



Family & Community Medicine  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSIONAL DEGREE PROGRAM BScPA

## STUDENT HANDBOOK

### ***Regulations and Policies***

The University has policies that are approved by its Governing Council which apply to all students. Each student must become familiar with these policies. The University will assume that each student has done so. Some of these policies are enclosed in this Handbook, the remainder can be found at [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/policies.htm). The rules and regulations of the Physician Assistant Professional Degree Program (BScPA) are contained in this Handbook.

**Note: Policies within this handbook are current at time of issue. As a student in the Physician Assistant Professional Degree Program, it is your responsibility to understand all policies and guidelines in this document, including those linked in the document, and to seek more information when you need it.**

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*All relevant forms, links and key policies are available on the BScPA Program Website ([www.PAconsortium.ca](http://www.PAconsortium.ca))*

*under Current Students, and in the PA Program course shell in Blackboard under Program Resources.*

**Land Acknowledgement:**

The land on which the MD Program operates has been a site of human activity for thousands of years. This land is the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat and Petun First Nations, Seneca and most recently the Mississaugas of the New Credit. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon, Wampum Belt Covenant which is an agreement to peaceably share resources around the Great Lakes. Today Toronto is also home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, and on this important traditional territory and meeting place.

*Revised by the Elders Circle (Council of Aboriginal Initiatives) on November 6, 2014*

## **1 Attendance Guidelines**

### **1.1 Regular Attendance**

Students are expected to arrive/log in/participate on time for all scheduled classes, labs and synchronous (on-line) sessions. Students are expected to be in attendance and on time for all clinical activities and responsibilities, as required by their clinical sites, including on-call, holiday and weekend responsibilities.

#### **1.1.1 Name Tag**

All students in the BScPA Program are issued a Consortium of PA Education name tag, indicating they are a student in the University of Toronto. Name tags are to be worn at all times during Residential Block sessions and clinical experiences (including LCE). Students are also to carry official UofT identification (T-card) at these times. If you lose/misplace your name tag, there is a replacement fee. Please contact the PA office for further instructions.

### **1.2 Absences and Notification**

*(Portions of Attendance Guidelines adapted with permission from: Saint Louis University Physician Assistant Program, Student Handbook and Policy Manual, 2009-2010)*

#### **1.2.1 Personal Days**

BScPA students are adult learners, and it is acknowledged that, at times, a student may need to miss a session for personal reasons. These are thus considered “Personal Days”. Just as graduate PAs must plan for coverage of professional duties when they are unable to attend work, courtesy dictates that students communicate with appropriate course directors/faculty members in the event that they require a “Personal Day” to attend to their own matters. Students are not judged nor excused, one way or another, for using a “Personal Day”, as long as appropriate notification is provided. The Absence Notification system allows for this notice.

#### **1.2.2 Professional Expectations**

During the course of the Program there are many times when the scheduling of a simulation, lab or small group session is dependent not only on room availability but also on the attendance of all students involved (for example when students are paired or scheduled in small groups). Students who miss such sessions without advance notice may be compromising the learning/evaluation experience for their peers. Absences without appropriate notification may be considered unprofessional behavior.

If a student does not follow the Absence Notification process as instructed and/or has absences or tardiness that is affecting their success in the program, s/he may be required to discuss the challenges facing the student with the Program faculty. The absence(s) may not necessarily be considered as unprofessional, it is how the student conducts themselves with respect to the absence and the impact of this absence on their own success that may require escalation of the matter to the level of the Program faculty. Depending on the circumstances, failing to follow process or meeting the professional expectations of students may be discussed by the Progress Review Committee, may be presented to the Board of Examiners, and may result in disciplinary action.

#### **1.2.3 Definition of a Personal Day**

Sick days, medical appointments, urgent situations and personal time off all fall within the realm of personal days. Students will complete an Absence Notification Form for any day or any part of a day they will not be in class (residential block) or unable to participate in a synchronous session on-line (distance portion), whether they are in Year 1 or Year 2 of the Program. This policy does not require a determination of whether an absence is excused or unexcused. It is expected that Personal Days will

be used appropriately as outlined here, and as such, students will not have to provide an explanation or reason for their absence for a Personal Day. Additionally no "doctor's note", "[Verification of Student Illness or Injury](#)" or similar documentation is required as long as the policy outlined here is followed.

#### 1.2.4 Number of Personal Days

As a guide from the program, during the academic year, students should consider the benchmark of using no more than three (3) Personal Days during each semester. The program reserves the right to discuss attendance with the student, in the event of any concerns about academic performance, effect of student participation on performance of the individual or of the group. The semesters are defined as follows (for the purpose of attendance):

Semester	Start	End
1	First day of Residential Block (Sept.)	Last day of second Residential Block (Dec.)
2	First day of on-line learning (Jan.)	Last day of on-line learning (Apr.)
3	First day of Residential Block (Apr.)	Last day Residential Block (Aug.)

#### 1.2.5 Counting Personal Days

General Rule: If a student utilizes a Personal Day for less than an entire day this is still considered one Personal Day. If a student will miss *more than one third* of a scheduled synchronous learning activity or event, it is considered as an entire Personal Day.

For example:

- If a student will miss morning classes but not afternoon classes, this counts for one Personal Day.
- If a student will miss more than one hour of a half-day event (usually 3 hours of instruction), this counts for an entire Personal Day.
- If a student will miss more than 20 minutes of a one hour scheduled on-line discussion, this counts as an entire Personal Day.
- If the schedule consists of 30 minutes of one topic and two hours of another topic, and only the 30 minute topic is missed, this will count as an entire Personal Day. In that same schedule, the student can miss up to 40 minutes of the 2 hour topic (up to one third of 2 hours) and this will not count as an entire Personal Day.

#### 1.2.6 When to Avoid Taking a Personal Day

The program makes every effort to schedule learning activities in a student-centered way, keeping in mind statutory holidays, the need for breaks and for down time. Keeping student success in mind, it is most useful for everyone to have full attendance at all times. However, the program recognizes that students are adult learners and, at times, may need to make choices as to their absences. As a guide, students are strongly discouraged from taking a personal day in the following situations:

- Labs and simulation sessions in Residential Blocks during which students are paired or grouped
- Small group presentations where the student's group is presenting
- The first or last day of a semester
- The first or last day of a residential block
- The first or last day of a clinical placement
- The day before or the day after a scheduled study/reading day, break, vacation or holiday
- ANY summative assessment\* in which a grade is given such as clinical skills exams and other practical exams; written and/or online exams, tests, quizzes

\*If a student is unable to attend a summative assessment, the student is expected to submit a [Petition for Consideration of Prolonged Absence or Missed Examination/Required Assessment form](#) to their Course

Director. This form is required in advance to request a rescheduling of the assessment. The Course Director *may* award a score of '0' for the missed assessment if the request is denied or if the process is not followed. (See section in Academic Regulations- Taking Examinations as Scheduled).

### 1.2.7 Process for Absence Notification

#### ***In the event of a planned Personal Day:***

At least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled event that will be missed, the student is to inform the Course Director of their impending absence, then complete an Absence Notification Form. The link to the form is available on the BScPA Program Website and in the PA Program course shell on Blackboard. Only this form will be accepted. The form is completed electronically and submitted directly to the Program.

#### ***In the event of an unplanned Personal Day:***

In the event of an unanticipated urgent situation or illness, students must notify the course director ASAP via e-mail or voicemail (directly to the Course Director, not to the general BScPA Program phone number). Students must then complete the Absence Notification Form as soon as physically possible.

### 1.2.8 Implications of Taking Personal Days

For any session that is missed, the student is responsible for the material included in that session. The Course Director may consider assigning additional learning activities if required.

