules (less than once a week but usually not more than once a day). The 'toolkit' should include:
    - Virus scanning software (such as McAfee, Norton, TrendMicro)
    - Latest security patches and other fixes for operating systems and all other applications

Students are encouraged to have a laptop computer available for the duration of the Program. Use of laptops in the classroom is permitted and encouraged to reduce the use of paper and aid in efficiency of learning. Wireless Internet access is available on campus and in classrooms. Students can access Celtic Online and other academic resources as needed in the classroom. Each course's faculty of record may have specific rules or requirements regarding the use of laptops during classes or labs; these will be outlined in the course syllabus. The use of laptops during class time is limited to academic endeavors; students are discouraged from using laptops to check personal emails, texting others, or viewing personal material for entertainment.

Use of Technology to record:

- a. Technology may be used in the classroom or lab setting to record students as they present information or perform a specific skill. Students will be made aware of the recording prior to the event. The recording will be used for academic purposes only within the corresponding course. No additional use of the recording is authorized without the written consent of the student and participants. No recording shall be posted on social media for public consumption without its intent known prior to recording, and the participants grant written consent for its use in that specified manner.
- b. Students must obtain consent of faculty prior to recording any classroom activity. Any need for ongoing recording must be authorized by the Carlow University Disabilities Office as part of an authorized accommodation plan. The recording, if authorized, may only be used for study purposes within the corresponding course. No recording shall be posted on social media for public consumption. Recordings may only be maintained for the duration of the course/semester. All recordings must be erased and destroyed after that time.
  - i. Faculty may choose to post presentations on CelticOnline with voice-over narration to support students' learning. These presentations shall be used for academic purposes only; no presentation shall be posted on social media for public consumption.

In support of its mission, Carlow University, within the parameters of institutional priorities and financial capabilities, provides access for faculty, staff, students, Sisters of Mercy, contractors, and guests (hereinafter "Users") to local, national and international sources of information.

The policy for Responsible Use of Information Resources contains the governing philosophy for regulating any and all use of the University's Information Technology Resources including, but not limited to University-owned and/or licensed computers, software, telephone equipment and services, audio-visual equipment, learning spaces resources, websites, forums, databases, Internet bandwidth, networks and networking equipment. The policy also addresses acceptable use of any personally owned devices, such as tablets, smartphones and laptops connected to, through, or gaining access to networks, databases, or websites administered by the University. In adopting this policy, the University recognizes that all members of the University community are also bound by local, state, and federal laws governing the use of these resources.

### **Access to Services**

Access to the University's Information Resources is a privilege granted to Users. The University reserves the right to extend, limit or revoke privileges and access to these Resources. Any User who, without authorization, overburdens, accesses, destroys, alters, dismantles, or disfigures University Information Resources, properties or facilities, including those owned by third parties, thereby threatens the environment of increased access and sharing of information. This unauthorized use is considered unethical and unacceptable conduct, as it threatens the security and viability of the Information Resources of the University. Whether intended, accidental or unwittingly engaged in, such behavior is unacceptable and subjects the User to discipline, sanction or report to law enforcement, as applicable. Carlow University's Technology, including the campus network and access paths it provides to off-campus resources such as the Internet, are facilities of the University and are designed to advance the mission of the University. The University strives to operate its Technology reliably, efficiently, securely, legally, and in accordance with University policies. To accomplish this, the University may exercise its right to log access to and use of all resources on its network as well as the digital traffic that flows through its network. Although information can be monitored and logged by the network, the University does not routinely monitor individuals' activities or the content of their use of University owned and administered technology resources. The University reserves the right to monitor or review individual activity or content on University-owned or provided services. The University will take all appropriate steps to identify the cause and/or source of any identified problem with the operation of its network or information resources or any violation of its policies. This may include using information logged by the system or collected about users and the devices they use. If policies are violated, offending users will be dealt with according to established procedures. If there are indications of local, state or federal law violations, University personnel will cooperate with law enforcement or other appropriate individuals to identify and prosecute offenders. This will include providing information about machines and user activities that might be involved in the violations.

Certain student information is protected by state and federal regulations, such as FERPA. The ability of employees to access student and employee data is limited and based on the responsibilities of that employee's professional position. It is the responsibility of each employee to act ethically, within the scope of University policies and applicable laws when accessing or utilizing this data. Faculty and staff are also expected to protect the privacy of University information when utilizing any method of storing, sharing, or delivering information, data, and equipment to or from an off-campus location, and to return, restore, or forfeit possession of any requested University materials or resources at the end or termination of an agreement or at the request of the University.

### **Off-campus access to services**

The use of the University Technology for conducting University business is permitted when off-campus. Faculty and staff can access secured and protected services, information, data, sites, and equipment.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to exercise additional precautions to protect information when accessing information from remote locations. All policies and expectations contained within this policy are in full force, regardless of geographic location.

### **Protection of accounts and information**

It is the responsibility of each person to set strong passwords and to ensure that their passwords remain private. Sharing of accounts and passwords is a violation of this policy, as it may allow for unauthorized access or damage to the University's technology

Information systems are configured with timed locking mechanisms and password change requirements to protect access to data. However, it is incumbent upon Users who are granted the privilege of accessing sensitive information to take appropriate measures to log-out and secure both digital and physical information.

