



Thiel College
Physician Assistant Program

Student Policy
Manual
2022-23

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Introduction

This Student Manual has been developed by the faculty and administration of the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program to provide the student with specific guidelines, rights, and responsibilities regarding the PA Program. This handbook is designed to supplement other existing College and program policies and procedures, including the PA Program Clinical Manual and the Thiel College Student Handbook. We encourage every student to become familiar with and refer to those and other Thiel College publications for further information. Any questions regarding policies contained within this manual should be directed to the Program Director.

Although every effort has been made to make this handbook as complete and up to date as possible, it should be recognized that circumstances will occur that the handbook does not cover. Changes may be necessary in the handbook due to changes in the PA Program. Students will be notified of any changes or additions in writing, and they will become effective immediately.

When the handbook does not cover a specific circumstance or the interpretation is ambiguous, the Program Director will make the necessary decision and/or interpretation. Written policies that are not in the handbook should not be interpreted as an absence of a policy or regulation. If the student has questions regarding a situation, they should discuss them with the Program Director. If any conflict arises between the specific policies and procedures set forth in this handbook and those of the general institution, the Thiel College policies and procedures shall be the standard.

The PA Program Student Policy Manual and Handbook provides information on the policies, requirements, services, and expectations for all students enrolled in the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) program at Thiel College. Students are required to read and acknowledge the policies and procedures detailed in the PA Program Student Handbook, and to sign the Acknowledgement of Policies Form at the end of this document.

Mission and Goals of the Thiel College PA Program

Mission: The mission of the Thiel College Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program is to graduate physician assistants who have the disciplinary knowledge and skills, clinical preparation, and dispositions to provide excellent patient care and serve the needs of their community.

Goals: The goals of the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program include:

- ❖ Goal 1: Recruit and retain qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds and experiences.
- ❖ Goal 2: Prepare graduates to be successful physician assistants by providing them with the knowledge and skills needed to be culturally competent and compassionate providers of high-quality healthcare.
- ❖ Goal 3: Prepare graduates for a lifelong career of continuous self-directed learning and self-assessment.
- ❖ Goal 4: Prepare students and graduates to make significant contributions to the communities they serve.
- ❖ Goal 5: Engage students in interprofessional medical education that will enable them to adapt to the changing health care environment.
- ❖ Goal 6: Graduate competent physician assistants that function as professional members of the healthcare team, in a variety of clinical settings, to meet workforce needs.

Personal Conduct and Professionalism

Every student in the PA Program is expected to develop a sense of professionalism to maximize his/her contribution to the promotion of health and alleviation of suffering. A sense of dedication to service and ethical principles is essential for a student to grow toward a sense of professional competence and service to humanity within the PA profession.

The Program considers the principles of academic integrity, courtesy, individual responsibility, self-respect, and respect for others as key aspects of professionalism. Students enrolled in the PA Program assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with these principles.

Should a student's personal conduct adversely affect other persons, the Program, or the College, the Student Progress Committee will investigate and determine appropriate actions as necessary. The student should keep in mind that he/she represents Thiel College, the PA Program and the PA profession. Respect and courtesy must be shown to patients, faculty, instructors, medical staff and preceptors at all times.

Physician Assistant Oath

The Program endorses the Physician Assistant Oath, which was created by the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants. All students are expected to uphold the precepts in the PA Oath:

- I will hold as my primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare and dignity of all human beings.
- I will uphold the tenets of patient autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence and justice.
- I will recognize and promote the value of diversity.
- I will treat all persons who seek my care equally.
- I will hold in confidence the information shared in the course of practicing medicine.
- I will assess my personal capabilities and limitations, striving always to improve my medical practice.
- I will actively seek to expand my knowledge and skills, keeping abreast of advances in medicine.
- I will work with other members of the health care team to provide compassionate and effective care of patients.
- I will use my knowledge and experience to contribute to an improved community.
- I will respect my professional relationship with the physician.
- I will share and expand knowledge within the profession.

Student Learning Outcomes

The Thiel College Student Learning Outcomes are based on the *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession* document published by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. This document was developed to communicate to the PA profession and to the public a set of competencies that all physician assistants, regardless of specialty or setting, are expected to acquire and maintain throughout their careers; it was adopted in 2012 by ARC-PA, NCCPA, and PAEA, and by the AAPA in 2013. Thiel College has chosen to use the content from *Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession* as the basis for Student Learning Outcomes to ensure that all essential competencies will be included in the curriculum and foundation of this PA training program.

SLO 1: Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnosis, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion, and disease prevention. Physician assistant students must demonstrate core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this

knowledge to patient care in their area of practice. In Addition, physician assistant students are expected to demonstrate an investigative and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Physician Assistants are expected to understand, evaluate, and apply the following to clinical scenarios:

1. Evidence-based medicine.
2. Scientific principles related to patient care.
3. Etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process, and epidemiology for medical/surgical conditions.
4. Signs and symptoms of medical and surgical conditions.
5. Appropriate diagnostic studies.
6. Management of general medical and surgical conditions to include pharmacologic and other treatment modalities.
7. Interventions for prevention of disease and health promotion/maintenance.
8. Screening methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual.
9. History and physical findings and diagnostic studies to formulate differential diagnoses.

SLO 2: Interpersonal & Communications Skills

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information. Physician assistant students must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, patients' families, physicians, professional associates, and other individuals within the healthcare system.

Physician Assistant students are expected to:

1. Create and sustain a therapeutic and ethically sound relationship with patients.
2. Use effective communication skills to elicit and provide information.
3. Adapt communication style and messages to the context of the interaction.
4. Work effectively with physicians and other healthcare professionals as a member or leader of a healthcare team or other professional group.
5. Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility, and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety.
6. Accurately and adequately document information regarding care for medical, legal, quality, and financial purposes.

SLO 3: Patient Care

Patient care includes patient- and setting-specific assessment, evaluation, and management. Physician Assistant students must demonstrate care that is effective, safe, high quality, and equitable. Physician Assistant students must obtain a relevant medical history, adequately perform physical examinations, and implement treatment plans on patients of all age groups,

appropriate to the patient's condition. In addition, Physician Assistant students must demonstrate proficiency in technical procedures and health care that is effective, patient-centered, safe, compassionate, and culturally appropriate for the treatment of medical problems and the promotion of health.

Physician Assistant students are expected to:

1. Work effectively with physicians and other healthcare professionals to provide patient-centered care.
2. Demonstrate compassionate and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families.
3. Obtain essential and accurate information about their patients.
4. Make decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, current scientific evidence, and informed clinical judgment.
5. Develop and implement patient management plans.
6. Counsel and educate patients and their families.
7. Perform medical and surgical procedures common to primary care practice.
8. Provide health care services and education aimed at disease prevention and health maintenance.
9. Use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education.

SLO 4: Professionalism

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. Physician Assistant students must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that Physician Assistants practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency, or mental illness. Physician Assistant students must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to a diverse patient population, and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements.

Physician Assistant students are expected to demonstrate:

1. Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the Physician Assistant.
2. Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers.
3. Respect, compassion, and integrity.
4. Accountability to patients, society, and the profession.
5. Commitment to excellence and on-going professional development.
6. Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices.

7. Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' culture, age, gender, and abilities and the relationship to health and health beliefs.
8. Self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative.
9. Healthy behaviors and life balance.
10. Commitment to the education of students and other health care professionals.

SLO 5: Practice-based Learning & Improvement

Practice-based learning and improvement includes the processes through which Physician Assistants engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, the medical literature, and other information resources for the purposes of self- and practice-improvement. Physician Assistant students must be able to assess, evaluate, and improve their patient care practices.

Physician Assistant students are expected to:

1. Analyze practice experience and perform practice-based improvement activities using a systematic methodology in concert with other members of the health care delivery team.
2. Locate, appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients' health.
3. Apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical literature and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness.
4. Utilize information technology to manage information, access medical information, and support their own education.
5. Recognize and appropriately address personal biases, gaps in medical knowledge, and physical limitations in themselves and others.

SLO 6: Systems-based Practice

Systems-based practice encompasses the societal, organizational, and economic environments in which healthcare is delivered. Physician Assistant students must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that balances quality and cost, while maintaining the primacy of the individual patient. Physician Assistants should work to improve the health care system of which their practices are a part.

Physician Assistant students are expected to:

1. Effectively interact with different types of medical practice and delivery systems.
2. Understand the funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care and use the systems effectively.

3. Practice cost-effective health care and resource allocation that does not compromise quality of care.
4. Advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities.
5. Partner with supervising physicians, health care managers, and other health care providers to assess, coordinate, and improve the delivery and effectiveness of healthcare and patient outcomes.
6. Accept responsibility for promoting a safe environment for patient care and recognizing and correcting systems-based factors that negatively impact patient care.
7. Apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide effective, efficient patient care.
8. Recognize and appropriately address system biases that contribute to health care disparities.
9. Apply the concepts of population health to patient care.

The language included above in the “Thiel College Physician Assistant Student Learning Outcomes” was taken from the document “Competencies for the Physician Assistant Profession” (Originally adopted 2005; revised 2012) Adopted 2012 by ARC-PA, NCCPA, and PAEA, Adopted 2013 by AAPA.

Acknowledgement of Policies *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.01, A3.02*

All students enrolled in the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program are guided by policies and guidelines, including:

1. **Thiel College Student Handbook:** All students at Thiel College are expected to read and follow the Thiel College Student Handbook. The Thiel College Student Handbook is revised each year to inform students about the expectations, guidelines, and services of the College. All questions regarding the Student Handbook, including potential updates and edits, should be addressed to the Division of Student Life.

The current handbook can be found on the website at:
<https://www.thiel.edu/about/forms-and-resources>

2. **The Physician Assistant Program Student Policy Manual**
3. **The Physician Assistant Program Clinical Clerkship Manual**
4. **Clinical Site Policies:** In addition to the Thiel College and Physician Assistant Program policies, all students must adhere to the policies and guidelines of any clinical site to which the student is assigned. A signed clinical affiliation agreement or memorandum of understanding may specify that certain program policies will be superseded by those at the clinical site.