### 1.2.9 Prolonged Absences

In the case of an extremely serious and/or extended illness (beyond 3 days per semester) or an unusually difficult and/or dire personal situation, a student may require additional time away from the program. These cases will be handled on an individual basis and must be discussed with the BScPA Program Director or with the Office of Health Professions Student Affairs (OHPSA), as soon as possible. A [Petition for Consideration of Prolonged Absence or Missed Examination/Required Assessment form](#) may be required, and may include (if illness is a factor) the University of Toronto's medical certificate (<http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca>). The Petition for Consideration form is available on the BScPA Program Website and in the PA Program course shell on Blackboard

### 1.2.10 Tracking of Absences

Tracking of absences by the BScPA program is done for administrative purposes and not for punitive ones. All absences will be recorded into the student's academic file as an attendance record. The attendance record of the student, including the student's demonstration of following process, may be considered in the event of academic difficulties or concerns regarding professional behaviours.

### 1.2.11 Absences During Clinical Rotations in Year 2

Attendance during the Year 2 Clinical Rotations is mandatory. As outlined in the Clinical Handbook, all rotations have an expected weekly commitment of 9 half days or a total of 4 and half days per week of clinical time. Students are responsible to ensure they make up any missed time in the event of a short term absence. During the Clinical Phase (Year 2) of the Program, while at clinical sites, students are responsible to notify both their preceptor **and** the BScPA Program Clinical Course Director regarding any and all absences. Unexpected absences require courteous and professional notification as soon as possible in a manner appropriate to the individual circumstances. During the Clinical Phase, students will be evaluated on their professional behaviours and responsibilities, and attendance will be considered at that time. Students are expected to use common sense and good judgment in determining whether they should attend clinical placement in the event of their own acute illness. In the event of an acute illness or personal emergency, BScPA students are expected to notify the following contacts in a timely manner, as soon as physically possible, by phone as well as e-mail (for immediate contact and written confirmation)

- The clinical preceptor
- The site Medical Affairs office (if relevant)
- The Clinical Course Director

It is the responsibility of the student to contact the appropriate individuals **directly** as instructed in the event of an absence, and not to rely on others to convey the message.

### 1.3 Accommodations for Religious Observances

It is the policy of the University of Toronto to arrange reasonable accommodation of the needs of students who observe religious holy days other than those already accommodated by ordinary scheduling and statutory holidays. Please note that students have the responsibility to alert members of the teaching staff in a timely fashion to upcoming religious observances and anticipated absences. For information on the University's expectations concerning the accommodation of religious observances for students, see the [Policy on Scheduling of Classes and Examinations and Other Accommodations for Religious Observances](#) and [Accommodations for Religious Observances](#) (the Accommodations for Religious Observances page includes links to examples of related dates on which students may be excused from classes or examinations).

### 1.4 Leaves of Absence

Leaves of Absence from the Physician Assistant Program are not automatically granted. Under exceptional circumstances, a Leave of Absence (LOA) *may* be granted to a student upon the request of the student, and the approval is at the discretion of the BScPA program and the Office of Health Professions Student Affairs. An LOA *may* also be recommended by the BScPA program and the Office of Health Professions Student Affairs, in order to support the student, and may be subject to the approval of the Board of Examiners (BOE). Taking into account all Leaves of Absence (and probation periods, if applicable), the total duration of the Program cannot exceed 3 years and 6 months.

#### 1.4.1 Timing of The Leave of Absence

This leave will be granted until the following academic year only, which begins in September. The following examples outline the application of this policy:

- A student requests an LOA in the middle of the academic year (Year 1) of the program. If the student must leave the program before successful completion of the first year, they may audit the courses that have been successfully completed, and re-take all courses that were not. This is due to the integrated nature of the curriculum and the importance of participating as a member of the class cohort. The program is unable to hold the position for the student for longer than 18 months. This means that if the student leaves the academic year within the first six months of the program, they must return to repeat the year with the immediately following cohort. If the student leaves the academic year after more than six months in the program, they may be able to return with the immediately following cohort, or the one after that (maximum time to return date is 18 months). If they are unable to return within the 18 month time frame, they must withdraw from the program.
- A student requests an LOA to begin after completion of the first year of the program, in order to delay the start of the second year of the program. In this case, a leave of absence will be granted up to a maximum of 12 months. The student will be expected to return to the clinical year with the next cohort of students. If this is not possible, the student will have to withdraw from the program.
- A student requests an LOA in the middle of the clinical year (Year 2) of the program. The program is unable to hold the clinical training position for the student for longer than 18 months, without exception. . This means that if the student leaves within the first six months of the clinical year, they must return to repeat the year with the immediately following cohort. If the student leaves after more than six months in the clinical year,
  - They may be able to return with the immediately following cohort, or the one after that (maximum time to return date is 18 months). If they are unable to return within the required time frame they must withdraw from the program. Once leave is granted, no extension will be permitted.

#### 1.4.2 Process for Applying for a Leave of Absence

Students who are considering an application for a Leave of Absence must contact:



- The Program Director of the BScPA Program to discuss scheduling and re-entry to the program
- The Office of the Registrar to discuss matters relating to access to financial assistance and academic transcripts.
- The Associate Dean or designate of the Office of Health Professions Student Affairs to discuss academic and career implications.

If supported, the Associate Dean of the Office of Health Professions Student Affairs will write a letter which summarizes the conditions under which the leave is granted and the expected re- entry date. This letter will be copied to the BScPA Program Director, Faculty Registrar, and other appropriate parties, including the Board of Examiners, as applicable.

### 1.4.3 Student Status

A student who is granted a LOA will not be registered as a BScPA student for the duration of the leave.

### 1.4.4 Student Fees During a Leave of Absence

Depending on the timing of the LOA, the student may forfeit the academic and non-academic fees for that year. Students will be subject to the appropriate Academic and Non-academic fees upon re-entry to the program and are thus subject to the fee schedule that pertains to the year they re-enter.

### 1.4.5 Returning to the Program

*(Adapted from: Regulations for student attendance and guidelines for approved absences from mandatory activities in UME, University Of Toronto, found at <http://md.utoronto.ca/content/regulations-student-attendance-and-guidelines-absences-mandatory-activities> )*

A student who is granted a leave of absence prior to the start of the clinical year, or if the clinical year was interrupted, must ensure they have an adequate clinical skill set to participate in the clinical training upon their return. Individual consideration will be given to situations in which the student may benefit from returning to the program to participate in the previous semester to audit completed courses prior to returning to the clinical year.

## 1.5 Advanced Standing

At this time, the BScPA Program is unable to give advanced standing in any course or component in the curriculum. **There are no exceptions.**

## 2 Academic Regulations and Student Assessment

The primary outcome of the Program is to produce PAs who are safe, professional and competent practitioners. The BScPA Program utilizes a competency-based curriculum, and thus competency-based assessment. The Program embraces an assessment philosophy: “to use multiple forms of assessment that allow for success in multiple ways”.

Students will be assessed in all competencies at various times in the Program. These competencies relate to the National Competency Profile for PAs in Canada ([CanMEDS-PA](#)), and encompass the roles of Medical Expert, Communicator, Collaborator, Leader, Health Advocate, Scholar, and Professional.

Successful completion of the Academic and Clinical Curricula are dependent upon the student meeting all expected competencies as outlined within the program.

## 2.1 Students Requiring Accommodations

The University of Toronto and the BScPA Program are committed to providing effective accommodation for students with disabilities. Students requiring academic accommodations should register early with Accessibility Services (AS) to determine their accommodations. Students are also encouraged to approach course faculty and/or AS for assistance in achieving academic success in their courses. Accessibility Services will provide the PA Program with a Letter of Accommodations on behalf of the student. The Letter of Accommodations is a confidential document which outlines a student's accommodation. This letter will be shared with PA Program faculty, staff, and test proctors on a "need to know" basis, in order for the student's accommodations to be efficiently implemented. Every effort will be made to protect the student's privacy. Please refer to the University of Toronto Accessibility Services website <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as> for further information on accommodations policies.