The University encourages innovative solutions in the use of technology while upholding the need to protect sensitive information. Confidential information, including any data protected by FERPA or other legislation, may be stored in non-University systems (e.g., cloud services) only after formal permission of the senior technology officer and upon satisfactory acknowledgment and legal review of data ownership and security, sharing, backup, and recovery policies of the external device or service.

### **Personal devices on Carlow network and use of Information Resources**

Carlow University provides the privilege of connecting personal devices to the campus network to gain access to internet resources. This may be referred to as "Bring Your Own Device" or (BYOD). As such, Carlow requires that all devices have appropriate and up to date anti-virus software installed.

Additionally, Carlow reserves the right to restrict or deny access to any personal device that either does not meet the minimum requirements to protect the security of the network or the services therein, or any device that hampers the effectiveness of the network services. The use of any personal network routing device with the University technology is strictly prohibited. Carlow reserves the right to monitor and verify connection of devices to the University technology, which, if found, subjects the User to discipline, sanction or report to law enforcement, as applicable.

### **Mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, laptops**

With the mobility of information available via laptops, tablets, thumb drives, cloud-based storage, CD backups, etc., the University requires that anyone using such devices and/or services take precautions to protect sensitive and confidential information. Confidential information is to be encrypted and/or stored on password-protected devices. Access by any employee to any University operational information, including e-mail services, must be on a device which can be remotely erased in the event of loss, theft, or transfer of custody. By connecting a personal device to any University Technology, the owner grants permission to the University to execute such management capability necessary to protect the privacy of Information Resources, as well as the capability to protect itself from infrastructure threats by means of interacting with or scanning the device using anti-virus software. Any device which connects to University Technology must also contain locking security such as password protection or activation. If a personal device containing or used to access University data or information is lost, stolen, or becomes inaccessible to its owner, it is the responsibility of the individual who used the device to access University data or information to contact Carlow University's senior technology officer immediately upon loss of custody of the device in order to safeguard any University information stored therein.

### **Inappropriate behaviors**

- Use or attempted use, not authorized by the University, of any University account or resource;
- Disguise or attempted disguise of the identity of a University account or information resource;
- Authorization of use of your University account or the accounts of others in the absence of the owner of the account;
- Use of University telecommunications network to gain or attempt to gain unauthorized access to local or remote information resources, including attempted access to other's account or information;
- No machine configured to operate as a network server shall be connected to the campus network by any method (data jacks, hubs, wireless or other connections or Wi-Fi access points) without written approval from the senior technology officer;
- Installation of software on corporate-owned devices;
- Acts performed knowingly or deliberately which are intended to or have the effect of impacting adversely the operation of information resources and/or denying service to other users of the resources. This includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized use of accounts for the purpose of sending e-mail mass mailings or chain letters or executing programs that impede the operation of the network;
- Modification of files, disks, programs or other information resources

- belonging to the University or other persons without the owner's permission;
- Use or installation of a program or device which is intended to scan or damage an information resource file, system or network;
  - Circumvention or attempts to circumvent information resource protection measures;
  - Violation of licensing agreements for information resources, including the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA);
  - Unauthorized reading, copying, deleting or altering in any way information resource communications, files, or software belonging to others without their permission. Authorization to access sensitive data may only be authorized if necessary by the President, Presidential designee, or the senior technology officer;
  - Use of University technology and information resources for personal commercial enterprises (such as side businesses and non-profit operations outside the scope of Carlow University) and/or for financial gain.
  - Unapproved sharing of sensitive, confidential or internal business-related information with any outside agency.

### **Process for reporting suspected inappropriate behavior**

Any suspected inappropriate behavior that counters the Responsible Use of Information Resources should be reported immediately to the senior technology officer. The senior technology officer may report the behavior to other appropriate officials for further action. The University will investigate and address as appropriate any suspected inappropriate behavior in accordance with the student code of conduct, faculty handbook, code of ethical conduct, University policies or any applicable local/state and/or federal law.

### **CARLOW CARD**

All students are required to have a Carlow University identification card, called the "Carlow Card." A Carlow Card is necessary for admittance to University activities, to check materials out of the library, to use the fitness center, and to gain entrance to University buildings. The Carlow Card is also used to gain access to copy machines across campus. Visit Isadora for information about the Carlow Card and its advantages.

### **IT HELP! Services**

Carlow offers 24/7 technology support through IT Help Services team. Help Services is on the University Commons, 2nd floor, at the Information Desk. Current on-site IT hours are Monday-Thursday, 7:30 AM-7:30 PM, and Friday 7:30 AM - 5:00 PM. During these hours, IT may be reached by phone at 412-578-8700 or by using the chat feature on the IT Isadora page. During off-hours, please call (866) 767-9509. You may also submit requests through the Self-Service Portal.

## **FINANCIAL AID**

Financial aid information and assistance is provided by the Financial Aid Department at Carlow University. Located in the Student Hub on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of Antonian Hall, the Department helps with the financial aid application, as well as information on scholarships and grants for graduate students.

According to the Financial Aid Department, the primary form of assistance for graduate students is the Federal Direct unsubsidized loan. Students must complete the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) to qualify for this loan. If additional funds are needed, a student may apply for a Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan ([www.studentloans.gov](http://www.studentloans.gov)) or private alternative loan. Several grants and scholarships are also available for graduate students; information is provided on the financial aid website. Financial aid counselors are also available to help.