Academic Advisement *(ARC PA 5th ed. Standard A 1.04)*

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor and must set up required meetings with the advisor at least once per semester. Students are encouraged to set up additional appointments with their advisor, especially when they feel they are having academic or professional challenges and before such difficulties lead to potential failure of a course or requirement. Academic advisors may recommend referral to an appropriate professional in cases where a student's personal problems have an impact on academic or professional performance. In addition to the faculty advisor, students are always welcome to schedule a meeting with individual course instructors or the Program Director.

Academic Policies

Honor Code: The Standards of Honor and Professional Conduct Policies are guided by the mission and vision statements of our institution.

Physician Assistants are called to the highest standards of honor and professional conduct. Understanding that this responsibility begins at the onset of one's medical education. The students enrolled in the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program must uphold the following standards which serve as an embodiment of conduct and integrity. These standards strive to foster an atmosphere of honesty, trust and cooperation among students, instructors, patients, and society.

Behavior considered appropriate for a career in medicine includes, but is not limited to, honesty, trustworthiness, professional demeanor, respect for the rights of others, personal accountability, and concern for the welfare of patients. In these areas, Physician Assistant students are bound by:

Honesty

- ❖ Be truthful in communication with others.
- ❖ Refrain from cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresentation in the fulfillment of academic requirements.

Trustworthiness

- ❖ Maintain the confidentiality of patient information.
- ❖ Maintain confidentiality of student assessment/evaluation information.
- ❖ Admit errors and not intentionally mislead others or promote ourselves at the student peer, professional colleague, or patient's expense.

Professional demeanor

- ❖ Be thoughtful and professional when interacting with patients, their families, our professional colleagues, and student peers.
- ❖ Strive to maintain our composure under the pressures of fatigue, professional stress, or personal problems.
- ❖ Avoid offensive language, gestures, or inappropriate remarks with sexual overtones.

- ❖ Maintain a neat and clean appearance, and dress in attire that is reasonable as a student and accepted as professional to the patient population served.

Respect for the rights of others

- ❖ Create an atmosphere which encourages learning, characterized by cooperative relationships to my student peers and/or to the patient population served.
- ❖ Deal with professional, staff and peer members of the health team and in my study groups in a considerate manner and with a spirit of cooperation.
- ❖ Act with an egalitarian spirit toward all persons encountered in a professional capacity, regardless of race, religion, gender, sexual preference, socioeconomic status, or educational achievement.
- ❖ Respect the rights of my patients and their families to be informed and share in patient care decisions.
- ❖ Respect the modesty and privacy of my patients, standardized patients, and peers.
- ❖ Respect the diversity of learning styles within my student class.

Personal accountability.

- ❖ Participate in my study groups and class assignments responsibly to the best of my ability.
- ❖ Participate responsibly in patient care to the best of my ability and with appropriate supervision.
- ❖ Undertake clinical duties and persevere until they are complete.
- ❖ Notify the responsible person if something interferes with my ability to perform clinical tasks effectively.

Concern for the welfare of patients

- ❖ Treat patients, their families and our peers or professional colleagues with respect and dignity, both in their presence and in discussions with others.
- ❖ Consider what is hurtful or helpful to patients and use that as a guide for participating in patients' medical care.
- ❖ Consider what is hurtful or helpful to our student peers and use that as a guide for participating in our study groups.
- ❖ Discern accurately when supervision or advice is needed and seek these out before acting.
- ❖ Recognize when our ability to function effectively is compromised and ask for relief or help.
- ❖ Avoid the use of alcohol or drugs in a way that could compromise patient care or our own performance.
- ❖ Avoid engaging in romantic, sexual, or other non-professional relationships with a patient, even upon the apparent request of a patient.

Academic Progress *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standards A3.15 a,b and A3.17 c,f*

To graduate from the Physician Assistant Program and earn a Master of Science degree, the candidate must:

- Achieve a grade of “C” or better in all Physician Assistant Program courses.
- Achieve a minimum overall GPA of 3.00 at the end of the program.
- Successfully complete the Physician Assistant Program Summative Evaluation.

To achieve satisfactory academic progress in the Physician Assistant Program, the student must maintain an aggregate grade of “B” (GPA of 3.00). The Physician Assistant Program considers a grade below “C” in any of the Physician Assistant Program courses to represent unsatisfactory academic progress and may result in academic warning, probation, or dismissal from the program. Unsatisfactory academic progress will result in a review by the academic review committee and may result in repeating course work, academic warning, academic probation, or dismissal from the Physician Assistant Program.

The Physician Assistant Program faculty members review each student’s progress each semester. The purpose of this review is to clarify each student’s academic status and his/her progress toward completion of the Physician Assistant Program. Factors to be considered in this review include an internal audit of grades earned in completed courses, professional development, and professional/ethical behavior.

Academic progress in the second year is evaluated with end of rotation exam scores, preceptor evaluations and other course work requirements.

To remain in good academic standing, all Physician Assistant students must receive a grade of “C” or better in all Physician Assistant Program courses and a passing grade in all clinical rotations. The academic review process exists to assist students with identification of problems and issues that may be associated with academic or professional difficulties, so that appropriate guidance, advice, and remediation options may occur.

Grading: Within the syllabus of each course, the grading methodology and elements are defined. Each element (quiz, exam, group session, etc.) is assigned a point value within the context of each course. The total points are calculated, and the final grade determined. The letter grade is determined from the point scale outlined in the course syllabi.

Academic Alert: The program will use an “Early Academic Alert System” to recognize students who could potentially be at academic risk. The following will be implemented:

- Advisors and instructors are to notify the Program Director of students who exhibit signs of academic risk ASAP.
- Academic progress of students will be reviewed at faculty meetings.
- Students are encouraged to speak to advisors, instructors or the Program Director if feeling overwhelmed or concerned about their academic progress.
- A minimum of one regular advisor session will be scheduled during each semester. Student academic advisement forms will be used at advising sessions and maintained in student files.

- Early intervention/remediation/referrals will be implemented as needed.
- A student with an exam or evaluation score below 80% will be required to remediate his/her exam. The student will develop a remediation plan of action with his/her course instructor. All remediation must be completed within one week after grades have been released.

Requirements to Progress from Didactic Year to Clinical Year

The following components must be satisfied for a didactic year Physician Assistant student to progress to the clinical phase of the program. If any of these components are not satisfied prior to the clinical phase of the program, the student will not be allowed to begin their first clinical rotation, which will result in delayed graduation and possibly deceleration.

1. Cumulative GPA of 3.00 for Didactic year.
2. Pass the first year PACKRAT examination. To pass, a student must be within one standard deviation of the national average (This is a formative assessment, which will not be used for grading purposes). If a student does not pass, he or she must complete a PACKRAT remediation plan as determined by the Student Progress Committee.
3. Satisfactory completion of update on criminal background check completed prior to matriculation to the program.
4. Satisfactory drug screen by April 1 of the clinical year.
5. Complete updated immunizations, clearances, and site documentation no later than 45 days prior to the start of clinical rotations.
6. Satisfactory physical exam no later than 45 days prior to the start of clinical rotation.
7. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive clinical assessment (history and physical examination) on a simulated patient.

Graduation Requirements

To graduate, the Physician Assistant student must satisfy the following requirements:

1. Satisfactory completion of all courses in the Physician Assistant curriculum with a grade of 70% "C" or better.
2. Students must have a 3.00 or better cumulative GPA on a 4.00 scale for all graduate courses attempted at Thiel College to graduate.
3. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive written summative exam.
4. Satisfactory completion of a comprehensive Objective Structured Clinical Evaluation (OSCE).
5. Completion of the Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT) examination.
6. Compliance with behavioral and professional performance standards.
7. All requirements must be completed within a six-year period commencing with the first graduate course taken at Thiel College.
8. It is the student's responsibility to complete all degree/certificate requirements and to know the requirements set by both the Physician Assistant Program and Thiel College for graduation. Any questions should be directed to the Program Director or Faculty.

Appeals:

See “Student Progress and Appeals Policy” in this manual

Admissions *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.14*

The Thiel College Admissions Policy can be found in the Academic Catalog at: https://www.thiel.edu/assets/documents/academics/2020-2021-Academic_Catalog.pdf (beginning on page 12). A full list of prerequisites for entering the Physician Assistant Program is available on the Physician Assistant Program website at <https://www.thiel.edu/graduate-degrees/physician-assistant>. Application is through the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). After a review of all application materials, the Admissions Committee will invite qualified applicants to interview on campus. This interview consists of a group interview, individual interview, information sessions and tour. The Admissions Committee will then review all materials and recommend acceptance (for applicants who have completed all prerequisites and are highly recommended for admission), conditional acceptance (for applicants who need to complete prerequisites), wait-list (applicants who meet the minimum requirements and who may be offered acceptance if the best qualified candidates do not fill all available seats) and non-admission (applicants who do not meet minimum requirements or are non-competitive within the applicant pool). Applicants will generally be notified of their status within 3 to 4 weeks of the interview.

ADA Statement *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard B4.04*

The College and Program do not discriminate based on disability. However, a student must be able to meet technical standards to progress and graduate from the program, and the instructional and pedagogical methods are the same for all students in the Physician Assistant program. We are committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students to help them achieve their goals.

According to the Thiel College Student Handbook, Disability Support Services (DSS) also arranges academic accommodations for students eligible for assistance under section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, and the American Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with physical, learning, or emotional disabilities are encouraged to contact the Director of Disability Support Services as soon as possible to ensure that academic accommodations can be made in a timely manner. Students with temporary disabilities resulting from illness or injury, and who need academic accommodations, are also served by the DSS. Written documentation of a disability or temporary disability is required before academic accommodations are implemented.

Advanced Placement *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.13c*

The Thiel College Physician Assistant Program does not grant advanced placement, give credit for required MSPAS courses, or accept transfer of credit for Physician Assistant courses completed elsewhere.

Due to the knowledge base each semester building on the knowledge gained from the previous semester, it is vital that all students in the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program complete the required work in the prescribed sequence.

Assessment Process

Students will participate in a comprehensive, robust programmatic assessment process. It is essential that students take ownership of assessment methods and provide feedback to the program, with the goal of improvement for future cohorts.