Students with accommodations are expected to achieve the same academic standards and meet all the required outcomes of their courses. Academic accommodations provide appropriate alternatives for students with disability-related barriers to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. According to the Ontario Human Rights Commission (2004), "An appropriate accommodation enables a student to successfully meet the essential requirements of the program, with no alteration in standards or outcomes, although the manner in which the student demonstrates mastery, knowledge and skills may be altered."

It is up to students to decide how and when to use their accommodations. In some situations, students may feel they are able to meet course requirements without accommodations. Students may need to communicate with course faculty to request accommodations. Students are asked to identify themselves to course faculty early in the course to discuss their accommodation needs.

### 2.1.1 Tests and Exams:

Most tests and exams in the PA Program are written online. For tests and exams written at the UofT downtown campus, students with accommodations may register with Test & Exam Services (TES). TES receives information about student accommodations directly from AS, so there is no need to provide them the Letter of Accommodations. For tests taken at a remote proctor site, such as during distance learning, the PA Program will arrange proctoring at the remote test center and forward the Letter of Accommodations to the proctor prior to the test. For End Rotation Exams (ERE), students must notify the clinical course director of their accommodations no later than September 30 prior to the start of the clinical year. To receive accommodations for the ERE, students must write the exam at a test center near their clinical site. This will be arranged through the PA Program office. Once requested, the assumption is made that the student will receive accommodations for every ERE for the clinical year, unless otherwise stated, as students may choose to forego their test accommodations and write the ERE at the clinical site. In this case, students must communicate in writing to the clinical course director indicating that they wish to forego their test accommodations for that specific ERE.

### 2.1.2 Quizzes:

Some courses include online un-proctored quizzes which students may take wherever they choose. Students with accommodations may register at TES or a remote test center for these quizzes, following the same process as taking tests and exams. Only a test center is equipped to verify that a student's accommodations are fully met. Alternately, students whose accommodations include extra time may wish to request the extra time only, to avoid traveling to a test center for quizzes. In this case, students should contact the course faculty to request the extra time only. Students can request that the extra time is also applied to all subsequent quizzes in that course. Students must communicate in writing to the course faculty that they are aware they will be receiving the extra time only and that they feel this meets their needs for the quizzes.

Assignments: Students with disabilities may, at times, require extensions to meet assignment deadlines. Students who have been approved for this accommodation should approach course faculty to request an assignment extension of up to one week. The course faculty will help the student determine how much additional time is needed and feasible, based on the course structure. Students are expected to submit work on the new deadline unless their AS Disability Counsellor verifies that

unanticipated circumstances have arisen.

### 2.1.3 Group Work:

A significant portion of the PA Program coursework involves group work. Because of the nature of group work, it is important that any related accommodations, such as assignment extensions, be discussed with the course faculty early in the course. Because group members depend on each other for achievement course objectives, the needs of the group need to be considered in negotiating application of accommodations.

### 2.1.4 Clinical Rotations:

Since the nature of practice-based learning is so different than classroom- (and virtual classroom-) based learning, students with disabilities should meet with an AS counselor early to assess how their disability will affect their learning in clinical rotations and determine their accommodations for this setting.

Students registered with AS are required to re-register each academic year. Students registered with AS in year one of the program should meet with their AS counselors several months prior to the start of their first clinical rotation to discuss how their disability may affect them in the new learning environment and what additional accommodations may be needed. Student who were not registered with AS in year one, but believe they have a disability that may affect their learning in clinical rotations, should also register early with AS.

In order to facilitate the scheduling of clinical rotations and ensure the best fit for students requiring accommodations in clinical rotations, the PA office requires receipt of the Letter of Accommodations for the clinical year by May 15th of year one of your program. If you require these services, please plan accordingly and contact the University of Toronto Accessibility Services early to begin the registration (or re-registration) process.

## 2.2 Understanding and Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism

All students are subject to the policies of the University of Toronto, which prohibits cheating and plagiarism, and enforces severe penalties against students who break the rules outlined in the [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) (Available from [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/policies.htm)), which include:

- Using unauthorized aids on an exam or test
- Looking at someone else's answers during an exam or test
- Falsifying documents or grades
- Making up sources or facts for an essay or report
- Submitting the same work in more than one course (without permission)
- Submitting someone else's work as your own

It is inappropriate for students to copy and paste content without the proper use of quotation marks and citations/referencing.

Students may be required to submit their course assignments to [Turnitin.com](#) for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their assignments to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com).

## 2.3 Didactic Assessments

### 2.3.1 Rubrics

Assignments are graded according to standard rubrics, which are included in the assignment task package.

### 2.3.2 University Grading Practices - Academic

Course Directors are responsible for determining the content and method of examinations, and the weighting given to the various components of the assessment which determine the final grade. These arrangements are subject to the approval of the BScPA Program Evaluation and Assessment Committee and comply with the University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy ([University of Toronto \(U of T\) Grading Practices Policy](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm) is available at [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm))

### 2.3.3 Pass Mark

The pass mark for each course will be a C-, equivalent to a minimum course grade of 60%, or 1.7 (out of 4.0).

### 2.3.4 Course Outline and Grading Scheme

Each course will have a course outline and grading scheme available to students in accordance with the grading policies of U of T. The weighting of different components in each course will vary, and will be based on multiple types of assessment tools, used in multiple ways. Student participation, attitudes and behaviour during classroom and small group activities may be assessed as part of the course assessment.

### 2.3.5 Change in weighting

Once the weighting of the components has been stated, it may not normally be changed. However, the weighting *may* be changed with the majority consent of the students enrolled in the course. If changes are required and agreed upon as stated above, written notice of the changes will be given to each student in the class concerned, as far ahead as possible of the time at which the changes are to be implemented.

### 2.3.6 Marking and re-marking of assessments

It is expected that examinations and other assessments be set up, conducted and marked in a transparently fair manner. They will appropriately reflect course objectives and content. After each component is marked students should receive feedback on their performance in a fashion which is consistent with the evaluation format.

Feedback opportunities will allow any errors in marking or miscalculation of marks to be corrected. In some courses, as noted in course outlines, the time period for such feedback is limited. For example, students may be limited to one calendar week after the receipt of the marked exam to discuss any issues with the Course Director. If a Course Director decides to change the answer key, (e.g. in response to student feedback), any change should be promptly made known to the group of students involved.

Formal Review of assignments and/or the overall grade/mark on the course will not be undertaken lightly and will only occur if there are substantial and sufficient reasons to do so in the view of the Course Director concerned. If a request for a formal review is granted the component/ course mark or grade may, as a result of the review, be raised, be lowered, or remain unchanged. The [Request for Formal Review of a Course or Evaluation Form](#) is available on the BScPA Program Website and in the PA Program course shell on Blackboard. It is expected that Formal Review will occur very infrequently and only if allowing a mark to stand unchallenged will be grossly unfair to the student concerned.

### 2.3.7 Reviewing Examinations

Examination questions as a general rule are not released after an assessment has been completed. The exception would be if the faculty chooses to review specific concepts during an already scheduled office hour or tutorial. This would be a concept or content area that was identified during test analysis as one that a large proportion of the class did not seem to get and that was deemed to be a critical learning point (e.g. >30% of the class answered a particular question incorrectly). Class averages are not published for each assessment as the department's philosophy is that each student should measure him/herself based on the standards of the course competencies, rather than each other. This also helps promote collaboration over competition.

One-on-one test reviews can be requested by students. There are a number of possible formats for this review. If the timing is such that there is an upcoming residential block, or if the student lives in the GTA, the course faculty can schedule a time to meet with the student face to face. During that session, the student may be allowed to view the entire test, including questions the student answered incorrectly and what the correct answer was. The student can take notes, such as areas to review, but the student cannot be permitted to write down specific test questions and should not leave the meeting with any part of the test. This is to protect the security of the test questions. Also, during this review, the course director may or may not choose to review the test together with the student, or to simply allow the student to identify areas for review independently.