Graduate students are also encouraged to search databases for available grants and scholarships outside of the University. An excellent local resource is the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's Non-Profit Resource Center (formerly known as the Foundation Center) located at 4400 Forbes Avenue, Pittsburgh, PA 15213. Free orientation programs to the resources and services available are provided to the public. Contact the Center at (412) 622-6277 or see their website at [www.carnegielibrary.org](http://www.carnegielibrary.org) for more information.

## **STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES POLICY**

Carlow University offers Health and Wellness services to all enrolled students. These services include [health services, counseling services, and wellness and fitness services](#).

All students enrolled at Carlow University are eligible to receive free and reduced-fee routine, non-emergency healthcare services through the University Health Services Office located in Francis Warde Hall, Room 408. These services are available to all enrolled PA students, regardless of whether they are in the didactic or clinical phase of the program. Hours and fees [are posted on the website](#). To maintain eligibility for healthcare services, students must provide a completed Health History and Immunization Documentation form to the Student Health Services Office upon matriculation. Emergency medical services are provided by local hospitals; payment for those services, if not covered by the student's medical insurance, is the responsibility of the student.

Students who may be off campus can return to campus for health and wellness services offered by the university. As a result of the COVID-19

pandemic, telehealth visits are currently available for students who may be at distant clinical sites. Students may also call Health Services with questions and concerns while away from campus. Students may otherwise have to seek medical attention elsewhere if at distant sites. The student is responsible for the cost of seeking care while at a clinical site.

Counseling services are available to all students enrolled at Carlow University through the Counseling Center located in Francis Warde Hall, Rooms 401, 402, and 404.

[Information regarding these services, as well as community resources are available.](#) These services are free and confidential. Routine appointments can be made by calling 412-578-6474. For emergency mental health assistance, students are urged to contact the Re-solve Crisis Network at 1-888-796- 8226, the Carlow University Police at 412-578-6007, or Pittsburgh Police at 911.

### **STUDENT HEALTH RECORDS POLICY**

The PA Program will maintain no health records on PA students. PA faculty and staff will have no access to the students' health records.

### **FACULTY AS THE STUDENT HEALTHCARE PROVIDER POLICY**

Principal faculty, Program Director, and Medical Director must not participate as healthcare providers for students in the PA Program. Medical knowledge of current students has the potential to bias individuals regarding a student's academic performance and place individuals in jeopardy of accidentally disclosing confidential medical information.

Should a faculty member find that a student is also a patient of theirs in clinical practice, they should immediately reassign that student to another qualified healthcare provider in the practice, after having a conversation with the student to explain the potential conflicts of interest that could occur. In this case, the faculty should guard any medical knowledge of the student as they would with all other patients' information, in accordance with HIPAA.

Faculty, Program Director, and Medical Director must not provide personal medical advice to students in the academic setting (this includes advice whether or not to seek medical attention); all medical concerns should be re-directed to their personal healthcare provider.

In an emergency situation, the faculty should provide stabilization of clinical care to the student and arrange for transfer to a local healthcare facility to continue care, in accordance with duty to rescue considerations.

## **ACCESS AND REFERRAL FOR SUPPORT POLICY**

During a rigorous graduate program, personal issues can add to increased levels of stress and anxiety for students. The University provides a program of confidential support through the CARE Team. This program supports and promotes student safety, success, and overall well-being through a referral system, coupled with support and resources to address personal issues. These individuals collaborate with faculty and staff to provide confidential support, promoting student safety, success, and overall well-being. Concerns about students' safety and well-being are reported to [the CARE Team](#), who investigates and provides confidential support to students when and where needed.

The CARE Team accepts referrals for issues including, but not limited to, the following:

- Unusual or erratic behavior
- Written work or creative expression with troubling themes or references
- Verbal or written threats made by a student toward another student, faculty, or staff or actions that threaten personal safety
- Written or verbal expressions of suicidal ideation or intent
- Abrupt changes in student academic performance, class attendance, or engagement
- Basic needs insecurity (food & housing)

The CARE Team is not intended to provide academic support for students. For academic issues, students are referred to their faculty advisor and the Center for Academic Achievement for more information and support. For emergency situations such as acute medical or mental health situations that require immediate attention, individuals are directed to call 911 and the Carlow Police (emergency phone 412-578-6007) for an immediate emergency response.

To make a referral to the CARE Team, faculty and staff must complete an initial referral form. The form can also be accessed through the CARE Team page of the Carlow University website. A CARE Team member will contact the individual who provided the referral in order to gather additional information.

Other than receiving confirmation that the CARE Report was submitted, those who make reports generally do not receive updates or further information to protect the confidentiality of the students.

Counseling services to address personal issues that may impact academic performance are available on campus. Services on campus are free and confidential.

Students may also contact the Resolve Crisis Network at 1-888-796-8226, which is a free community mental health service and emergency services for Allegheny County residents, including students at Carlow University.

Personal wellness of students is a priority. The Program will work towards efforts that identify unnecessary stressors for graduate students and make attempts to alleviate these issues. In addition, the ongoing mentoring program will periodically address personal wellness issues. Students will be encouraged to actively participate in wellness activities of the University.

