

Division of Physician Assistant Studies

Dismissal Policy

Refer also to the *Definitions of Academic Sanctions Policy- Dismissal* section

All decisions regarding dismissal from the program will be made following review by the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CAPS), which will review the circumstances of the current matter, as well as the student's entire record within the program before making a recommendation to the program director.

The Committee on Academic and Professional Standards (CAPS) has been established by the Division of Physician Assistant Studies for the purpose of evaluating students who are at risk for failing to meet performance standards or who have failed to meet performance standards in any of the following areas:

- Academics (didactic and clinical education)
- Academic integrity
- Professional behavior

The Committee on Academic and Professional Standards is comprised of the medical director for the physician assistant studies program, the director of clinical education for the physician assistant studies program, and principal faculty in the Division of Physician Assistant Studies, with a chair appointed by the physician assistant studies program director. A quorum of three is required to make a recommendation. In cases where a student fails to meet academic or professional behavior standards during a clinical rotation, the director of clinical education (or his or her designee) must be present at the CAPS meeting in which the student's case is considered. In all cases, the program director will review the recommendations of the committee and make a final decision regarding a student's disposition.

The Committee on Academic and Professional Standards will meet regularly (at a minimum, prior to the end of the semester) and as needed to closely monitor each student's progress, with the goal of promptly identifying deficiencies in knowledge, skills, or professional behavior. Referral of a student to the Committee on Academic and Professional Standards may be made by any physician assistant studies program faculty with concerns about a student's academic performance, academic integrity, conduct, or professional behavior. Program faculty includes the program director, medical director, principal faculty, and instructional faculty (including preceptors for supervised clinical practice experiences).

A student identified by program faculty as having a significant deficit in knowledge, skills, or professional behaviors at any point in the program may be subject upon CAPS review to sanctions which include remediation, deceleration, or dismissal from the program.

Conditions Which May Lead to Dismissal

Circumstances leading to CAPS referral, and under which a student may be dismissed from the program include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Failure to meet post-acceptance requirements as specified in the admissions policy and offer of acceptance letter
- Failure to raise the cumulative GPA to 3.0 by the end of the semester following the semester in which a student is placed on academic probation
- Failure of more than one course within a given semester
- Failure to meet academic and/or professional standards while a student is decelerated (repeating a portion of the curriculum)
- Gross violation of professional conduct, including academic dishonesty
- Conduct which would render the student ineligible to participate in clinical rotations or obtain licensure
- Failure to pass a urine drug screen at any time during the program
- Failure to meet minimum technical standards as required by the program
- Inability to meet all program requirements for graduation within five years of original matriculation date

Appeal of an Academic Sanction

Students in the physician assistant studies program have the right to appeal an academic sanction, in accordance with West Virginia University policy. If a student appeals a penalty of dismissal, the Vice Dean of Professional and Undergraduate Programs will determine if the student shall be allowed to continue in the program, and the conditions of that continuation, until the case is determined.

Further information about the process for appealing an academic sanction (including suspension and dismissal from the program) for failure to meet academic requirements/standards or academic dishonesty can be found in the “Student Grievance and Grade Appeals Policies” folder of the **Physician Assistant Student E-Handbook**. The appeals process is outlined in the *Academic and Professional Standards* section of the WVU Graduate/Professional Academic Catalog at <http://catalog.wvu.edu/graduate/enrollmentandregistration/#appealstext>

Applicable ARC-PA 5th Edition Standards

A3.02 The program must define, publish, make readily available and consistently apply its policies and practices to all students.

A3.15 The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to students upon admission:

- a) any required academic standards,
- b) requirements and deadlines for progression in and completion of the program,
- c) policies and procedures for remediation and deceleration,
- d) policies and procedures for withdrawal and dismissal,
- e) policy for student employment while enrolled in the program,
- f) policies and procedures for allegations of student mistreatment, and

g) policies and procedures for student grievances and appeals.

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