## 2.4 Clinical Assessments

### 2.4.1 Meeting Expectations

Successful completion of the Clinical Curriculum is dependent upon the student meeting all expected clinical competencies. The grading scheme and expectations of students in the clinical rotations is outlined in the Clinical Handbook.

Students are assessed, in part, on professional practice behavior in clinical placements. All BScPA students are expected to meet the [Standards of Professional Practice Behaviours for all Health Professional Students](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm) ( Available at [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm)).

### 2.4.2 University Grading Practices - Clinical

It is obligatory that assessment of the performance of students in clinical placements should be fair, humane, valid, reliable, and in accordance with the principles enunciated in the [University Grading Practices Policy](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm) ([http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm)).

Accordingly, the assessments of a student's performance in a clinical setting is expected to encompass (as a minimum):

- Distribution of the assessment forms, the evaluation process, and the criteria to be used in assessing the performance of students. This is available to all students and preceptors before or at the beginning of the clinical experience;
- A midway performance evaluation with feedback to the student;
- Written documentation of the final assessment with feedback to the student;

### 2.4.3 Responsibilities of Clinical Preceptors

The program ensures that clinical preceptors are fully informed regarding University, divisional and course policies concerning evaluation procedures, including the specific assessment procedures to be applied in any particular clinical setting.

## 2.5 Taking Examinations as Scheduled

The Program expects all BScPA students to be present at all assessments, including examinations and assignments, as scheduled. Nevertheless illness or personal circumstances may interfere with a student's ability to adequately prepare for, write or participate in an assessment or an examination as scheduled.

In these circumstances, BScPA students must contact the appropriate Course Director involved as soon as the problem becomes apparent. It is the responsibility of the Course Director in the first instance, to determine whether the circumstances warrant an accommodation. As it is the policy of the Faculty of Medicine to strongly encourage students to take examinations as scheduled wherever possible, in most cases (for example those involving less serious illness), the student will be encouraged to attempt the examination and complete the assessment as scheduled.

Students who feel that their performance on an examination or an assessment may have been compromised by their personal illness or personal circumstances must complete a [Petition for Consideration Form](#) (available on the BScPA Program Website and in the PA Program course shell on Blackboard). This form should be completed and returned to the BScPA Program Office with 24 hours of the scheduled examination or assessment and may require medical or other documentation.

## 2.6 Rules for Conduct during Assessments

The concern of the [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#) is with the responsibilities of all parties to the integrity of the teaching and learning relationship. Honesty and fairness must inform this relationship, whose basis remains one of mutual respect for the aims of education and for those ethical principles which must characterize the pursuit and transmission of knowledge in the University. For further information please see the full Governing Council policy: [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm)

### 2.6.1 Rules for the Conduct of Written Examinations

*(Adapted and excerpted with permission from "MD Program Examination Rules and Regulations" available at: <http://md.utoronto.ca/policies> )*

Students who breach the following rules may be liable to penalties under the University of Toronto [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#), including the loss of academic credit and expulsion.

1. No person will be allowed in an examination room during an examination except of the students concerned and those supervising the examination
2. No materials shall be brought into the room or used at an examination except those authorized by the exam proctor. Students shall not assist or obtain assistance from other students or from any unauthorized source during the examination.
3. Bags and books are to be deposited in areas designated by the exam proctor and are not to be taken to the examination desk. Unless otherwise instructed in advance, the use of any digital, printed or hand-written course materials including notes, manuals or textbooks, and the use of mobile phone, calculator, camera or any other electronic devices prohibited during the exam and while in the proctored area. All electronic devices not required for the examination are to be turned off and must remain in bags in the designated area.
4. The sharing of examination questions or materials is considered a breach of academic integrity. Students shall not communicate with one another in any manner whatsoever during the examination. This included any verbal, nonverbal, written, or electronic communication. Students may not reproduce any portion of the examination by any means, electronic or mechanical. Students may not attempt to access any examination content prior to or after administration of the examination. Examination books, scrap paper, or any other material issued for the examination shall not be removed from the



examination room except by authority of the proctor. These must be returned to the proctor in their complete form, with no torn or removed parts.

5. The exam proctor has the authority to assign seats to students. The proctor may circulate throughout the examination room and view students' computer screens.
6. Students must use the computer designated by the exam proctor. Students may use their own, fully charged personal computers at the discretion of the course director. No other unauthorized devices may be used. Students may access online examinations only on a laptop or desktop computer (no tablets or smartphones). Students must ensure only the required browser or examination application is open. All other applications, including additional browser windows/tabs and programs must be closed and all electronic notifications must be turned off during the examination. If using a public computer, students must ensure they properly log in and out before and after the examination. Students are expected to notify the proctor if they encounter any technical issues with their personal or public computer during the examination (such as freezing, not saving answers, etc.).
7. Students must arrive at the examination room **at least ten minutes before** the start time of the examination.
8. Students are expected to log in (in the case of online examinations) and start examinations **on time**. If a student arrives **more than 15 minutes after** the scheduled examination start time, the course director and/or program faculty may deny permission to the student to start the examination late. In general, any student who starts the examination late will not be given extra time to complete the examination. Students are usually not permitted to start an examination after any other student has completed that examination and left the proctored area.
9. Students are expected to stay in the examination room **during the first 30 minutes** of the scheduled examination time, regardless of the length of the exam. Students shall remain seated at their desks during the **final ten minutes** of the scheduled test time of an examination.
10. For online examinations, students are responsible to save their answers as they proceed. At the conclusion of an examination, students must stop writing, typing, or responding to questions. Students are responsible to submit their online examination answers immediately at the end of the examination. For paper-based examinations, the proctor may seize the papers of students who do not stop writing.
11. Proctors will not respond to questions related to test content during the examination. Errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, numbering or notations may be addressed by the proctor and/or course director during the examination. Students are expected to answer examination questions to the best of their ability. If a student thinks a question was ambiguous or unclear, the student is expected to communicate the concern to the course director in writing (typically by email) within 30 minutes of completing the examination.

*THE UNIVERSITY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY LEFT IN EXAMINATION ROOMS*

### 2.6.2 Proctored Assessments During the Program

Proctored assessments will be scheduled in advance for students to participate in a monitored setting. Specific instructions are provided to students in advance of on-line tests with respect to accessing on-line technical support and informing Course Directors if problems arise during an assessment.

Invigilation guidelines are:

- BScPA students who live within 100 km of the BScPA Program Office at The University of Toronto or within 100 km of NOSM's West or East campuses are expected to write proctored assessments at the program facility. For students who live outside these areas, the options are to travel to the program facility or to complete compulsory proctored assessments at a remote test location that is pre-arranged. Remote test locations that have been previously used will be provided to students.
- Proctors at remote locations must be a professional representative from an academic institution, public library or health care institution. A proctor must not be a colleague, relative, friend or another student. All remote locations must be approved by the program office.
- Students with academic accommodations must be scheduled at an official academic test centre.
- Only proctors in Canada and the USA will be considered as acceptable.
- In the event that there is a time zone difference, the student is expected to complete the exam

at the scheduled time with the class.