Carlow University remains committed to supporting healthy lifestyles and wellness for the campus community. Carlow Wellness and Fitness Services provides several free services including nutrition consultations, special events, classes, workshops, and seminars for students. [Two fitness centers are available for students on campus.](#)

## **CAMPUS MINISTRY**

The Office of Campus Ministry is an important part of the Carlow community and serves the pastoral and spiritual needs of the University, providing opportunities for service, reflection, prayer, and worship. All faith traditions are welcome to participate. Campus Ministry can provide resources to local faith communities for those students from out of town who are seeking connection within the Pittsburgh area. Throughout the year, the Campus Ministry also provides a few events and activities for students, and also to support the core values of the University. The chapel and interfaith prayer room are located on the 5<sup>th</sup> floor of the University Commons and are available for quiet prayer and reflection. [The office of Campus Ministry is Room 210 of the University Commons.](#)

## **GRACE LIBRARY**

[Carlow's Grace Library](#), located in University Commons, collects, and maintains a comprehensive and diverse collection of online and print resources for the benefit of the University. These include books and journals, research guides, databases, and an interlibrary loan service.

## **REGISTRAR**

The Registrar and the staff of the [Office of the Registrar](#) are responsible for course registration, publishing the schedule of classes, issuing official transcripts, and the application process for graduation.

### **Change in Personal Information**

The PA Program and Office of the Registrar must be notified in writing regarding all changes in personal information, including name, address, phone number, and any other pertinent contact information. For the Change of Name/Address Form, please contact the Office of the Registrar.

### **Application for Graduation**

Those students completing the MPA degree and are in the final semester of the PA Program must apply to the University for Graduation. The Application for Graduation form is available through the Student Hub in Antonian Hall (2<sup>nd</sup> floor).

## **BOOKSTORE**

The Carlow University Bookstore, managed by Barnes & Noble, offers textbooks for courses, as well as other books and supplies. It is located on the first floor of the University Commons. For more information including hours of operation and how to order online, [see their webpage](#).

## SECTION V: OTHER POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### PROGRAM ACCREDITATION POLICY

In accordance with Standard D1.03, the program will inform individuals who request information, apply for, or plan to enroll, in writing, that the program is not yet fully accredited and will convey the implications of non-accreditation to applicants. In addition, this information will be available on the PA website.

*At its **September 2024** meeting, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) placed the **Carlow University Physician Assistant Program** sponsored by **Carlow University** on **Accreditation-Probation** status until its next review in **September 2026**. Probation accreditation is a temporary accreditation status initially of not less than two years. However, that period may be extended by the ARC-PA for up to an additional two years if the ARC-PA finds that the program is making substantial progress toward meeting all applicable standards but requires additional time to come into full compliance. Probation accreditation status is granted, at the sole discretion of the ARC- PA, when a program holding an accreditation status of Accreditation - Provisional or Accreditation - Continued does not, in the judgment of the ARC-PA, meet the Standards or when the capability of the program to provide an acceptable educational experience for its students is threatened. Once placed on probation, a program that fails to comply with accreditation requirements in a timely manner, as specified by the ARC-PA, may be scheduled for a focused site visit and is subject to having its accreditation withdrawn. Specific questions regarding the Program and its plans should be directed to the Program Director and/or the appropriate institutional official(s). The program's accreditation history can be found at <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-carlow-university/>.*

### ADMISSIONS POLICY

All applications are submitted via the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (<https://caspa.cas.myliaison.com/applicant-ux/#/login>) and corresponding information for admission into the matriculating cohort will be sent via the "Bridge to Carlow Application Management System" (<https://admissions.carlow.edu/apply/status>).

#### Requirements for Admission

- a. Applicants must have a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution at the time of matriculation. For applicants who have completed coursework in a foreign country, they are required to complete a course-by-course evaluation by a current member organization of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES). The list of current members can be found at [www.naces.org](http://www.naces.org). The evaluation company must send the official

evaluation report directly to Carlow University (photocopies are not accepted). Minimum GPA for all undergraduate coursework is 3.3/4.0.

- b. Pre-requisite Coursework – all coursework must be completed within 10 years of application. Any courses outstanding at the time of application must be successfully completed prior to May 31<sup>st</sup> of the year of entry. (Applicants may be accepted “conditionally” and may matriculate only if all required coursework is successfully completed prior to 5/31 of the year of matriculation.) All pre-requisite courses must be successfully completed with a passing grade of C (2.0) or better. Minimum GPA for all pre-requisite coursework is 3.3/4.0. No pre-requisite coursework can be waived.
- c. Pre-requisite coursework includes:

REQUIRED COURSE	CREDITS	COMMENTS
Anatomy – Human or Vertebrate	3	If Anatomy is coupled with Physiology (“A&P”) in one course then 2 semesters are required, with lab
Anatomy - Lab	1	If lab is a part of an A&P course, 2 semesters are required
Physiology – Human or Vertebrate	3	If Physiology is coupled with Anatomy (“A&P”) in one course then 2 semesters are required, with lab
Biochemistry	3	
General biology	6	2 semesters
General biology - Lab	2	2 semesters
Microbiology	3	
Genetics	3	
General/Inorganic Chemistry	6	2 semesters
General Chemistry - Lab	2	2 semesters
Organic Chemistry	3	1 semester
Organic Chemistry - Lab	1	1 semester
English Composition/Writing	3	
General Psychology	3	
Statistics	3	
Medical Terminology for Clinicians		May complete an online course for a certificate. Not used in the calculation of pre-req GPA

- d. Advanced Placement:

- i. No advanced placement credit is awarded to applicants. All students must complete all curricular components of the PA curriculum in order to graduate and be awarded a degree from Carlow University.
- e. **Technical Standards:** All applicants must meet the essential functions outlined in the Technical Standards. As a condition of admission, applicants are required to submit documentation from a licensed healthcare provider attesting to their ability to meet the program's established technical standards.