The leadership and faculty members of the MSPAS program at Thiel College are dedicated to a process of continuous self-evaluation and analysis of all aspects of program operations. The Faculty Executive Committee, Curriculum Committee, and Assessment Committee (described below) determine all program decision-making.

- Faculty Executive Committee: this committee is composed of all faculty and staff; this committee oversees and votes on all programmatic decisions, both assessment and operational.
- Curriculum Committee: this committee is composed of PA faculty members that review data focused on curricular aspects of the program and makes recommendations for improvement to the Faculty Executive Committee.
- Assessment Committee: this committee is composed of PA faculty members that analyze data generated from the programmatic self-assessment process and makes recommendations for improvement to the Faculty Executive Committee.

Didactic Year Assessment

- Course-embedded assessments
- Physician Assistant Clinical Knowledge Rating and Assessment Tool (PACKRAT I, Spring)

Clinical Year Assessment

- Course-embedded assessments
- Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) End of Rotation™ Exam (EORE) scores for Core Rotations
- Summative Exam I comprised of 360 questions that follow the NCCPA blueprint and mimic the PANCE in areas of length and content (At beginning of clinical phase of education)
- PACKRAT II (Fall)
- PAEA Summative Exam II comprehensive exam (Spring of clinical year)
- Objective Standardized Clinical Examination (OSCE): Assesses psychomotor skills, history taking skills, physical examination skills, interpersonal assessment, and interpretation of laboratory data

Program Assessment: In addition to student evaluation, assessment of the program will also occur throughout both academic and clinical years, as per ARC-PA standards.

- If at any time the program is determined to be non-compliant with its accrediting body standards, it will be documented and a plan will be devised, implemented and assessed; thereby, closing the feedback loop.
- Principal faculty, as well as the department chairperson and Program Director, will actively participate in the evaluation of the MSPAS program.
- Evaluation of the program will be continuous and comprehensive and will be discussed at faculty meetings and at faculty retreats.
- The ongoing assessment process will be initiated for the inaugural class and maintained throughout the program.
- At each faculty retreat, the ongoing development and maintenance of curricular standards will be benchmarked against program competencies, ARC-PA standards and NCCPA blueprint topics.
- Measurement of whether the program is meeting the learning outcomes and goals will be embedded into an annual review.
- Data collected annually will be analyzed for any weaknesses and will be triangulated with student evaluations of instruction, faculty self-assessment of teaching performance and evaluations of faculty.
- Results from the MSPAS assessments will be tabulated and analyzed and the faculty will make the necessary adjustments to the curriculum, pedagogical methods, incorporating changes for the upcoming year as needed.

Attendance

Attendance and Punctuality: Student attendance and punctuality are mandatory for all classes, laboratories, seminars, examinations, clinical assignments, and all other periods of training. Failure to contact the program prior to an absence or tardiness (other than medical emergency) will make that absence or tardiness unexcused, constitutes unprofessional behavior, and will not be condoned.

If a student in the didactic phase must be absent or late for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to:

1. Notify the course director and/or co-course director via phone and/or email.
2. Leave a voice mail message in the event no one is available to answer the student's call personally. The message must indicate a. The reason for tardiness or absence b. Detail all classes (lectures, seminars, laboratories, etc.), examinations, or other scheduled activities for which the student will be late or absent so that faculty can be notified. c. The student must notify the instructor on each day of absence or tardiness
3. Contact the appropriate course director(s) immediately upon returning to classes to arrange remediation of all missed training.

If a student in the clinical phase of training must be absent or late for any reason, it is the student's responsibility to call and/or email each day:

1. The clinical coordinator.
2. The clinical site preceptor or site contact person.

Attire and Personal Grooming *ARC- PA 5th ed. Standard A3.06*

As healthcare professionals, PA students are expected to maintain the highest possible standard of appearance. Students are expected to be neatly dressed and practice good hygiene throughout all phases of their professional education, as listed below:

- ❖ Slacks/skirts-at an appropriate length, with shirts/blouses that are non-revealing.
- ❖ Skirts or dresses should be no more than three inches above the knee.
- ❖ Denim, regardless of color, is not allowed.
- ❖ No shorts, sweatshirts, cut-off clothing, capri pants, cargo pants, or leggings without skirts.
- ❖ Scrubs may be worn if approved by the instructor and/or clinical site (e.g., OR and/or ER).
- ❖ No midriff tops, halter tops, translucent or transparent tops; no shirts with low-cut necklines or tank tops.
- ❖ Undergarments should not be visible, even with movement.
- ❖ No sneakers are permitted (unless wearing scrubs and approved by your instructor or preceptor), shoes are to be worn with socks or hose; heel height should be conservative.
- ❖ Open toe shoes are not permitted in any lab or in any clinical setting.
- ❖ Jewelry and make-up, if worn, must be subtle and appropriate for a professional setting. Perfume and cologne are not permitted, as some patients may be allergic.
- ❖ Fingernails must be clean and trimmed. Artificial nails are not permitted.
- ❖ Hair styles should be clean, combed, and neatly trimmed or arranged worn in a neat style. Long hair should be worn back if necessary, to avoid interference with work or patient care.
- ❖ Body piercings including, but not limited to, tongue, lip, eyebrow, or nose piercings, should not be worn. Discrete pierced earrings are allowed.
- ❖ Tattoos should be covered.

In any clinical setting, PA students are expected to be in full professional attire and to comply with these additional program standards and any other rules outlined by the clinical site.

- ❖ Wear clean, pressed, short white jackets with the issued Thiel College PA Program patch attached to the left upper sleeve.
- ❖ Identification badges bearing the student's name and designating him/her as a "Physician Assistant Student" must be worn at all times.

Clinical supervisors, preceptors, or PA Program faculty reserve the right to remove any student who is not appropriately dressed from a classroom, clinical site, or experience. If a student is sent home due to inappropriate attire or poor hygiene, the student may be marked

absent and may not be permitted to make up any clinical work, assignments, or experiences for the missed day. All such incidents will be documented in the student's permanent record.

Classroom Etiquette

The classroom should provide a safe and positive learning environment for all students. To create such an environment, it is important that everyone treat each other with respect and common courtesy. Faculty members have the responsibility for conducting classes and maintaining the learning environment, and they may ask anyone who engages in distracting activity to leave the room. Please be mindful during class participation to be respectful, mature, and not monopolize discussions.

Some of the expected behaviors include the following:

- Address instructors by appropriate title (Professor, Doctor, Mr., Mrs., Ms.)
- Utilize a respectful tone of voice, word choices, and body language
- Arrive on time
- Take advantage of breaks between classes for restroom use and personal issues so as not to disrupt classes by arriving late or leaving in the middle
- Following the Communications Policy and Attire Policy found in this handbook

Activities that might be prohibited by faculty include:

- Surfing the Internet (except as directed by faculty)
- Bringing animals to class (except service animals with documentation, and to the extent that they do not disrupt classroom activities)
- Bringing children to class (except as requested by faculty)
- Conducting conversations outside of class participation

Cell Phone Policy

Cell Phones: Cell phones may not be used in the classroom or during program meetings, unless the instructor permits use for class participation purposes, e.g., interactive quizzes. Cell phone use can be disruptive and are inconsiderate of other students' learning. An exception for using cell phones is during clinical rotation, when cell phones may be used during approved breaks, if the student is on call, or when allowed by the preceptor. Text messaging or other use of electronic communications is not permitted during class or at clinical sites. Inappropriate use of electronic communication tools will be brought to the Student Progress Committee for discussion. Note: cell phones may be used in any setting in an emergency to request assistance.

Computer, Correspondence and Technology Policy *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard*

A1.09

Classroom Use of Laptop Computers / Tablets: Use of laptops during class is up to the instructor's discretion. Using one's laptop during class for purposes other than those related to the class's activity is not permitted. It is inconsiderate and may be disruptive to other students' learning.

Computer Use Policy: Professional phase PA students will be issued a (PC) laptop computer with wireless compatibility on Orientation Day. During orientation, the Technology team will review all current IT policies and assist students in downloading software programs to be used during training. While enrolled as a Thiel College student, the IT Solutions Center will be available to provide support and troubleshooting for your Thiel issued laptop.

All examinations must be taken on a Thiel College issued laptop. Many assignments will also need to be completed using Thiel computer equipment. You are free to use your own laptop for studying and other uses, if you choose; however, you may not use any personal device for examinations or selected assignments. The Solutions Center will only be able to assist you with concerns regarding your Thiel issued laptop.

Correspondence: Students are expected to maintain a current name, address, phone number, and emergency contact with the program. Any changes to this information must also be submitted in a timely manner.

Email: Students are expected to check email daily for announcements related to classes or assignments, and for messages from faculty. Any difficulty with accessing your email should be brought to the attention of the IT department and/or PA faculty.

Social Media: (Please also see the Social Media section later in this manual) Maintaining professionalism is of utmost importance when using social media. Students should always assume that all postings you make to social media sites are visible to program faculty, future employers, and patients. This is true whether you think you are posting to a "members only" chat room or to a site in which a viewer must be "invited" to read your words or view other uploads. Violation of this policy will result in your appearance before the Student Progress Committee and possible dismissal from the program. Witnessing any violation of this policy should be immediately reported to the program director.

COVID-19 Health and Safety

The safety of Thiel College's students, faculty and staff is our top priority. Please refer to the Thiel College safety plan (<https://www.thiel.edu/campus-life/coronavirus-updates>), the Pennsylvania Department of Health website ([Department of Health Home](#)) and the CDC website ([About COVID-19 | CDC](#)) for the most up to date information regarding COVID19 and other health issues.

If you feel ill, follow the guidelines below.

Circumstances	Your responsibilities
You have cold-, flu-, or other symptoms which could suggest an infectious process.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Email the instructor immediately if symptoms and/or failed screening. ✓ If you require emergency treatment and/or hospitalization, contact instructor as soon as you are stable. ✓ Request remote link to view class that day. ✓ Complete assignments you missed
You have been advised by the College or public health authorities to self-isolate or quarantine.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Email instructor immediately. ✓ Complete assignments ✓ Follow the College’s quarantine protocol.