- Students are expected to submit a [Petition for Consideration](#), in order for individual consideration to occur, on a case-by-case basis.
- If, for any reason, a proctor cannot be arranged, arrangements will be made to write the assessment at one of the PA program's campus offices.
- Students are responsible for their own travel arrangements and expenses for proctored assessments

### 2.6.3 Rules for the conduct of OSCE and Simulation Assessments

*(Adapted and excerpted with permission from "MD Program Examination Rules and Regulations" available at: <http://md.utoronto.ca/policies> )*

1. Students must arrive at the examination site at least twenty minutes before the commencement of the examination.
2. If a student arrives after the commencement of the examination, it will be at the discretion of the Chief Presiding Officer whether she/he will be allowed to participate in the examination and whether she/he will be allowed additional time beyond the announced conclusion of the examination.
3. Students must present with appropriate documentation and equipment, as instructed prior to the examination (such as: picture identification, lab coat, stethoscope, watch with a second hand, clipboard, blank sheets of paper, pens and pencils). Failure to follow these instructions may prevent the student from sitting the examination.
4. All extraneous items not explicitly approved as allowable aids for the examination, shall be placed in a designated secure storage area under the supervision of the invigilators.
5. Each student will proceed through the sequence of stations as assigned by the Chief Presiding Officer.
6. Students are responsible for ensuring that all information is written legibly.
7. Where standardized patients are used in the course of an examination the student will extend the same respect and professional courtesy as that which is appropriate for any clinical interaction.
8. No student shall discuss any part of the examination with another for the duration of the exam period. The administration period of the examination includes all sessions of the examination which are conducted for separate groups of students that may occur on separate days. Students found to be violating this prohibition are liable for penalties under the University's [Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters](#), including loss of academic credit or expulsion.
9. A student shall not otherwise engage in behaviour that is disruptive to the examination process. Characterization of behaviour as disruptive and expulsion of a disruptive student from the examination site will be at the discretion of the Chief Presiding Officer.
10. If a student feels that her/his performance has been compromised as a result of an irregularity in the conduct of the examination she/he must report the irregularity to the Chief Presiding Officer prior to leaving the examination site.
11. No portion of the examination shall be retained by a student after the conclusion of the examination except where explicitly authorized by the Chief Presiding Officer.

**THE UNIVERSITY IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR PERSONAL PROPERTY LEFT IN EXAMINATION ROOMS**

## 2.7 Students in Difficulty

1. Students are responsible for attempting to self-identify, as early as possible, any academic difficulty and seek assistance.
2. The BScPA Program makes every effort to be supportive and find creative solutions for students in academic difficulty. For example, written correspondence to the student may be accompanied by a variety of conversations (face to face, by telephone and/or



- videoconference). These conversations, as a rule, are documented and summarized for the student record.
3. Due to the pace of the Year One Academic Curriculum, the BScPA Program will continue to promote the early identification of students in difficulty by Course Directors and support the use of tutoring, extra work, and supplemental assessments to aid in achieving and demonstrating competency.
  4. If a student fails a mandatory component of a course he/she may be granted a reassessment for that test/assignment. Such work and/or examination is not granted automatically, but is a privilege awarded by the Course Director, under the authority of the Board of Examiners. Reassessments must be given as soon as possible. The arrangement and conduct of reassessments is the responsibility of the Course Director. If the assessment is successfully completed on the second attempt the student will acquire a passing grade of 60% on that assessment (irrespective of the grade obtained on the second attempt). Unless there are extenuating circumstances, normally no more than one reassessment may be offered to a student in a given semester. Upon successful completion of a reassessment, a student may remain in good academic standing.
  5. If the student is unsuccessful in the reassessment or there is more than one reassessment required in a given semester the student's status in the program may change and this student's progress will be presented to the Board of Examiners for consideration regarding future standing in the program.
  6. Students will be permitted a maximum number of 2 attempts to successfully complete a particular course in order to continue through the program. In recognition of the logistics of offering courses once a year within the PA program, a re-attempt at a course means the course will be re-attempted when they are next offered again.
  7. In addition, at times course directors may choose to give remedial work for assessment/tests that were passed but that showed gaps in attaining competency. As such, a student will be given the opportunity for remedial work, and it is expected for the student to complete such remedial work to show they have attained competency in that objective(s).
  8. Student cases are presented to the BScPA Progress Review Committee (PRC) by the Program Director. The PRC reviews the case and makes recommendations for the consideration of the Board of Examiners (BOE), as the academic authority for the Program.
  9. If the PRC determines that the matter should be presented to the BOE, then the Program Director will inform the student in writing and invite the student to submit a letter to the BOE regarding their position. The Program Director prepares the summary for the BOE to review, and will include all pertinent documentation.
  10. Students are advised that in the event of academic difficulties, being employed during the time they are registered as a student in the BScPA Program will not be considered as exceptional circumstances to excuse this poor performance. Although this is essentially an on-line program, it is a full-time program (30+ hours per week). Students are strongly discouraged from working during the program.

## 2.8 Academic Standing Categories

Despite the best efforts of students and faculty, in the event of persistent academic difficulties, the academic standing of a student may be potentially changed from Good Standing to Probation, upon following the specific process as outlined below. A change in academic standing is possible through the Board of Examiners (BOE), as the academic authority for the Program. The BOE is a Standing Committee of the Faculty Council of the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Toronto. Taking into account all probation periods (and Leaves of Absence, if applicable), the total duration of the Program cannot exceed 3 years and 6 months.

The following categories are utilized to describe the specific academic standing of an individual student in the BScPA Program.

### 2.8.1 Good Standing

#### DEFINITION:

- A student in good standing is currently meeting all academic and/or clinical competencies as expected

#### CONDITIONS:

- A student may be in good standing while completing the routine curriculum
- A student in good standing may also be actively involved in extra remedial work and/or supplemental activities under direct supervision of a faculty member

#### IMPLICATIONS:

- If the student is in good standing and involved in remedial or supplemental work, and is unsuccessful in this, probation may be the next step. In such circumstances, students must be advised in writing by the BScPA Program Representative (Medical/Program Director or designate) that their academic standing may be changed to probation, upon review by the BOE.

### 2.8.2 Probation

#### DEFINITION:

- Probation is the time period during which the student is expected to correct identified serious weaknesses (following exceptionally poor academic performance- such as during the time following a failed clinical rotation) which are seen to jeopardize the student's successful completion of the Program.
- The duration of the probation period is dependent upon the specific curriculum learning objective(s) identified for the particular student, and should be no less than four (4) weeks duration.

#### CONDITIONS:

- A student may be placed under probation in the event of exceptionally poor academic performance, generally following attempts at remedial or supplemental work.
- A student may be placed under probation in the event of a failed clinical rotation
- Under direct and specific supervision of a responsible faculty member, the student must demonstrate both improvement and successful completion of necessary assessments (i.e. demonstrate competency) in order to progress through the program.
- Under individual consideration, a student may be given the opportunity to repeat a failed clinical rotation (once only), in order to be reassessed

#### IMPLICATIONS:

- Probation implies the possibility of dismissal from the Program if adequate improvement in performance is not identified by the end of the probation period. The outcome of Probation may be one of the following:
  - o The problem has been corrected and the learner continues in the program in Good Standing (or at a level as determined by BOE)
  - o The problem is partially corrected, and the Progress Review Committee recommends further period of probation
  - o The problem is not corrected, further options for remediation have been exhausted, and the PRC recommends to the BOE suspension or dismissal from the program

### 2.8.3 Suspension

#### DEFINITION:

- Suspension is defined as an imposed interruption of a learner's participation in their education program (academic or clinical or both).

#### CONDITIONS:

- In the event of improper conduct, lack of professional conduct or egregious error(s), the Medical/Program Director or designate may, pending a formal review by the PRC and BOE, suspend a learner. The learner will be notified in writing, and the department head and clinical

supervisors will be included in the correspondence, and the reason for the suspension and the period of the suspension will also be included.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

- Suspension is intended to serve as a means to deal with improper conduct and requires a formal review. Upon review, the BOE may re-instate the learner to Good Standing or Probation or continue Suspension pending further investigation

#### **2.8.4 Dismissal**

**DEFINITION:**

- Dismissal is the result of a student being withdrawn from the Program involuntarily.