Technical Standards (a.k.a. "Essential Functions") are defined as: *Nonacademic requirements for participation in an educational program or activity. They include physical, cognitive and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and for entry into the profession.* These are the abilities required of individuals who matriculate into the Carlow University PA Program.

- i. Students must have the mental, physical, emotional capacities and professional disposition essential to successfully complete all aspects of the curriculum and enter and practice successfully in the profession. All students are expected to have abilities, upon matriculation, in five realms including **sensory, communication, motor, intellectual, and social/emotional/professional**. These abilities allow students to perform functional tasks required to meet graduation and professional requirements as measured by national certification requirements as well as state licensure and credentialing processes.
  1. **Sensory:** All individuals must have functional sensory capacity including visual, auditory, olfactory, and tactile capacity to observe and actively participate in various academic settings as well as the sensory capacity to perform appropriate examinations and interactions as deemed appropriate in the role as a student and graduate PA. They must maintain a clear sensorium at all times and not be under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
  2. **Communication:** All individuals must be able to communicate effectively and professionally in all academic and clinical settings and be able to demonstrate accuracy, clarity, and proficiency in both verbal and written English.
  3. **Motor:** All individuals must have the physical ability to participate in basic physical maneuvers and procedures. Students must be able to negotiate patient care environments. Manual dexterity is required of all individuals. Physical stamina and endurance sufficient to complete the course of didactic and clinical study is required. Long periods

of sitting, standing or moving are required in a variety of learning and clinical environments.

4. **Intellectual:** All individuals must have the cognitive ability sufficient to understand and interpret information, as well as be able to calculate, reason, assess and integrate information, critically think and problem solve. Must be able to read and comprehend graduate level written course materials.
  5. **Social/Emotional/Professional:** All individuals must possess the social, emotional and professional maturity to function appropriately and effectively in the academic and clinical setting, based upon social, societal, and professional norms, maintaining mature and effective relationships with peers, faculty, patients and others in the health care environment. All individuals must demonstrate good judgement, emotional stability and regulation, and an overall awareness of acceptable behaviors in the classroom, clinical setting, and public environments. Demonstrate compassion and empathy.
- f. **Workplace Experience:** All applicants must complete workplace experience prior to application. This can be direct patient care or clinical research experience.
- g. All applicants must document a minimum of 500 hours of direct patient care (defined as providing healthcare services directly to patients) OR 500 hours of clinical research experience (in which you work with human subjects in a clinical research environment). Evidence of completion shall be provided to the "Bridge to Carlow Application Management System" in the form of a letter from the applicant's supervisor or HR Department on official letterhead. Healthcare experience can be paid or unpaid. Workplace experience cannot be a school sanctioned "internship" or other experience used for credit or a grade.
- h. Testing
- GRE: The GRE is not required for admission to the Carlow University PA Program.
  - TOEFL: The Test of English as a Foreign Language) is required for those for whom English is a second language. Scores are valid for 2 years after the test date. Applicants are encouraged to complete the Internet-based exam (iBT). Individuals must score a 20 in any subject area for a total score of 90 or higher to qualify. (Carlow School Code is 2421.) <https://www.ets.org/toefl>.
  - An alternate to TOEFL is IELTS (Official Test of International

English Language Testing System). Individuals must score 6.5 or higher to qualify. (Carlow School Code is 2421.)

<https://www.ielts.org/>.

- i. References: three letters of reference are required. References cannot be from a friend or a relative.
  - One reference from a Physician Assistant. This letter provides insight into your potential as a PA.
  - One reference from a collegiate academic individual involved in the candidate's education. This letter provides insight into your ability to successfully complete rigorous academic requirements.
  - One reference from an individual of the candidate's choice. It is recommended that you select an individual who can provide insight into your character and your potential for success that has not otherwise been addressed in your application. Suggestions include former employer/supervisor, clergy, community leader with whom you have worked, or volunteer leader.
- j. Faculty Interview and Writing Sample
  - Candidates who meet admission requirements (including undergraduate and pre-requisite GPA of 3.3 or higher, 500 hours or more of relevant work experience, and 3 positive letters of recommendation) may be invited to submit a video interview. This will consist of 3 question prompts. The submission will be reviewed by 2 members of the Physician Assistant faculty. The video will be scored according to rubric, and the applicant will be evaluated for suitability for admission to the Physician Assistant program.
- k. Preferences
  - i. Carlow University does not offer preferential treatment to any categories. Our selection process is committed to fairness and impartiality, ensuring that all candidates are evaluated based on merit and qualifications alone. Throughout the application cycle, faculty will host informational Q & A sessions to address applicant questions.
- l. Process for Admission
  - i. Students who meet the requirements as stated above will be invited for video interview as described above.
  - ii. Students are also asked to complete an essay specific to Carlow's mission as part of their CASPA application. Responses to this prompt will also be considered in the admission process.
  - iii. Once the video interview has been scored and overall application, including essays and written responses, have been reviewed, the Admissions Committee will meet to assess the candidates' suitability for

the program. Applicants will receive scores for each of the required components of the admission process (including overall and pre-requisite GPA, healthcare experience, references, video interview, and writing sample). Admissions decisions will be made on a rolling basis. Once the cohort reaches capacity, applicants will be placed on a waitlist and ranked according to their scores.