Criminal Background Clearance

Prior to matriculation, students will be required to undergo a criminal background check. Failure to complete this process and submission of documents on or before the deadline given will result in forfeiture of the student’s seat. Please note: Students who answer "no" to questions relating to criminal background on their CASPA application but who are found to have a positive background check may not be permitted to matriculate or may be dismissed from the program. Individuals who have been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor might be denied certification or licensure as a health professional. Information regarding eligibility can be obtained from appropriate credentialing boards. In addition, various clinical rotation sites might not permit participation in that clinical experience.

Information regarding background checks will be sent to all incoming students. The clearances which must be completed in advance of both pre-clinical and clinical years include:

- Pennsylvania Criminal History (PATCH)
- Child Abuse History Clearance
- Federal Criminal History/Fingerprinting

During training, students may be required to undergo one or more additional criminal background checks – including fingerprinting. The costs for these screens are borne by the student.

If a student does not initiate the process for the required background check, training will be delayed. It is critical that the process for all site requirements be started no later than sixty days, and preferably 90 days, from the rotation start date. This means that all students should be checking the clinical site requirements once they are assigned to a site. Delays in beginning any rotation because of the student’s failure to fulfill these requirements in a timely fashion will result in a delay in graduating from the program.

The procedure for reviewing background check records is maintained in the Physician Assistant Office and can be viewed upon request.

PLEASE NOTE: A criminal background check that reveals criminal activity and/or a failure to pass a drug screening will be referred to the Program Director and the Student Progress Committee and is likely to impede clinical training and/or to affect the student's status in the program. In addition, criminal offenses committed after the student matriculates may result in the student's dismissal from the program; if this occurs, tuition and fees will not be refunded. Applicants are advised that results of criminal background checks and other required screening will be released to third parties involved in their clinical education.

Diversity and Inclusion *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A1.11*

Thiel College and the Physician Assistant program are dedicated to teaching cultural competency and inclusivity. Our goal is to create a supportive learning environment where every student has the potential to succeed, while honoring and celebrating our differences and similarities. All faculty, staff and students shall maintain respect for differences in race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, spirituality, culture, ability, and socioeconomic status. The Thiel College Office for Diversity and Inclusion sponsors and supports academic, social, and cultural events on campus that are open to the entire Thiel community. For more information, see the website at: https://www.thiel.edu/campus_life/office-for-diversity-and-inclusion.

Drug Screening

In addition to criminal background clearance, students matriculating in the program are required to undergo a drug screen. Clinical sites may also require a drug screen prior to the start of the rotation. Students are responsible for checking the clinical site requirements once they are assigned to a site. The cost of all drug screenings will be at the expense of the student.

The Program Director, clinical preceptors, faculty, and the Clinical Coordinator reserve the right to request a drug screen when drug or alcohol use is suspected by the PA Program staff or the preceptor. If the preceptor suspects illicit use, the preceptor will contact the program immediately. In addition, many hospitals and offices require drug screening prior to doing a rotation in their facility. Students should be prepared for drug testing at any point in their training and must comply when a test is requested. Failure to submit for drug testing when requested will be interpreted in the same manner as a positive drug test and sanctions for these positive tests can include dismissal from the PA Program. The cost of the drug screen test is at the student's expense.

The results will be interpreted by an independent medical professional and the report will be sent to the Program via Certiphi. A positive drug test which is not related to a legally prescribed therapy drug will result in immediate dismissal from the PA Program.

If the student is on a prescribed substance, they must immediately provide documentation from their licensed health care provider that there is a medical necessity for the medication.

Despite a medical necessity for taking this medication, the student may not be able to attend a clinical site if this medication impairs the ability of the student to appropriately function.

Students may be removed from their clinical sites if the program determines that they are not able to safely function in this clinical setting. Students may request a medical leave of absence if they believe that a medical condition would prohibit them from appropriately functioning in their role as a student health care provider.

Thiel College's Physician Assistant Program will not be held liable for a student's dismissal or inability to obtain a state license as the result of a positive drug screen or noncompliance with statutes regarding impaired provider performance.

Students will be provided with information regarding impaired provider networks available to them as students during the student orientation program.

Employment *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standards A3.04, A3.15e*

The program will not employ any Physician Assistant student as a graduate assistant or in any other capacity within the program. Students enrolled in the PA Program cannot substitute for practicing Physician Assistants or provide unsupervised services while at any clinical site. Students must not substitute for or function as instructional faculty. Students must not substitute for clinical or administrative staff during supervised clinical practical experiences

Thiel College employee policies do not apply to students while in the program. PA students who are credentialed or licensed in other non-PA professions cannot function in that role while in the role of a PA student.

The program does not encourage students to work during the didactic or clinical years of the program. The program will not make any exceptions in course work or clinical assignments to accommodate outside employment for the student who chooses to engage in outside employment.

Health Insurance *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.08c*

Personal health insurance coverage is required for admission into and completion of the Thiel College PA Program. Students must maintain a valid health insurance policy throughout their time of enrollment in this program. Students are to complete the Coverage Selection Form to either elect or decline the insurance that Thiel College offers. Proof of College or other health insurance coverage must be provided to the PA program.

Failure to maintain a valid insurance policy will result in removal from clinical rotations until proof of compliance is provided, which in turn may result in delay of graduation from the program. At the initiation of and throughout the clinical year, students will be required to show proof of a valid health insurance policy. Any costs incurred through illness, injury (either on or off-site during the course of the program), and/or a hospitalization during attendance at the PA Program is the students' sole financial responsibility.

Health Requirements for Students *ARC- PA 5th ed. Standard A3.09*

All PA students are required to meet entrance health requirements. The results of a physical exam by the student's PCP or medical provider must be recorded on the appropriate form and uploaded into Certiphi prior to enrollment. Student health records are confidential and will not be accessible to or reviewed by program, principal or instructional faculty or staff except for immunization and tuberculosis screening results, which may be maintained and released with written permission from the student.

Faculty Health Care Provider Restrictions

The Program Director, Medical Director, Faculty, and staff must not and will not participate as health care providers for students enrolled in the program OR have access to any student health information other than that defined in the PA Program File Maintenance Policy. Providing care for a life-threatening emergency is an exception to this policy.

Student Health Status Restrictions

A student should notify the Program Director of any significant change in his/her health status (serious injury, prolonged illness, or other health-related needs that impact program progression) as soon as possible. The Program Director or designee and the student will work to determine if any restrictions or modifications of the student's coursework are necessary.

Identification *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.06*

Each student receives a photo identification card at orientation. This ID is to be worn during all clinical experiences, professional activities, and other times as required by the program. In addition, the ID card with electronic access to labs and the science building. Access may be limited at certain times of the year, hours of the day, and classes in which the student is enrolled. Each student is responsible for replacement of this badge should it be lost.

Immunizations *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard 3.07*

The Thiel College Physician Assistant Program has a pre-matriculation immunization policy that is based on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) immunization recommendations for health care personnel and is periodically updated to comply with those changing recommendations. Prior to matriculation, all students must submit certification of immunizations or proof of immunity via Certiphi. Students are responsible for maintaining their personal immunization record. It is recommended that the student carry a copy of this record to the assigned clinical site on the first day of each rotation. Failure to demonstrate an up-to-date immunization status on request will result in removal from the rotation until valid proof of current immunization status is presented. Failure to maintain current immunizations will prevent a student from progressing in the program.

The list of **REQUIRED** immunizations includes:

1. MMR / MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA VACCINE: This combination vaccine is given because it protects from Measles, Mumps and Rubella. Two doses are required for entry into the Thiel College PA Program. One must have been received at 12 months of age or later and in 1971 or later. The second dose must have been received at least 30 days after the first dose and in 1990 or later. Provide lab evidence of immunity by doing a blood test to check for antibodies for Rubella. Submit lab evidence of immunity and complete Immunization Form. NOTE: All titers must include a lab report.

2. HEPATITIS B VACCINE: Provide lab evidence of immunity by doing a blood test to check for antibodies for hepatitis B. Submit lab evidence of immunity and complete Immunization Form. Ideally the titer is performed one to two months after the third vaccine. If the quantitative titer is negative, another three-dose Hepatitis B series should be completed, and a quantitative titer again drawn one to two months after completion of the re-vaccination series. If this titer is negative, please contact the program for further CDC/ACIP recommended instructions. NOTE: All titers must include a lab report.

3. POLIO VACCINE: Documentation of the completed primary series. There must be a record of at least three vaccinations.

4. TDAP (Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis) VACCINE: A one-time dose of Tdap is required, if you have not received Tdap previously (regardless of when previous dose of Td was received). Td boosters are required every 10 years thereafter. Pregnant students need to get a dose of Tdap during each pregnancy.

5. VARICELLA (Chickenpox): Provide proof of two doses of varicella vaccine OR provide results of a blood test on a lab form verifying immunity to Chickenpox/Varicella. Submit lab evidence of immunity and complete Immunization Form. NOTE: All titers must include a lab report.

6. INFLUENZA VACCINE: Provide written record of having received one dose of the influenza immunization preceding matriculation and provide proof of having received an influenza immunization annually no later than October 1 of each year while enrolled in the program. If a student wishes to waive the vaccine; a signed waiver from a medical professional must be provided. Failure to receive an annual influenza vaccine may result in a clinical site denying placement and result in a change in clinical rotation scheduling.

7. MCV4 (MENACTRA/MENVEO) / MENINGOCOCCAL MENINGITIS VACCINE: The CDC recommends that those who are routinely exposed to isolates of N. meningitidis should get one dose.

8. TUBERCULOSIS SCREENING: Quantiferon Gold TB Test

Please provide documentation of a negative Quantiferon Gold TB test.

- If Quantiferon Gold TB test is positive, or if you have a history of previous positive TB testing, a negative chest x-ray is required to attend classes or

clinical rotations. X-rays are valid for 1 year. For each subsequent year, an updated chest x-ray and a TB screening questionnaire must be provided.

- If the chest x-ray is positive, the applicant/student will not be allowed to enter or continue training until treated and cleared by an infectious disease specialist.
- BCG vaccination does not prevent testing. For students who have received the BCG vaccine, a QuantiFERON Gold TB test (QFT-G) is required.