**CONDITIONS:**

- Following exceptionally poor academic performance and/or unsuccessful attempts at remediation (i.e. unsuccessful probation); or following suspension for an ethical, professional or behavioural violation, which is believed not to be suitable for further remediation, the BOE may determine that a student is to be dismissed from the Program. The decision of the BOE is effective immediately.
- If a student has exceptionally poor academic performance (i.e. failing more than one course), then the student may be dismissed without probation upon the final decision of the BOE.
- If a student is found to have repeatedly committed egregious errors that compromise the safety of a patient(s) and/or colleague(s) and/or self, then the student may be dismissed without probation upon the final decision of the BOE.

**IMPLICATIONS:**

- If a student is dismissed, they are eligible to appeal the decision, as per the Faculty of Medicine Appeals process (see the section on Appeals)
- Upon dismissal, the individual who is dismissed will lose access to program material and resources, and is no longer eligible to represent themselves as a BScPA student at the University of Toronto.

### **3 Student Rights, Responsibilities and Conduct**

As members of the University of Toronto community, students assume certain responsibilities and are guaranteed certain rights and freedoms. The University of Toronto offers an abundance of resources to support its students and to ensure that an environment conducive to learning continues to flourish. Of course, as with any large community, the University has rules and policies to guide students and to help them make the most of the opportunities offered to them. All of these are documented in a series of policies which have been formulated by the decision-making structures of the University and which serve, ultimately, to benefit all of the members of the community and to preserve the academic integrity of the institution.

For further information, please review the university policies found at:

[http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm) and the selected policies that specifically apply to the Faculty of Medicine, available at: <http://md.utoronto.ca/policies>

For Rights and Responsibilities please review the various resources found at:

<http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/rights-and-responsibilities.htm> . Specific sections are referenced below.

#### **3.1 Privacy**

The University of Toronto respects student privacy. Information provided for the purpose of administering admission, registration, academic programs, university-related student activities, activities of student

societies, financial assistance and awards, graduation and university advancement, and for the purpose of statistical reporting to government agencies is protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. There are also specific expectations of learners in clinical placements with regards to protecting the Personal Health Information of patients.

For further information, please review the documents found at:

[http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm) or contact the University's Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Office at 416 946-5385, Room 201, McMurrich Bldg., 12 Queen's Park Crescent, Toronto, ON, M5S 1A1.

### 3.2 Code of Student Conduct

Students at the University of Toronto are expected to comply with the [Code of Student Conduct](#), available at: [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm)

The use of computers and other electronic devices during synchronized, online or face-to-face class sessions should focus on the learning activities and avoid distractions. The use of social media, email, messaging, browsing the internet, or completing evaluations or other non-sanctioned course work during a scheduled learning activity is considered unprofessional and inappropriate.

### 3.3 Technical Standards for Students in the Physician Assistant Program

The Faculty of Medicine, in accord with the Ontario Human Rights Code and University Policy, is committed to provision of equal access opportunities to all qualified applicants. To fulfill the requirements of the BScPA program and to avoid serious risk to the health and safety of patients/clients, students are required to acquire competency in a wide range of knowledge, skills and abilities.

Student in the BScPA Program must meet the Technical Standards as outlined in the Council of Ontario Faculties of Medicine (COFM) Policy Document: [Essential Skills and Abilities Required for the Study of Medicine](#) (Available at: <http://md.utoronto.ca/policies> )

If doubt arises, for medical reasons, about the advisability of a student continuing in his or her course of studies, the student may be requested by the Dean (or designate) of the Faculty to undergo an examination by an independent Board of Medical Assessors. In case of refusal to comply with such a request, action may be initiated against the student. The outcome of such action may include a decision to refuse the student further registration in the Faculty of Medicine.

### 3.4 Student Participation in Physical Examinations

Students may be asked to perform physical examinations on each other, as part of simulation, at various stages of the teaching program. There are occasions when anatomical, biochemical, physiological or pharmacological observations and diagnostic procedures are made by students on themselves or on fellow-students. Students are expected to participate in such exercises. Students are encouraged to notify the relevant Course Director in advance of the exercise or practice session to discuss their level of comfort, in order for modifications to be made. (For example, if a student is not comfortable to have a particular body part examined by others, the student is expected to communicate their concerns with the Course Director in advance of the teaching session – and not during it – in order for attempts to be made to modify the group assignments accordingly). If any physical examination, diagnostic or investigative work involving student participation does not form part of the teaching program, student participation is entirely voluntary.

### 3.5 Behavioural and Ethical Performance

Health professional students engage in a variety of activities with patients/clients under supervision and

as part of their academic programs. During this training, the University training sites, and society more generally, expect our health professional students to adhere to appropriate standards of behaviour and ethical values. All health professional students accept that their profession demands integrity, exemplary behaviour, dedication to the search for truth, and service to humanity in pursuit of their education and the exercise of their profession.

As per the [Standards of Professional Practice Behaviour for All Health Professional Students](#), "...assessment of [professional] behaviour and [ethical] performance will form part of the academic assessment of health professions students..." and "Each Health Science Faculty will have specific guidelines related to these Standards that provide further elaboration with respect to their Faculty-specific behavioural standards and ethical performance, assessment of such standards and relevant procedures"

**The assessment of behavioural and ethical performance of BScPA students will be related to the following educational objectives:**

- The student should display skill at communicating and interacting appropriately with patients, families and health care personnel.
- The student should demonstrate "the following qualities in the provision of care" (selected points are copied and adapted from the Standards of Professional Practice Behaviour document):
  - empathy and compassion for patients and their families;
  - concern for the needs of the patients and their families to understand the nature of the illness and the goals and possible complications of investigations and treatment;
  - concern for the psycho-social aspects of the patient's illness;
  - respect for, and ability to work harmoniously with other physicians and allied health care personnel;
  - recognition of the importance of self-assessment and of continuing medical education and a willingness to teach others in their own specialty, as well as other allied health care personnel;
  - understanding of the appropriate requirements for involvement of patients and their families in research;
  - awareness of the effects that differences in gender and cultural and social background may have on the maintenance of health and the development and treatment of illness.

***Breach of any of the above principles of behaviour may, after appropriate evaluation of a student, be cause for dismissal from a course or program or failure to promote.***

Behaviour unacceptable to the professional practice of medicine may include:

- referring to oneself as, or holding oneself to be, more qualified than one is;
- theft of drugs;
- violation of the criminal code;
- failure to be available while on call;
- failure to respect patients' rights;
- breach of confidentiality;
- failure to provide transfer of responsibility for patient care;
- failure to keep proper medical records;
- falsification of medical records;
- sexual impropriety with a patient;
- being under the influence of alcohol or drugs while participating in patient care or on call;
- any other conduct unbecoming of a practicing physician assistant

Students of the Faculty of Medicine found to be guilty of the unlawful use and/or distribution of drugs on the "Restricted Drug List" are subject to the jurisdiction of the University Disciplinary Tribunal and will be liable for suspension or expulsion from the University in addition to any criminal action that may be brought against them.

For further information on [Standards of Professional Practice Behaviour for All Health Professional Students](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm), please review the document found at:  
[http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing\\_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Governing_Council/bac/gc/Policies.htm)

### 3.5 Guidelines for Ethics and Professionalism in Training

All affiliated institutions of the University of Toronto have in their mission statements the facilitation of education of healthcare professional trainees. Students, at all levels of experience, encounter learning opportunities in a wide variety of clinical settings. It is the aim of the University and its teaching institutions to provide healthcare professional trainees and clinical faculty or supervising clinicians with a welcoming learning environment and strong positive role models for professional behaviour and professional practice. In doing so, guidelines for the conduct of clinical teaching in the clinical environments are suggested for use across the affiliated teaching institutions. Teaching is not only defined as 'specific acts' but includes all activities when someone in training is providing care to patients on a day-to-day basis. This [guidelines] document is intended to provide guidance for all healthcare professional trainees and the clinical faculty or supervising clinicians in determining their rights and responsibilities when participating in clinical education.