The Graduate Admissions Department at Carlow University will officially extend the offer of admission to candidates in writing; those who accept the offer must provide a non-refundable deposit of \$1000 within the timeline specified by their Admissions offer. A waitlist will be established once the cohort meets capacity and candidates will be notified as seats are available in the program. All candidates who are interviewed will be notified of their status in writing.

### **ADVANCED PLACEMENT POLICY**

1. Advanced Placement is defined by ARC-PA as *a waiver of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for applicants to the program and/or a waiver of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for currently enrolled students in the program which results in the student advancing in the curriculum without completing required curriculum components at the sponsoring institution.*
2. The curriculum of the Carlow University PA Program is designed to address the academic standards set forth by ARC-PA in a systematic manner. For information integration, it is vital that all students complete all curricular aspects of the PA Program.
3. It is the policy of the PA Program at Carlow University that no advanced placement will be granted to any applicant or student in the program. All students must successfully complete all curricular components of the Program to graduate and be granted a degree by Carlow University. There will be no exceptions.

### **PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENT POLICY**

The PA Program will define, publish and make readily available to all enrolled and prospective students the following information:

- a. The program's ARC-PA accreditation status.
  - i. The following statement will appear on the PA website and all published materials, until the status of the Program changes. At that time, Program announcements will reflect the current accreditation status:  
*At its **September 2024** meeting, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA) placed the **Carlow University Physician Assistant Program** sponsored by **Carlow University on Accreditation-***

***Probation status until its next review in September***

***2026. Probation accreditation is a temporary accreditation status initially of not less than two years. However, that period may be extended by the ARC-PA for up to an additional two years if the ARC-PA finds that the program is making substantial progress toward meeting all applicable standards but requires additional time to come into full compliance. Probation accreditation status is granted, at the sole discretion of the ARC- PA, when a program holding an accreditation status of Accreditation - Provisional or Accreditation - Continued does not, in the judgment of the ARC-PA, meet the Standards or when the capability of the program to provide an acceptable educational experience for its students is threatened. Once placed on probation, a program that fails to comply with accreditation requirements in a timely manner, as specified by the ARC-PA, may be scheduled for a focused site visit and is subject to having its accreditation withdrawn. Specific questions regarding the Program and its plans should be directed to the Program Director and/or the appropriate institutional official(s). The program's accreditation history can be found at <https://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-carlow-university/>.***

- b. The success of the program in achieving its published goals.
  - i. Program goals will be published and readily available on the PA Program website. Following graduation of the first cohort of students and a comprehensive study, the success at achieving program goals will be made public via the website. An action plan will be developed to increase success in reaching goals. An annual review will be initiated and results published.
- c. The first time PANCE rates for the five most recent graduating classes.
  - i. The NCCPA PANCE Pass Rate Summary Report will be published on the Program's web site upon completion of the first cohort of students and annually thereafter.
- d. All required curricular components of the PA Program will be published on the PA Program website.
  - i. Any change in required curricular components will be published within 15 days of said change.
  - ii. Any changes will be announced to currently enrolled students, in person and in writing.
- e. Academic credit offered by the program will be published by the program on the PA Program website.
  - i. Any change in academic credit offered by the program will be published within 15 days of said change.
  - ii. Any changes will be announced to currently enrolled students, in person and in writing.

- f. Estimates of all costs, including tuition, fees, etc. related to the Program will be published by the Program on the PA Program website.
  - i. Any change in tuition, fees, etc. related to the program will be published within 15 days of said change.
  - ii. Any changes will be announced to currently enrolled students, in person and in writing.
- g. Policies and procedures for refunds of tuition and fees will be published by the University and the Program on the PA Program website.
  - i. Any change in policy for refunds of tuition and fees will be announced in writing by the University. In addition, a notice will appear on the PA Program website.
- h. Policies about student employment while enrolled in the Program.
  - i. Student employment policy appears on the Program website. See Student Employment Policy (PA 120) for more details.

The PA Program shall inform students of program policies and practices.

- Each student will receive electronic access to a copy of the Student Manual, containing all student-related policies and procedures.
  - Students will sign an attestation statement, stating that they received a student manual and have read the contents.
- All students will be required to attend an initial orientation, at which time the policies, procedures and practices of the PA Program will be presented.
- All students will be required to attend an orientation prior to the clinical phase of the program, at which time the policies, procedures and practices of the PA Program will be reviewed.