Please note: TB Skin Tests are not accepted for the initial TB screening. Clinical sites may require retesting (which may be a 2-step skin test or other test) prior to clinical rotations.

The following immunizations are **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED**: for all students entering or entering or enrolled in the Thiel College PA Program:

1. **HEPATITIS A VACCINE**
2. **COVID-19 VACCINE:** Students should consult CDC guidelines and make the appropriate personal decision regarding this vaccination.

Clinical sites may require additional vaccinations and documentation.

Infection Control, Blood Borne Pathogens, Universal Precautions & Environmental Hazards *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.08*

Students are required to complete training on OSHA, infection control, blood borne pathogens, and environmental hazards prior to their clinical year or hospital experience during the didactic year. Proof of successful completion of the above programs is required prior to students beginning their clinical year or hospital experience during the didactic year.

Students are responsible for following OSHA Guidelines for universal precautions at clinical rotation sites, including the use of protective gloves, eyewear, and clothing, the proper use and disposal of sharps, regular hand washing/hand sanitation, and other precautionary measures.

The principle of universal precautions recognizes that any patient may be infected with microorganisms that could be transmitted to other persons. Observance of universal precautions will help to provide better protection for every staff member.

Universal Precautions and Bloodborne Pathogens Training: *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.08a*

The guidelines are summarized below and will be presented in greater detail in the PA Professional Issues didactic modules and pre-clinical training activities prior to starting clinical rotations. Individual clinical sites may also provide orientation sessions regarding blood borne pathogens. Students should also familiarize themselves with the hospital/clinical sites' specific policies regarding universal precautions.

Universal Precautions Guidelines:

- Act as though all patients you have contact with have a potentially contagious blood borne disease. (Because a patient's status may not be known and because infected patients may be asymptomatic, it is necessary to use basic precautions with every patient.)
- Avoid direct contact with blood, body fluids, secretions, excretions, mucous membranes, non-intact skin, and lesions.
- Avoid injuries from all "sharps." Do not recap needles and use safety caps.
- Avoid direct contact with items, objects, and surfaces contaminated with blood, body fluids, secretions, and excretions.
- Dispose of all "sharps" promptly in special puncture resistant containers.
- Dispose of all contaminated articles and materials in a safe manner prescribed by law
- Wash hands frequently and thoroughly, especially if they become contaminated with blood, body fluids, secretions, and excretions.
- All patient specimens should be bagged per facility protocol before transport to the laboratory.

Personal Protective Equipment: Depending on job duties and risk of exposure, using appropriate barriers, including gloves, gowns, aprons, caps, shoe covers, leggings, masks, goggles, face shields, and equipment such as resuscitation devices to protect skin and mucous membranes, especially eyes, nose, and mouth.

- NOTE: These items of protective apparel, including gloves are removed after each use and are properly disposed. The same pair of gloves, etc., are NOT to be worn from one patient or activity to another.
- Students should wear protective equipment as directed by their clinical preceptor or facility protocol

Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.08b*

Accidents will occasionally occur in the laboratory or in the clinical setting. Exposure to blood borne pathogens is a risk assumed by all healthcare providers. The National PEPLINE provides expert guidance in managing health care worker exposures to HIV and hepatitis B and C. Callers receive immediate post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) recommendations. **1-888-448-4911** | Occupational PEP: 11 am to 8 pm EST, seven days a week - Non-occupational PEP: 9 am to 8 pm ET, Monday through Friday; 11 am to 8 pm ET, weekends & holidays

Exposure in the Laboratory or classroom setting: If a student is injured in a laboratory or classroom setting:

1. The instructor and Program Director should be notified immediately.
2. The student should seek prompt evaluation and treatment at the Student Health Center, Urgent Care Clinic, or Emergency Room.

Exposure in the Clinical Setting: In the event a student is injured by a contaminated “sharp” or is exposed in any manner to blood or potentially infectious bodily fluids in the course of their assigned clinical work, the following steps should be followed for proper treatment and follow-up for the student. Upon possible exposure to a blood borne pathogen or any other potential pathogen:

1. For skin and wounds, wash the affected area with soap and water. Eyes and mucous membranes should be copiously flushed with water. Notify your clinical preceptor immediately.
2. Follow facility protocols regarding evaluation. Most facilities will require you to report immediately to employee health or the emergency department following exposure. Failure to follow up properly may make it difficult or impossible to obtain source patient blood in facilities in cases in which this may be possible.
3. In sites without employee health or emergency departments, or if the site protocol is unclear, proceed immediately to the nearest emergency department for assessment. In cases in which prophylactic medical treatment is indicated, it is believed to be most effective when administered as quickly as possible.
4. The treating healthcare professional will request information about your medical history, the source patient’s history (if known) and the nature of the exposure. They may request permission to draw baseline laboratory studies. They will discuss your risk of contracting a blood borne disease and the risks and benefits of prophylactic treatment. In deciding whether to receive post-exposure prophylactic treatment, students might also wish to consult with the National Clinicians Post-Exposure Prophylaxis Hotline: 888-448-4911.
5. Students should follow up as directed by their treating healthcare provider. Ongoing follow-up may take place at the initial treating facility or the student may be referred to a healthcare provider with expertise in infectious disease. The program may be able to assist the student in finding an infectious disease specialist as requested or required.
6. Because students are not employees of Thiel College or the clinical sites, payment for assessment and treatment is the responsibility of the student and their insurance carrier.
7. While there is no guarantee or requirement for such, many of the clinical sites can and will arrange for immediate medical care of students in the event of accidental injury or illness (costs incurred may be charged to the student’s personal health insurance policy). However, they are not obligated to take responsibility for subsequent costs involved in follow-up care, treatment, counseling, hospitalization, preventive care, etc.

Student Incident Reporting

Ultimately, the student is responsible for initiating care after exposure to possible blood borne and other pathogens and reporting the incident.

1. An incident form must be completed and submitted to the clinical site and the PA Program. The incident reporting form can be found in the Forms Section at the end of the Clinical Manual or from the Program staff.

2. An incident report should be submitted to the Program Director as soon as possible, however, students should not delay prompt evaluation and treatment to complete paperwork.
3. The Clinical Coordinator must be notified within 24 hours via e-mail of any exposure/possible exposure (i.e., needle-stick injuries, splashing of body fluids on exposed mucous membranes, inhalation exposure, etc.).

Financial responsibility *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.08c*

All costs for treatment and follow-up of an injury and/or exposure are the student's sole responsibility. This includes any visits to a healthcare provider, emergency room or urgent care facility, laboratory, or hospital. Please refer to the attendance and absenteeism policies in this handbook to account for all time missed due to clinical injury or exposure.

Leave of Absence *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.15b*

Due to the intensive nature of Physician Assistant education, all academic activities are considered an important part of the overall educational experience. The program encourages all students to engage in their education with consistent attendance. Leaves of absence will be individualized to the specific situation but will follow the general policies and procedures outlined below. Program faculty will be notified of all instances of leaves of absence. Students are urged to submit requests for absence as soon as an absence is anticipated. All requests for a leave of absence, whether administrative or medical, should be submitted in writing to the program director or their designee.

- A. Administrative Leaves of Absence:** Administrative leaves of absence may be granted for personal, educational, financial, or other reasons, which must be stated in a letter of request. If the student is in academic difficulty, the Program Director or designee will consult with the faculty and course instructors of record prior to approval of the request. During both the Pre-Clinical and Clinical years, administrative leaves will be considered on a case-by-case basis. If more than two weeks of leave are needed during the Pre-Clinical year, the usual recommendation will be withdrawal from school and readmission.
- B. Medical Leaves of Absence:** Medical leaves of absence require a statement from the appropriate licensed healthcare provider as to the expected duration of absence. Details as to the reason for the medical leave are not required. Reinstatement must be approved by the Program Director or their designee, who will need to be assured that the student is again ready for the rigors of medical studies. While a statement of readiness from the student's healthcare provider may be sufficient, the right to require a second opinion regarding readiness is reserved. This consultation will come from a healthcare provider approved by the program, and any cost involved will be borne by the student. With medical leaves of longer than two weeks, the usual recommendation will be withdrawal from school and readmission.

- C. Excused Absences (Up to 72 Hours in Length):** Excused absences will be determined on a case-by-case basis. Valid reasons for requesting an excused absence include personal illness and family emergencies. Personal illness lasting longer than three days may require documentation by a medical provider. The student must notify the program via phone or email to report all absences. Please note that absence requests related to attending weddings, homecomings, the need to make an early flight for vacation, etc., will not be granted.

Regarding excused absences during the didactic year:

- The student should arrange to make up any work missed.
- The student must notify the PA Program of his/her absence.
- For excused absences that include missing an exam, refer to the Exam Policy.

Regarding excused absences during the clinical year:

- Each absence will be considered individually.
- For excused absences that include missing an exam, refer to the Exam Policy.

Exit Interview: Should you be granted an extended administrative or medical leave of absence you are required to have an exit interview with the PA Program director or designated faculty member. This will involve returning any instructional property that has been entrusted to you and turning in your identification badge and white clinical jacket. Other things to be considered at this time are clearance of all current debt with the College, the onset of the grace period if you should have school loans and termination or conversion of your health and disability coverage. You may also want to arrange for an exit interview with Financial Aid. Students dismissed from the program will no longer be able to attend program classes and activities unless an appeal is in process.

NCCPA Examination/PANCE (PA National Certification Examination)

ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.12c

Only those students who graduate in good standing from a program approved by the Accreditation Review Committee for PAs (ARC-PA) may sit for the PANCE exam. Advanced registration is required and can be completed 3 months prior to graduation. Registration is completed online at www.nccpa.net. The available testing dates for each candidate will begin seven days after the expected program completion date and end 180 days later. Please contact NCCPA at www.nccpa.net for more detailed information. Graduation from the Thiel College PA Program does not ensure that one can practice as a PA. Graduates must successfully pass the PANCE examination and meet state registration requirements to become licensed to practice as a PA.

The program's most current annual NCCPA PANCE Exam Performance Summary Report Last 5 Years provided by the NCCPA will be published on the program's website no later than April first of each year.