The University, affiliated institutions, clinical faculty or supervising clinicians and the Healthcare Professional Trainees (BScPA students) are committed to the roles in:

- A. Teaching and learning
- B. Supervision and Communication
- C. Informed Consent
- D. Protecting Patient Confidentiality
- E. Managing Ethical Concerns

The excerpts above are from the Guidelines document. Full details should be reviewed at:  
<http://md.utoronto.ca/policies>

## 4 Student Travel

BScPA Students are responsible for the cost of their travel and accommodation during the Residential/Evaluation blocks throughout the program.

### 4.1 Year 1 Travel

The Physician Assistant Professional Degree Program is rooted in e-learning in which most of the Year 1 curriculum is taught online via distance education. However, students will be required to travel to the Academic Centre (Toronto) on four separate occasions over the course of Year 1 to participate in the Residential block (which includes Evaluations).

### 4.2 Year 2 travel

Students will be responsible for all travel and accommodation costs incurred while undertaking clinical education training in their "home" location in Year 2. They will also be responsible for travel and accommodation costs associated with two residential/evaluation blocks for Year 2. Students may be required to travel (at the student's own expense) to a Home Training Location in order to obtain required clinical experience for up to five months. In addition to the Home Training Location, there is also a Swap location for which students will be required to move for up to five months. However, the cost of travel/accommodations for the Swap locations will be covered up to a pre-determined maximum to assist in defraying the cost to students. Any costs above the pre-determined maximum allowable by the subsidy are the student's responsibility. Efforts will be made to reduce relocation requirements of students. Details on the comprehensive funding rules are provided to students in anticipation of starting the clinical year.

***All accommodation and travel funding is based on actual expenditures and substantiated by receipts. Expenditures that are beyond the stated limitations will not be reimbursed.***



## 5 Communication

### 5.1 Communication Expectations between Students and Faculty

Students are expected to reply to e-mail, phone, or other messages from BScPA Program faculty, instructors and clinical preceptors in a timely manner (usually within 24 hours or 1 business day, unless otherwise specified).

Faculty teachers in the BScPA program are also expected to reply to communications from students within this same timeline (usually within 24 hours or 1 business day, unless otherwise specified).

Students are expected to keep all scheduled appointments/meetings with BScPA Program faculty, instructors and clinical preceptors. Requests to meet from Program faculty are to be considered mandatory.

Students are expected to ensure their contact information is updated and accurate, to ensure they can be reached when necessary. Students are expected to:

- Utilize their university-issued email account for all academic-related communications (an address that ends with @mail.utoronto.ca)
- Retrieve and read all emails sent from U of T on a consistent and timely basis
- Maintain updated contact information (including utoronto email address) in ROSI/ACORN
- Maintain updated contact information in E\*Value in their Biographical Profile

### 5.2 Appropriate Use of On-line Communication and Technology

Please review the Faculty of Medicine document Guidelines for Appropriate Use of the Internet, Electronic Networking and Other Media found at <http://md.utoronto.ca/policies>. The “General Guidelines for Safe Internet Use” are “...based on several foundational principles as follows:

- The importance of privacy and confidentiality to the development of trust between physician [assistant] and patient,
- Respect for colleagues and co-workers in an inter-professional environment,
- The tone and content of electronic conversations should remain professional.
- Bloggers are personally responsible for the content of their blogs.
- Assume that published material on the Web is permanent, and
- All involved in health care have an obligation to maintain the privacy and security of patient records under The Personal Health Information Protection Act [PHIPA], which defines a record as: “information in any form or any medium, whether in written, printed, photographic or electronic form or otherwise.”

The unauthorized use of any form of device to audiotape, photograph, video-record or otherwise reproduce lectures, course notes or teaching materials provided by instructors is covered by the Canadian Copyright Act and is prohibited. You must obtain prior written consent to such recording. In the case of private use by students with disabilities, the instructor’s consent must not be unreasonably withheld.

Please review the University of Toronto’s information and communication technology resource document regarding the [Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology](#) found at: <http://www.provost.utoronto.ca/policy/use.htm>

Electronic communication that is unwanted, and that is persistent, repeated, abusive, obscene or otherwise unwelcome may be harassment and may be actionable under University policy.

### 5.3 Poster and Flyer Distribution

Before posting or distributing any promotional materials, please review the information on the “Procedure on Distribution of Publications, Posters and Banners at the University of Toronto St George Campus”, available at: <http://www.fs.utoronto.ca/building-services-trades/posters-and-flyers/>

## 6 Health and Safety

The University of Toronto is committed to the promotion of the health, safety and well-being of all members of the University community, to the provision of a safe and healthy work and study environment, and to the prevention of occupational injuries and illnesses.

For further information, please review The University of Toronto Policies and Guidelines on Safety:

Health and Safety Policy:

<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/ppmar292004.pdf>)

Policies and Statements on Sexual Violence, Harassment, Prohibited Discrimination and Discriminatory Harassment, <http://www.safety.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/>

In addition to support offered through the Faculty of medicine's Office for Health Professions Student Affairs, students can access supports from the University of Toronto – available here: <http://www.safety.utoronto.ca/>

### 6.1 Student Injury

#### ***Process in the Event of Injury...In the classroom***

The procedure for students who incur an injury or a medically related incident during face-to-face class time during Residential Blocks is proposed as follows:

When an accident or near-accident occurs and is non-critical, students are encouraged to seek medical attention, depending on the level of urgency, either through Student Health Services, their personal health provider, or the local emergency department. If appropriate, the Medical/Program Director and/or faculty member and/or classmates will accompany the student. 911 is called in cases of critical incidences and paramedics accompany the student to the nearest available emergency department.

In cases of personal or bodily injury to students that occur on UofT premises or during curricular activities, the Program must notify Campus Police within 24 hours. The Online Accident/Incident eForm for Students, Contractors and Visitors is available here: <https://ehs.utoronto.ca/report-an-incident/online-accidentincident-eform-for-students-contractors-and-visitors/>

The form is to be submitted by a UofT employee on behalf of the student in the event of an injury or accident. The University of Toronto Environmental Health and Safety office can be reached at 416-978-4467.

#### ***Process in the Event of Injury...In the clinical site***

The procedure for students who incur an injury or a medically related incident while at their clinical placement is outlined in the Clinical Handbook and on our program website <http://www.paconsortium.ca/event-learner-injury>. The Clinical Handbook reviews the process of utilizing student incident reports, the associated Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) considerations and provides the appropriate form required for submitting an incident report.

### 6.2 Mask Fit Policy

Healthcare providers adopt infection control procedures including the wearing of personal protective equipment. One of the key pieces of personal protective equipment is a properly fit tested mask. The Ministry of Health has developed directives for health care professionals to wear an approved respirator/mask when droplet protection is required (as in the cases of SARS and H1N1). In order to protect the health and safety of health care learners, the use of respirators/masks may be required if there is evidence of potential exposure to airborne infectious agents, chemicals, etc.



Learners may be mask fit tested prior to the start of the experiential rotation. Fit test data must be updated every 18 months – 2 years or when facial characteristics change due to weight gain/loss or facial trauma. For an adequate mask-to-face seal learners must be clean shaven at the time of the mask fitting. Accommodation requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students must ensure their mask fit results remains valid during their duration in the PA Program.

PA learners are required to be Mask Fit tested prior to the start of the Longitudinal Clinical Experiences in Year 1. The Program will arrange for mask fit testing for students during the initial Residential Block. The cost for the Mask Fit testing has been included in Student Ancillary fees. The PA Program and the Office of the Registrar will NOT keep a record of the students' Mask Fit results; it is the responsibility of the student to upload their Mask Fit details into their profile in E\*Value, including a copy of their results and the expiry date. Students are also expected to keep the information for their own records.