## **STUDENT FILES POLICY**

Academic Records: All program-related student academic records must be kept and maintained in a safe and secure manner within the confines of the PA Program. The student academic records are kept electronically, as part of Carlow University's Microsoft 360 system. This system is secure and is FERPA-compliant. Access to student academic records is limited to principal faculty, Program Director, Medical Director, and PA Program's Administrative Assistant. No student will have access to the file system.

Individual student (active) files are organized (by cohort/class) as follows:

- i. Contact Information: Contact Information, Emergency Contact Information, Proof of Medical Insurance.
- ii. Program Forms
- iii. Application: CASPA documents, Interview materials.
- iv. Background checks, Notice of Completion of Immunizations/Health Requirements.
- v. Urine Drug Screenings are held in paper format in a separate file,

- under lock and key.
- vi. Academic: Advisement, Clinical Schedule, Disciplinary Actions, HIPAA, OSHA Training, Mandated Reporter Child Abuse Training, PACKRAT, Program Completion Requirements, Remediation.
- vii. Awards, Honors, Service
- viii. ePortfolio
- ix. Letters of Recommendation
- x. PANCE Scores

Any student files that require temporary storage in a paper format until scanned electronically will be maintained within the department, securely locked in a file cabinet, behind two locked doors. Once successfully scanned and entered into the electronic file, the paper document will be shredded using the University's secure shredding vendor.

- Students who request access to their record must do so in writing. Any viewing of electronic record must be done in the presence of a faculty member. This will occur within five business days of request. No paper copies shall be generated at that time.

#### Student Health Requirements Records:

1. All students will provide documentation of completion of health/medical requirements. Students will upload all documentation into EXXAT by the appropriate deadlines. PA Program faculty and staff may not collect or review these records. The Program will maintain a copy of a compliance statement only and will not maintain or have access to actual records. Records will be kept electronically. Students must maintain a copy of information in their records for potential distribution to assigned clinical sites.

### **SUPERVISED CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCE POLICY**

Student Progression to Clinical Phase: In order for students to progress to the clinical phase of the PA program, the following requirements must be met.

- a. Successful completion of all required didactic course as outlined in the Academic Performance and Progression Policy Including completion of all academic remediation requirements
- b. Compliance with Professionalism Policy and successful completion of all professional remediation activities.
- c. Successful completion of all training activities including, but not limited to, HIPAA, OSHA, Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers course with current certification, and Advanced Cardiovascular Life Support course with current certification.

- d. Completion and negative results associated with drug screening.
- e. Documentation of immunization status, current History and Physical Examination completed by licensed primary care provider, current background checks current TB screening status with signed release allowing Carlow University to maintain and release the following information to assigned clinical sites: immunization status, TB screening status, drug screening, background checks, notice of completion of trainings including HIPAA and OSHA, and BLS/ACLS certification
- f. Proof of Medical Insurance coverage
- g. Proof of Professional Liability Insurance. This will be provided by the Carlow University PA Program.

Failure to fulfill and maintain the above requirements will prevent the student from initiating supervised clinical practice experience(s) and corresponding Clinical Medicine modules, thus delaying completion of the program and graduation.

1. Identification and assignment of sites:
  - Students are not required to identify clinical sites or preceptors. Under no circumstances should students contact potential sites or preceptors or attempt to negotiate the establishment of clinical sites.
  - Potential clinical sites will be considered for partnership with the Carlow University PA Program which can address and meet the learning objectives of the rotation specialty, provide a safe and supervised environment, and provide adequate hours and patient exposure, creating a positive learning environment.
  - It is the role and responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education to assign students to clinical sites and supervising preceptors. This process will be conducted in a fair and equitable manner, taking into consideration geographic location, academic needs of the student, and other considerations. Travel may be required 100% of the time.
  - A schedule of assignments will be provided to students well in advance of the date of rotations. On occasion, issues arise when a site must cancel a student. In that event, Carlow University will make every attempt to schedule an alternative site as soon as possible and notify the student when the details are finalized.
2. Affiliation Agreement:
  - a. It is the responsibility of Carlow University and the PA Program to obtain and maintain an affiliation agreement for each clinical site.
  - b. No student will be scheduled for or participate in a clinical rotation at a site without an active affiliation agreement. The affiliation agreement addresses only Carlow University sanctioned academic activities at the site.

3. Vetting
  - a. Vetting of the Site/Agency
    - i. It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education to assess and approve the clinical site/agency for use as a clinical rotation site. Following initial vetting and completion of the Affiliation Agreement, the Director of Clinical Education will complete a formal assessment of the site by completing the Initial Site Visit Form. The form will help to determine if it meets the standards regarding safety and potential to meet the rotation's clinical objectives.
    - ii. The Director of Clinical Education will complete an Annual Site Visit Form to determine if the site will continue to meet the educational needs of students as a clinical site.
  - b. Vetting of the Supervising Clinical Preceptor
    - i. It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education to assess and approve the individual(s) designated to be the supervising clinical preceptor at the site. Assessment includes, but is not limited to licensure, malpractice insurance, board certification in area of instruction (for MD and DO) or board certification of supervising physician of the PA. CV of all preceptors will be obtained and updated annually.
4. Maintenance of site:
  - a. It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education to assess and vet the clinical site/physical facilities to ensure that the site offers sufficient resources (including, but not limited to) workspace, examination rooms, patient numbers, support staff, references, space for student belongings. The vetting also includes assessing the general safety and security of the environment and location.
  - b. It is the responsibility of the Director of Clinical Education to assess, educate, and vet the supervising preceptor to ensure, licensure status, specialty board certification in the area of SCPE, as well as provide a current PA Program Preceptor Manual and provide instruction in policies, procedures, and practices associated with precepting a Carlow University PA student.
  - c. Maintenance of the site and the support of the supervising preceptors involves regularly scheduled site visits. Each site will be visited (in person or virtually) by the Director of Clinical Education or her/his representative a minimum of once annually. In addition, each student will be visited on-site a minimum of once over the eight rotations .
5. Safety of site:
  - a. The initial site vetting, as well as regularly scheduled site visits occur, in part, to assess the safety of the site. Safety assessment includes physical