Non-Discrimination (Title IX)

Thiel College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, sexual orientation, religious belief, national origin, ethnicity, veteran status, age or disability as those terms are defined under applicable law. This policy of nondiscrimination applies in connection with admission to and participation in all programs and activities sponsored by Thiel College and to all employment practices of Thiel College. Policy and Procedure information regarding Title IX can be found at

https://www.thiel.edu/assets/documents/campus_life/FinalTitleIXPolicyBrochure2017.pdf

Placements *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.03*

ARC-PA Standard A3.03 states that "Students must not be required to provide or solicit clinical rotation sites or preceptors. The program must coordinate all clinical sites and preceptors for program-required rotations." Students are welcome to make suggestions to the Program Director and Faculty for clinical sites and preceptors; however, no student is required to do so. Any site or preceptor suggested by a student will be reviewed and evaluated; if determined to provide a suitable educational experience, the site may be approved. Only the program can coordinate and handle arrangements with a clinical site or preceptor.

Safety *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A1.02 g*

Students will attend an orientation session from the Thiel College Public Safety Department. The Department of Public Safety maintains a full-time police department 365 days a year with a multi-faceted mission of maintaining a safe environment for the campus community and educating and involving campus members in safety and security issues including fire safety inspections and crime prevention education programming

The department consists of seven full-time and several part-time sworn police officers with municipal police training academy instructors, crime prevention practitioners, emergency medical technicians and instructors on staff. Each officer has met the standards of Pennsylvania Municipal Police officer training, and is trained in emergency response procedures, First Aid, CPR and Act 180 (mandatory in-service training each year).

Tomcat Alert is an email and text emergency alerting system for the College, which provides SMS text messaging service for emergency notification. All Thiel email addresses have an account with Tomcat Alert – [enroll your phone and activate your account online](#). Should there be an emergency, you will receive a text message on your cell phone, and an email message at your registered email address.

To contact Public Safety, call 724-589-2222. The link for Thiel College Public Safety, including the Emergency Management Plan, is https://www.thiel.edu/campus_life/campus-resources/public-safety

For off-campus activities such as Clinical Clerkship rotations, the student should inquire and become familiar with that site's safety protocols and personnel.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct (Title IX) *ARC-PA 5th ed.*

Standard A1.02 j, A3.15 f

Thiel College strives to maintain a campus environment that fosters mutual respect and promotes harmonious, productive relationships. The institution believes that discrimination in any form constitutes misconduct that undermines the integrity of any relationship. Therefore, Thiel College prohibits bullying and discrimination that is sexual, racial, or religious in nature or is related to anyone's gender, national origin, age, sexual orientation, veteran status, or disability. This policy applies to all the Thiel college community (students, faculty, staff, and volunteers) and all individuals who may have contact with any member of this institution. The Title IX Coordinators and Deputy Coordinators are responsible for ensuring that the institution is compliant with Title IX, and for all policies, programs, coordination of resources, tracking and investigation in relation to Title IX. Link to Policy for Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct:

https://www.thiel.edu/assets/documents/campus_life/Title-IX-Policies-and-Procedures.pdf

Social Media

Maintaining professionalism is of utmost importance when using social media. Students should always assume that all postings you make to social media sites are visible to program faculty, future employers, and patients. This is true whether you think you are posting to a "members only" chat room or to a site in which a viewer must be "invited" to read your words or view other uploads. The following types of posts are prohibited on any social media platform, whether photographic or in written form. This is true even when, in your belief, the patient and other persons is/are not identified or identifiable:

- discussions of patient-related matters
- any form of patient data or statistics
- photographs of patients, including in the operating room
- photographs of cadavers and anatomical specimens
- the posting of diagnostic images, whether they are the subject of the post or in the background
- posting photographs in which your clinical location is identifiable
- any information regarding clinical site personal or negative information regarding college personnel, including faculty, staff, and fellow students

PA Studies students should not provide any content to a social media site (blog, feed, online forum, or any other site) that contains any information (favorable or unfavorable) which may be associated or identified with a clinical site, patient, or preceptor.

Requesting social media connection with preceptors, faculty, staff, and supervisors while currently a student is also unacceptable.

Violation of this policy will result in your appearance before the Student Progress Committee and possible dismissal from the program. Witnessing any violation of this policy should be immediately reported to the program director.

Student Grievance & Harassment *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A1.02j and A3.15 f,g*

Students may encounter a variety of problems, including interpersonal problems over the course of their tenure in this program. The student should make every reasonable effort to resolve the complaint informally by discussing the situation with the person most directly involved. If the problem is unresolved, the student should contact his/her advisor, and finally, the Program Director. While students are on clinical rotations, they should notify the clinical coordinator or course instructor for any difficulties they are encountering, even if they are able to resolve their difficulties in person. The student may choose to ask the preceptor for assistance and may also contact his/her advisor on campus.

If the student cannot resolve the issue, the student may initiate a grievance. This should be done within one month of the incident. To begin the process, the student should contact the Office of the Dean of Students. During this initial meeting, the Dean of Students or designee will outline the informal and formal grievance processes. More information regarding this policy can be found in the College's Student Handbook in the link: https://www.thiel.edu/assets/documents/campus_life/2017-2018_HandbookMaster.pdf

Student Progress and Appeals Policy *(ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.15 a,b,c,g)*

Student Progress Committee (SPC)

The Student Progress Committee (SPC) of the Physician Assistant Program will review all students at least once per semester to monitor for completion of requirements for progression and graduation. Student offenses and concerns regarding potentially unprofessional or other behaviors will also be referred to the SPC. The Student Progress Committee, at the conclusion of the review procedures, will recommend progression, deceleration, probation and/or dismissal. See Student Progress Actions section for details about each action.

Composition: The SPC shall be composed of the Academic Coordinator, Director of Clinical Education, and members of the faculty (voting members) appointed by the PD, and the Program Director (non-voting member). Other designated Physician Assistant faculty may be involved on a case-by-case basis.

Process: When a student fails to achieve satisfactory academic progress, is accused of academic dishonesty, or is accused of other program violations, the Student Progress Committee Review Process will be initiated. (See Sexual Harassment/Title IX section for explanation of the handling of sexual harassment grievances.)

- ❖ The accuser will, within three working days, inform the Program Director in writing of the accusation, providing as much detail as possible.
- ❖ Within three working days of notification, the Program Director will schedule a meeting of the Student Progress Committee.
- ❖ The committee will meet to discuss the situation or incident, interview witnesses and use any method allowed to gather information related to the incident. Multiple meetings may be required.
- ❖ Within three working days of the final meeting the PA faculty attending the review will prepare the committee's recommendations and forward them to the Program Director.
- ❖ The Program Director will accept or reject the recommendations including, if applicable, reasons for rejection of any recommendations. The Program Director will inform the student and members of the review process in writing on the course of action within three working days.
- ❖ A form accompanying the written course of action must be signed and returned by the student to the Program Director within seven days of receipt.
- ❖ A copy of all final recommendations will be placed in the student's academic file.
- ❖ Working Days are defined as those days within an academic semester or session. Holidays recognized by Thiel College and days that separate academic semesters and sessions are not counted in these timetables.

There will be times when extenuating circumstances call for an exception to these time frames. Requests for modifying these time frames must be presented to and approved by the Program Director.

Appeal Process: Students who disagree with the plan of action set forth by the Program Director and/or the Student Progress Committee may have the decision reviewed by the Dean of Thiel College. If the student wishes to appeal the disciplinary action, he or she:

1. Must submit a letter explaining his/her position to the VPAA with copies to the faculty member, his/her advisor, and the Program Director within seven (7) days after receiving the written notification.
2. May attend classes while the appeal is in process.

The VPAA/Dean of the College will follow the normal Thiel College hearing procedure outlined in the Thiel Student Handbook (https://www.thiel.edu/assets/documents/campus_life/2017-2018_HandbookMaster.pdf) and notify, in writing, the student, the student's advisor, the faculty member, and the department head, ordinarily within two (2) class days of the decision.

Student Progress Actions

Progression: When all requirements for progression are satisfied, the student will move on to the next phase of training.

Remediation: The program curriculum is rigorous and requires a full commitment from both students and faculty. Remediation is a process intended to correct a student's academic deficiencies and includes such activities as assignments, examinations, and other assessment. The following reasons

Remediation during Didactic Year: A student with an exam or evaluation score below 80% will be required to remediate his/her exam.

1. The student will work with the course director or their assigned faculty advisor/designee to collectively develop a strategy to successfully remediate the failed item which could include tutoring, additional readings, and developing efficient study skills.
2. All remediation must be completed within one week after grades have been released.
3. If a student does not complete a remediation assignment by the agreed upon (or specified) date, the student will be placed on probation.

Remediation of Practical Examinations or Assignments: A student who fails an assignment, project or practical examination must complete the following:

1. Remediate the failure by successfully repeating the assignment or practical examination as determined by the course director.
2. The student will be given an assignment to complete. The assignment is meant to satisfy knowledge deficiencies.
3. The highest grade that can be achieved for the remediation is 70%.
4. If a student does not complete a remediation assignment by the agreed upon (or specified) date, the student will be placed on probation.

Remediation of Clinical Year End of Rotation Examinations: A student will be required to achieve a minimum score of 70% (C) on the End of Rotation exam. Any student who is unsuccessful in meeting the minimum score requirement of 70% (C) on the first attempt will be:

1. Required to meet with the Clinical Coordinator and/or their assigned faculty advisor/designee for a remediation plan
2. Required to take another version of the exam the following Monday and complete an assignment.
 - a. Assignment will aim to reflect objectives missed in the exam.
 - b. Assignment is due within 1 week of the remediation plan meeting.
3. The highest grade the student will be able to receive for the repeat exam is 70% (C).

4. If a student fails the remediation exam (grade of <70%), they will be placed on academic probation and referred to the Student Progress Committee.

Remediation of a Rotation Requirement: If it is the Committee's determination that the student has not met the rotation requirements, the following actions will take place:

1. Implementation of a remediation plan.
2. The student will be required to repeat the rotation.
3. If the student is not able to remediate the rotation within the same clinical year, they will be required to remediate the rotation the following clinical year. This will delay graduation and sitting for the PANCE. Remediation of a failed rotation course will incur additional tuition/fees.
4. The highest grade the PA student can achieve for the rotation is 70% (C)
5. Repeating of the clinical rotation may cause a delay in graduation and additional tuition costs may occur.