### 6.3 Infectious Diseases and Occupational Health

Applicants with known/diagnosed active tuberculosis (TB), Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C, or HIV infection are required, **upon acceptance**, to inform the Associate Dean, Health Professions Student Affairs of their condition (<http://www.ohpsa.utoronto.ca/>). The diagnosis of any infectious disease in an applicant or learner shall remain confidential within a strict “need to know” environment.

For full details, please review the Guidelines Regarding Infectious Diseases and Occupational Health for Applicants to and Learner of the Faculty of Medicine Academic Programs found at <http://paconsortium.ca/policies>.

## 7 Addressing a Problem or Concern

Each of the University's policies includes clear procedures that outline how decisions are made under that policy. In general, the University's policies are carried out according to the rules of natural justice, and student rights and responsibilities will be communicated to students if they are involved in a dispute, a complaint or a judicial process of the University. Ways to Address a Problem or Conflict

### 7.1 Petitions

Students file petitions in order to obtain special consideration on an academic matter. Common reasons for petitioning include missing an exam, not completing course work, or failing to meet administrative regulations or degree requirements. In general, petitions must be supported by documentation, such as a medical note, in order to be considered.

### 7.2 Appeals

The BScPA Program appeals procedures follows the Faculty of Medicine Appeals Guidelines (approved by Faculty Council February 10, 2014) found at: <http://md.utoronto.ca/policies> . The BScPA Program procedures include the addition of specific timeframes applicable to the program (see below).

#### ***Grounds for Appeal***

Appeals may only be based on grounds that the decision was unreasonable because:

- Faculty regulations and procedures were not followed; or
- Relevant evidence was not taken into consideration when the decision was made; or
- It could not be supported by the evidence which was considered when the decision was made.

#### ***Procedures to File an Appeal and Pre-Appeal Procedures***

The appeals process is outlined in the document: Faculty of Medicine [Guidelines for Procedure - Faculty of Medicine Appeals Committee](#).

### 7.3 Mediation

Mediation is a relatively informal technique used to help two or more parties resolve a dispute. It can be done without involving legal counsel and in a timely manner and often results in a solution that leaves both parties satisfied. In some situations, mediation might be an appropriate option, such as: a disagreement between students living in the same residence, a dispute between members of a student society or club or a case of harassment in which the two parties are both willing to resolve their differences informally. The University of Toronto recommends the services of mediators trained by St. Stephen's Community House (<http://www.sschto.ca/>) who may be reached by telephone: 416-925-2103 ext. 1225 or by email: [info@sschto.ca](mailto:info@sschto.ca)

### 7.4 Complaints about Campus Organizations

Student societies and recognized campus groups are obligated to comply with the terms of their constitutions and/or by-laws, the requirements of applicable University policies and the law. Complaints concerning campus organizations should always be made first to the organization itself. If the organization fails to respond to your complaint, or if you feel that the group has not adequately addressed your concerns, you may wish to contact the appropriate representative of Student Life/Student Affairs. In the normal course of events, the University does not monitor or review the activities of student societies and recognized groups. Student Life/Student Affairs will, however, investigate complaints or charges that an organization has acted in a manner that is inconsistent with its constitution or with other requirements. <https://ulife.utoronto.ca/index.php>

## 7.5 University Ombudsperson

The Office of the University Ombudsperson investigates complaints from any member of the University not handled through regular University channels, offers advice and assistance and can recommend changes in academic or administrative procedures where this seems justified. The Ombudsperson has access to all relevant files and information and to all appropriate University officials. All matters are held in strict confidence, unless the individual involved approves otherwise. The Ombudsperson is independent of all administrative structures of the University and is accountable only to Governing Council. The Ombudsperson <http://ombudsperson.utoronto.ca/> is available by appointment at all three U of T campuses (for an appointment, call 416-946-3485 or e-mail [ombuds.person@utoronto.ca](mailto:ombuds.person@utoronto.ca) ).

## 7.6 Legal Advice

Many of the policies and procedures of the University allow students to be assisted by legal counsel. Many students use the services of Downtown Legal Services (DLS), an on-campus legal aid clinic. Staffed by students in the Faculty of Law under professional legal supervision, DLS provides legal assistance for summary offence criminal matters, Small Claims Court cases, academic appeals and offenses, landlord/tenant disputes, employment matters, and other administrative matters. Referrals for other legal problems are also provided. DLS services are free but an administrative fee is charged to cover expenses. <http://downtownlegalservices.ca/>

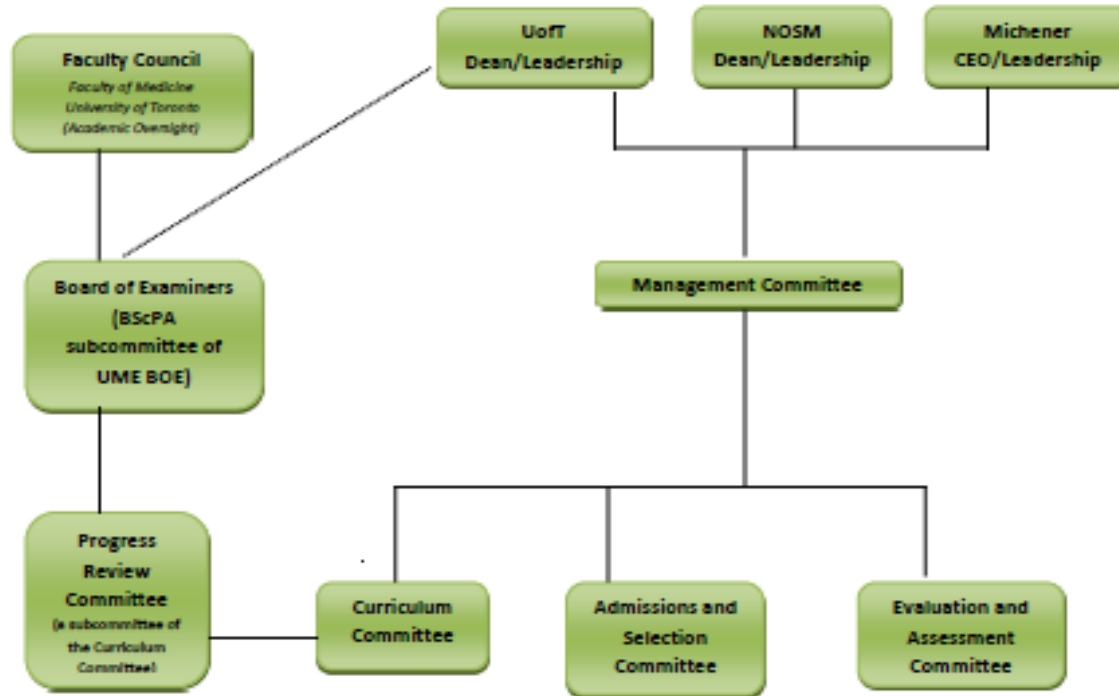
## 7.7 Policy Advice

The Office of the Vice-Provost, Students (<http://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/> 416-978-3870) deals with a number of policies and guidelines relating to student services, student groups and societies, and campus life issues. This office can provide copies of many of these policies; staff there can also provide advice and assistance in pursuing a policy matter through the appropriate channels. The Office of Governing Council (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca>) is also a valuable source of information and can provide copies of any University policy.

# 8 The Consortium of PA Education

## 8.1 BScPA Program Committees

The following chart represents the committee organization of the BScPA Program. Student representatives are included in various committees. Representatives are elected by the class, upon approval from the Program Director.



## Declaration Form

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the policies in the BScPA Student Handbook, including those that are provided as links.

Print Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_