safety (exit plans, fire safety, police and ambulance availability), infection control efforts, and safety policies and procedures for staff and visitors. All students will be required to obtain and maintain a list of first responders for the geographic area as a part of safety considerations.

6. Clinical Preceptor:
  - a. The clinical preceptor is responsible for managing the education experience of the assigned student at the site. They provide students with opportunities to achieve the rotation's learning outcomes and assess and mentor the student throughout the experience. Their role is detailed in the PA Program Preceptor Manual.
7. Student Role:
  - a. The student role at the site is that of a learner. As such, the student will not substitute as a clinical or administrative support employee. See Role of the Student for more details.
8. Student Identification:
  - a. All students should present themselves and wear University and/or clinical site sanctioned identification, as outlined in Student Identification Policy.

## **STUDENT TRAVEL POLICY**

The purpose of this policy is to outline expectations, responsibilities, and safety requirements for all Physician Assistant (PA) students when traveling to clinical rotation sites. Students should expect to travel to any assigned clinical site within the United States, which may require travel of up to approximately 5,000 miles one way.

### General Expectations

- Students are responsible for their own travel. Clinical rotations may require student travel for each assigned experience. All PA students must arrange and fund transportation to and from all program-related activities, including clinical rotations, simulation sessions, community learning experiences, and off-campus events.
- Reliable transportation is required. Maintaining dependable and timely transportation is an essential expectation of the program. Transportation issues are not considered acceptable reasons for lateness, absence, or missed assignments.
- Travel may include long distances. Students should expect significant travel throughout the United States for clinical experiences or special program requirements.
- No guarantee of local placement. The Program does not guarantee placement at sites near home or within a specific mileage range. Students must be prepared for commute variations each rotation.

### Clinical Rotation Travel Requirements

- Students should expect to travel to any assigned clinical site within the United States, which may require travel of up to approximately 5,000 miles one way.
- Clinical assignments are based on educational needs, accreditation requirements, and site availability, not geographic convenience or personal preference.
- Students are responsible for arranging and funding all transportation and/or temporary housing associated with their assigned clinical sites, regardless of distance.
- Students must report to the clinical site at the times designated by the preceptor, including evenings, weekends, or extended hours when required.
- Travel time does not count toward clinical hours.
- Students must allow adequate time for travel planning to ensure early arrival for all clinical responsibilities.

#### Travel Safety

- Students must follow all state and federal laws related to travel, including seatbelt use, speed limits, and restrictions on handheld devices.
- Students must not operate a vehicle while fatigued or under the influence of substances or medications that impair driving ability.
- Hazardous weather should be approached with caution; however, students are expected to plan accordingly and notify the Program and the preceptor before any delay.

#### Liability & Insurance

- Personal auto insurance is required. Students must maintain valid automobile insurance meeting state minimum coverage requirements for any vehicle used for program-related travel.
- Liability during travel. The University and Program are not responsible for accidents, injuries, or vehicle-related incidents occurring during student travel.
- University insurance does not cover personal vehicles.

#### Weather, Delays, and Emergency Situations

- Students must notify both the Program and the preceptor immediately if weather, traffic, or emergency conditions impact their ability to arrive on time.
- Make-up hours must be arranged with both the Director of Clinical Education and the preceptor.
- The Program reserves the right to require documentation for repeated travel-related issues.

#### Professional Conduct During Travel

- Personal travel must not interfere with academic or clinical responsibilities.
- Travel for personal reasons (vacations, appointments, family events) must not conflict with required clinical activities.
- Students traveling between sites or program activities during the academic day must do so efficiently and professionally.

#### Failure to Comply

- Failure to comply with this travel policy, including repeated lateness, absences, safety violations, or transportation issues, may result in a formal written warning, Professional Probation, and/or dismissal from the Program (according to Program and University policies).

## STUDENT HANDBOOK ATTESTATION

By my signature below, I affirm that I have read the entire *Physician Assistant Student Handbook* and have sought clarification from faculty regarding any sections I did not fully understand. I acknowledge that I am responsible for understanding and adhering to the policies, procedures, rights, and responsibilities outlined in this document. I further commit to reviewing the Handbook at least annually and as directed, to remain informed of any updates or changes.

I also confirm that I have read and have access to the *Carlow University Graduate Course Catalog* and the *University Student Handbook*. I understand that all programmatic and university policies apply to all students, regardless of their location or learning format, and I accept responsibility for compliance with these policies.

*Print Name:*

*Signature:*

*Date:*