Remediation of a Clinical Rotation

If a student fails a rotation (grade of <70%), the student will be placed on academic probation and referred to the Student Progress Committee. If it is the Committee's determination that the student has not satisfactorily met the rotation requirements, the following actions will take place:

1. Implementation of a remediation plan.
2. The student will be required to repeat the rotation.
3. If the student is not able to remediate the rotation within the same clinical year, they will be required to remediate the rotation the following clinical year. This will delay graduation and sitting for the PANCE. Remediation of a failed rotation course will incur additional tuition and fees.
4. The highest grade the PA student can achieve for the rotation is 70% (C)
5. If a student fails 2 (two) clinical rotations or 2 (two) courses in the entire program, the PA student will be dismissed from the PA Program.
6. No student will be allowed to repeat a rotation more than once. A failed performance of a repeated rotation (<70%) while on academic probation will be grounds for dismissal from the PA Program.
7. Note: Repeating a rotation may cause delay in graduation. In many states, this will have a negative impact on the student's ability to obtain/accept employment. Depending on the state, it may also be required to be documented on the student's records when applying for licensure.

Probation

Academic Probation: Students may be subject to Academic program probation for the following reasons:

- ❖ Failing to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better for one semester

- ❖ Not completing a remediation assignment by the agreed upon (or stated) date
- ❖ Because grades issued for Clinical rotations are composed of many different criteria, including outside evaluations, and because some evaluations from outside sources may not be available immediately upon completion of the rotation, students may be allowed to begin the next rotation without a grade being assigned. Once all evaluation materials are gathered, if the criteria for passing the rotation are not met, the student will be notified of academic probation (for a first failed rotation).

Professional Probation: A student may be subject to Professional program probation for a lapse in professionalism, which can include but is not limited to:

- ❖ Solicitation of clinical site.
- ❖ Breach of chain of command.
- ❖ Dishonest and/or unethical behavior (includes plagiarism, lying, or falsifying or omitting any required program information or documentation).
- ❖ Uncooperative, hostile, disruptive, negative, disrespectful, or verbally or physically abusive behavior manifested toward the program staff, patients, instructors, clinical preceptor(s), the PA Program, the University, medical staff, visitors, or fellow students (this includes disruptive behavior in the classroom).
- ❖ Exceeding the PA student scope of practice.
- ❖ Impersonating a PA or other health care professional.
- ❖ Refusing to see patients or perform a task as requested by a preceptor, faculty member, or staff.
- ❖ Insubordination to a preceptor or faculty member including refusal to accept constructive feedback or criticism or failure to adhere to the defined dress code
- ❖ Inappropriate, accusative, derogatory, argumentative, disrespectful or privileged information included in any kind of written materials, electronic mail, conversations, or comments in any open setting at the University or clinical site Use of profane, vulgar, abusive, obscene, or threatening language of any sort while participating in University activities.
- ❖ Any violation of requirements set forth in a PA course syllabus.
- ❖ Use of an electronic device that is disrespectful, distracting or not dedicated to the topic of instruction.
- ❖ Lack of respect for the privacy or property of others.
- ❖ Any other situation or condition not addressed in this list of behaviors will be considered independently according to the individual case.

Written Notice: A student will receive written notice of their probationary status from the Program Director. The letter will describe how the student has failed to meet expected standards, and it will detail the expectations and conditions to remain in and/or graduate from the program. It will also include steps that should be taken to remediate a deficiency or improve performance. The student will be required to meet with his/her assigned faculty advisor/designee as outlined in the conditions. The student will be required to sign this notice and a copy will be placed in the student's

file. Failure to comply with the conditions established will constitute grounds for further disciplinary action, including deceleration and dismissal from the program.

Deceleration: Students may be subject to program deceleration for the following reasons:

- ❖ Failing to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better for two semesters
- ❖ Failing to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.00 at the end the semester prior to the clinical year
- ❖ Failing to achieve a cumulative GPA of 3.00 at the end of the semester prior to graduation
- ❖ A repeated lapse in professionalism
- ❖ Not meeting probationary requirements

Written Notice: A student will receive written notice of their deceleration from the Program Director. A student may be reactivated within the program one year after being decelerated. The student must inform the PA Program of their intent to return no less than three months prior to the semester that they intend to return. The student will be required to submit a letter requesting reactivation and a letter of recommendation from a faculty member, written at the time of deceleration.

Reactivation: When a student is reactivated, the student will be allowed back into the program on probationary status. The student will receive a written notice that will stipulate the expectations and conditions to remain in/or graduate from the program. It will also include steps that should be taken to remediate a deficiency or improve performance. The student will be required to sign this notice. Failure to comply with the conditions established constitutes grounds for dismissal from the program.

Dismissal: Inappropriate, unprofessional, or threatening behavior as identified by the preceptor or PA Program will be referred to the Student Progress Committee of the PA program. Reasons for which a student may be subject to dismissal may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ❖ Failing to maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better for three semesters.
- ❖ All completed courses will be graded on a letter grade basis of A, B, C, D or F. Passing grades are considered a "C" or better. All courses must be passed to graduate. If a student earns a "D" or an "F" in a course, the student will be dismissed from the program.
- ❖ Failing to pass two (2) clinical rotations.
- ❖ A student is caught cheating.
- ❖ Falsifying medical records or submitting falsified SOAP notes or H&Ps.
- ❖ Writing unauthorized prescriptions.
- ❖ Forgery
- ❖ Theft
- ❖ Violation of HIPAA standards in any form.

- ❖ Conviction of a misdemeanor, felony or offense involving moral turpitude while enrolled as a Physician Assistant student.
- ❖ Illegally obtaining, possessing, selling, or using controlled substances.
- ❖ Using or being under the influence of drugs or alcohol while participating in any program activity or while present in any facility where program activities occur.
- ❖ Being dismissed from clinical site based upon inappropriate behavior or unprofessional conduct.
- ❖ Continued lapse in professionalism.
- ❖ Any action that could result in legal action being taken against the student by the clinical site or College.

Written Notice: A student will receive written notice of their dismissal from the Program Director. If the student is on campus, the Program Director will attempt to schedule a meeting in person to give the written notice to the student. If the student is not on campus, or cannot return for a meeting, the letter will be sent to the most recent address provided to the program by the student, via Certified Mail. Upon receipt of the written notice, the student must sign one copy and return it to the Program Director to confirm receipt. It is the responsibility of the student to provide a current address or to return a signed copy of the written notice of dismissal. A copy of the dismissal letter will be sent to the Registrar and Dean.

Exit Interview: Should you be dismissed from the program you are required to have an exit interview with the PA program director or designated faculty member. This will involve returning any instructional property that has been entrusted to you and turning in your identification badge and white clinical jacket. Other things to be considered at this time are clearance of all current debt with the College, the onset of the grace period if you should have school loans and termination or conversion of your health and disability coverage. You may also want to arrange for an exit interview with Financial Aid. Students dismissed from the program will no longer be able to attend program classes and activities unless an appeal is in process.

Student Records *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standards A3.17 a-f, A3.18*

The following matriculated student records will be maintained by the Thiel College and the Physician Assistant Program for the length of time specified. Some of these records and others may be maintained by other departments within the institution. For example, transcripts are maintained by the registrar and health records are maintained by student health. ****All records will be kept confidential; no student will have access to the academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty.***

<u>Document</u>	<u>Length of Time</u>
Educational transcripts and Graduation requirements <i>A3.17f</i>	Permanent

Admission records	A3.17a	Permanent
Didactic/clinical performance	A3.17c	Permanent
Clinical rotation schedule		Permanent
Advising records		Ten years after graduation
Remediation records	A3.17d	Ten years after graduation
Disciplinary/dismissal records	A3.17e	Permanent
Health/immunization screening	A3.17b	Ten years after graduation

Student Referral: Academic, Health, Counseling & Other Services

ARC-PA 5th ed. Standards A1.04, A3.10

Academic support and other services are available for all current students, including students in the Physician Assistant Program.

Academic Records & Registration: The Academic Records Office offers a number of services for our students, alumni, administration, faculty and staff, including: [transcript requests](#) and enrollment verifications, course registration and final exam schedules, and withdrawals. Academic Records is located on the first floor of Roth Hall, Telephone: 724-589-2009, Email registrar@thiel.edu. Link to Academic Records: <https://www.thiel.edu/academics/academic-records>

Academic Assistance: The Thiel Learning Commons (TLC) aims to enhance the academic development of Thiel students by providing a variety of proactive and innovative programs designed to supplement the student’s academic experience. TLC promotes collaborative learning opportunities to enable students to build on their strengths and maximize their potential for academic success. Students seeking supplemental learning opportunities are encouraged to visit TLC on the first floor of the library and take advantage of our free services. TLC is open Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Contact information can be found on the link to Thiel Learning Commons: <https://www.thiel.edu/library/the-learning-commons>

Career Development Center: The mission of the Career Development Center is to provide top-tier services to students, alumni, and employers. We partner with students to develop a personalized career plan and provide career-related opportunities that enable their professional and career development.

The Center is open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Other times and summer hours are available by appointment. Please contact the center at 724-589-2005 or

careercenter@thiel.edu schedule an appointment. The link to the Career Development Center is: <https://www.thiel.edu/academics/career-development-center>

Counseling Center: Counseling services are free to all enrolled Thiel students and help students explore any personal concerns or problems in a safe and confidential setting as well as promote the success and academic performance of students at all stages. Any shared communication with the counselor is the decision of the student and remains strictly confidential. Call 724-589-2125 or stop by to schedule an appointment. Link to Counseling Center Information: https://www.thiel.edu/campus_life/health-and-wellness/counseling-center. If a student is off campus (e.g., at a clinical rotation site) arrangements can be made by calling the Counseling Center, the Program Director or Principal Faculty, or Student Health Services. Call the Counseling Center at 724-589-2754; you may also call Public Safety at 1-724-589-2222 or the College operator at 1-800-24-THIEL to be connected to the Counseling Center or Student Health. Students will be given the contact information for the program director and faculty at Orientation. In the event of a crisis or emergency, call 911 and/or request emergent assistance from skilled health professionals at the clinical site.

Disability Resource Center: The Thiel College Disability Resource Center recognizes disability as a valued aspect of diversity and fosters an inclusive environment for the entire Thiel College community through awareness, accessibility, and empowerment. The office is committed not only to ensuring access, but also to supporting success. Location: Langenheim Library, Thiel Learning Commons Area/Room 5, Telephone: 724-589-2371, Fax: 724-589-2249, Email: accessibilityservices@thiel.edu. The website link to the Disability Resources Center is: https://www.thiel.edu/campus_life/campus-resources/disability-services

Financial Aid: The Financial Aid Office's primary goal is to work with you and your family to achieve your educational goals. After all, your education is an investment in your future. The financial aid office is located on the first floor of Roth Hall. Telephone: 724-589-2250; email: finaid@thiel.edu. Link to the Office of Financial aid: https://www.thiel.edu/financial_aid

Library: The Langenheim Memorial Library provides a wide range of services from traditional book and periodical collections, reference services and government depository holdings to Internet accessible databases and full-text document delivery. Link to contact information and library resources: <https://www.thiel.edu/library>

Shuttle Services: Thiel College Public Safety supervises a free student-staffed shuttle service, available to all students seven days a week.

- ❖ Hours of operation are typically 9 a.m. to 9 p.m.
- ❖ Travel anywhere within the Borough of Greenville limits
- ❖ The shuttle office is located on the first floor of the HMSC (across from the Student Life Office)
- ❖ Pickup and drop off point for all trips is the Howard Miller Student Center
- ❖ Not in operation during school breaks
- ❖ For this shuttle service, you may call 724-589-2222

Student Health Center: The Student Health Center provides treatment of minor illnesses and injuries, basic first aid supplies, blood pressure screenings, non-prescription cold, sinus and flu medications, and referral to local health care providers and health agencies. During the regular academic year, the office is staffed by a registered nurse. Public Safety is available to provide emergency care and transportation to an emergency room when the office is closed. Payment for physical examinations, immunizations and outside treatment is the responsibility of the parent/guardian and/or the student. The Student Health Center is located on the ground level of HMSC. Link to Health and Wellness: https://www.thiel.edu/campus_life/health-and-wellness

Technical Standards *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A3.13e*

Medical education requires not only the accumulation of medical knowledge, but also the acquisition of physical skills, stability, attitudes, and behaviors which are vital to successful completion of the program and future practice, particularly when under stress or within the time limits common in medical settings.

The Technical Standards for the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program have been established to ensure that students have the capability to demonstrate academic mastery, competence when performing clinical skills, and the ability to communicate clinical information.

A candidate for the Physician Assistant profession must be able to perform the following skills with or without accommodation. When requested, reasonable accommodations can be made in certain situations in conjunction with the Office of Disability Services, on an individual basis, and such that a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

Students who develop conditions while in the program which may impair their ability to meet the technical standards will be reevaluated. If the student's abilities appear to be compromised, the Program Director may request an independent medical assessment of the student's cognitive, psychological, or physical ability, to determine if the student meets the technical standards.

Every precaution will be taken to ensure that applicants or students with substantially impaired intellectual, physical, or emotional functions do not place themselves, the educational process, or the patient in jeopardy.

The technical standards include:

Observation

- ❖ Observe materials presented in the learning environment including audiovisual presentations in lectures and laboratories, microscopic examination of microorganisms, gross organs, and tissues in normal and pathologic states.

- ❖ Effective observation requires functional vision, hearing, and somatic sensation to observe a patient's condition, both at a distance and closely, and the ability to elicit information from a physical exam that includes inspection, auscultation, and palpation.

Communication

- ❖ Elicit information from patients, including the ability to speak, hear and observe patients and perceive nonverbal communications. Describe changes in mood, activity and posture.
- ❖ Communicate with patients and their families and the health care team through oral, written, and electronic forms.
- ❖ Convey sensitivity and respect in all communications with patients and their families as well as all members of the health care team.

Motor

- ❖ Elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other components of the physical examination.
- ❖ Execute movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Such skills require coordination of gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and sensation.
- ❖ Manual dexterity of wrists, hands, fingers, and arms. Ability to grasp, palpate, pinch, hold and percuss. Ability to lift, pull, push, rotate and twist. Ability to cut. Ability to measure. Ability to operate and maintain equipment (ventilators, monitors, defibrillators, etc.)
- ❖ Ability to adhere to Universal Precautions and Sterile Technique.
- ❖ Manipulate equipment and instruments to perform basic laboratory tests and medical procedures required to attain curricular goals (e.g., needles, stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, tongue blades, intravenous equipment, gynecologic speculum, and scalpel).
- ❖ Physical strength to support, position and transition another person, stand for long periods of time, perform CPR/resuscitation.
- ❖ Possess the physical stamina required to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study. Long periods of sitting, standing, and moving are required throughout both the didactic and clinical phases.

Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

- ❖ Apply knowledge and reasoning to solve problems as outlined by the curriculum.
- ❖ Comprehend three dimensional relationships and the spatial relationships of structures.
- ❖ Collect, organize, prioritize, analyze, and assimilate large amounts of technically detailed and complex information within a limited time frame. This information will be presented in a variety of educational settings, including lectures, small group

discussions, and individual clinical settings. The candidate should be able to analyze, integrate, and apply this information appropriately for problem solving and decision-making.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

- ❖ Possess the ability to use his/her intellectual ability, exercise good judgment, and complete all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.
- ❖ Promptly complete all academic and patient care responsibilities.
- ❖ Develop relationships with patients and colleagues.
- ❖ Tolerate physical, mental, and emotional stress in training and patient care while maintaining emotional and mental stability.
- ❖ Be adaptable, flexible, and able to function in the face of uncertainty within the healthcare team. He/she must have a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values.
- ❖ Possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems.
- ❖ Accept criticism and respond with appropriate modification of behavior.
- ❖ Form a compassionate relationship with his/her patients while maintaining appropriate boundaries for a professional relationship.

The faculty of the Physician Assistant Program have a responsibility to present candidates for the PA degree who have the knowledge, attitudes, and skills to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a broad spectrum of patient care. The Admissions Committee is responsible for adhering to these technical standards during the selection of Physician Assistant students.

If you have any questions about this document or whether you meet the standards as described above, please contact the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program Admissions Office.

Tuition and Fees Refund Policy *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard A1.02k*

Once enrolled, a student wishing to withdraw from the program will have his tuition refunded to the degree determined by the following schedule:

Withdrawal Charges:

Second week 20 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Third week 30 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Fourth week 40 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Fifth week 50 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Sixth week 60 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Seventh week 70 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Eighth week 80 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Ninth week 90 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs
10th week 100 percent of all tuition, fees, room, and board costs

Financial aid recipients who withdraw from the College may be required to return a portion of their financial aid to the federal programs. The policy is subject to change in accordance with revisions in federal regulations. The student must contact the Office of Financial Aid and Student Accounts prior to withdrawal, to review his/her financial status and obligations.

Wellness *ARC-PA 5th ed. Standard B2.20*

The PA training program is an intensive and rigorous program. The program requirements can be very demanding and stressful, alone or in combination with other events in a student's personal life. We strongly encourage students to utilize the resources available to them on campus, including Student Health Center and our Counseling Services. We also encourage students to inform their faculty advisors in the event they experience problems or stresses that may affect their academic obligations or patient care responsibilities. The faculty will endeavor to work with the student to try to arrive at a solution.

In addition, the program has instituted a Physician Assistant Wellness Seminar series, designed to provide effective strategies for maintaining personal wellness. This program will begin at Orientation and continue through graduation, to assist students in finding the appropriate strategies for coping with stress at various stages of their education and beyond.

Withdrawal *ARC- PA 5th ed. Standard A3.15d*

Should you withdraw from the program or college, you are required to have an exit interview with the Registrar, the Physician Assistant Program Director (and/or a designated faculty member). This will involve returning any instructional property that has been entrusted to you and turning in your identification badge and white clinical jacket. Other things to be considered at this time are clearance of all current debt with the College, the onset of the grace period if you should have school loans and termination or conversion of your health and disability coverage. You may also want to arrange for an exit interview with Financial Aid. Students dismissed from the program will no longer be able to attend program classes and activities unless an appeal is in process.

Forms

The following forms (located at the end of this manual) must be completed by the student upon entry to the program and updated as needed:

- ❖ Acknowledgement of Student Policy Manual
- ❖ Emergency Contact Form



**THIEL COLLEGE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM
STUDENT POLICY MANUAL
RECEIPT AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I acknowledge that I have received and read the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program Student Policy Manual and have had an opportunity to have any questions answered regarding its content.

I understand and acknowledge that I am bound by policies and procedures contained in the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program Student Policy Manual, the Thiel College Clinical Clerkship Manual, the Thiel College Student Handbook, and the Thiel College Catalogue. I agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained in these documents.

The Thiel College Physician Assistant program reserves the right to update the Physician Assistant Program Student Policy Manual without prior notice. The most recent Physician Assistant Program Student Manual will supersede all previously distributed versions.

My continuation in the Thiel College Physician Assistant program will be contingent upon submission of a signed and dated Receipt and Acknowledgement form

Name (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Acknowledgement of Updates to the Thiel College Physician Assistant Program Student Policy Manual, if applicable:

Date _____ Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____ Name _____

Signature _____

Date _____ Name _____

Signature _____



THIEL COLLEGE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM EMERGENCY CONTACT FORM

(Please Print Legibly)

Name: _____

Birth Date: _____

Personal Email Address (not @thiel.edu): _____

Local Address:

Permanent Address:

Primary Phone #: _____

Alternative Phone #: _____

In case of an emergency contact:

Name	Relationship	Phone #
1. _____	_____	_____
2. _____	_____	_____
3. _____	_____	_____

Any other information you wish to provide:

Signature _____ Date _____

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Physician Assistant program
if there any changes to the above emergency contact information