

Middle Tennessee State University

MS in Physician Assistant Studies

Preceptor Handbook



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Welcome

Middle Tennessee State University Physician Assistant Studies program would like to take this opportunity to express our sincere gratitude to the clinical preceptors for their hard work and dedication to this program and the physician assistant (PA) students. The clinical experiences the student will obtain in your office or clinic are of critical importance to a successful learning experience in the program. The clinical setting synthesizes concepts and application of principles for quality health care delivery. You, as a clinical preceptor, are the key to successful learning experiences. The PA student will work closely with you, learning from your advice and example. Through your supervision, the student will progressively develop the skills and clinical judgment necessary to become a practicing PA. The preceptor will also complete evaluations and review of learning outcomes with the student while on rotation. Below you will find important information about precepting PA students, please closely review each section and reach out to the MTSU PA Studies program with any questions that may arise.

Sincerely,

Dr. Marie Patterson

Marie Patterson, MSM, DHSc, PA-C
Program Director

Shannon Colvin

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Statement of Mission, Vision, and Goals

Middle Tennessee State University Mission

Middle Tennessee State University, a comprehensive, innovative institution, attracts students to a distinctive bachelor's, master's, specialist, and doctoral programs that prepare graduates to thrive in their chosen professions and a changing global society. Students and faculty generate, preserve, and disseminate knowledge and collaboratively promote excellence through teaching and learning, research, creative activity, and public engagement.

Webpage Link: [Mission Statement | Middle Tennessee State University \(mtsu.edu\)](https://www.mtsu.edu/mission-statement)



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MTSU Physician Assistant Studies Program Mission Statement

The mission of the MTSU Physician Assistant Studies Program is to provide comprehensive innovative medical education of the highest quality to prepare a diverse community of Physician Assistants to thrive as compassionate and collaborative members of the health care team with a commitment to community service and increasing access to care.

MTSU Physician Assistant Studies Program Vision

The MTSU Physician Assistant Studies Program will be a leading educational program with national recognition for excellence and service-learning, quality and compassionate health care, and increasing access to care in diverse populations.

MTSU Physician Assistant Studies Program Goals

1. Recruit, enroll, and retain highly qualified diverse applicants committed to compassionate patient care as a Physician Assistant.
2. Promote an environment that encourages a life-long commitment to community service.
3. Prepare graduates to practice in areas of high need and increase access to care to diverse populations.
4. Provide quality medical education that prepares graduates to gain the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to practice as an entry-level Physician Assistant.

Leadership Team

MS in PA Studies Directors



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Program Director, Dr. Marie Patterson



To say that Dr. Patterson is True Blue is an understatement. She has been a Murfreesboro resident since she was 5 years old. She has been a PA for 16 years, 10 of which were spent practicing medicine in the Student Health Clinic on the MTSU campus. *“I love the students here, and I love the community in middle Tennessee. It is my goal to have a student body with a high percentage of students from Tennessee who will then stay in this state and increase access to care for the many underserved areas we have. I am so thankful to be back at MTSU and to be involved in this PA program.”*

Medical Director, Dr. Edward “Dunk” Eastham



Dr. Eastham is a board-certified pediatrician who has been in private practice for more than 30 years. His experience included inner city and suburban practices in Atlanta and Nashville before he moved to Murfreesboro in 2001. He has held several leadership positions at Saint Thomas Rutherford Hospital, including being elected chief of staff by his fellow physicians in 2010. The medical staff also named him Physician of the Year in 2012, and the Saint Thomas Rutherford Society chose him as Physician Champion in 2019. Teaching residents and Nurse Practitioner and Physician Assistant students has been a focus of his clinical practice, and he is excited to be part of the leadership team for MTSU’s new Physician Assistant program.

Director of Didactic Education, Dr. Jason Huddleston



Dr. Huddleston has always had a vision for helping people. As a surgical PA with 20 years of experience, he has had the privilege of caring for residents in middle Tennessee for over a decade. While his passion for the medical and surgical care of injury and illness has not waned, he has shifted his focus toward training the next generation of PA students at MTSU. He is excited to bring his enthusiasm for education and the PA profession to the program.

Director of Clinical Education, Shannon Colvin



Ms. Colvin comes to MTSU from University of Tennessee–Chattanooga, where she was the associate program director for the Master of Public Health program. Previously, Colvin lived in Houston, Texas, working at Baylor College of Medicine and practicing clinically in the pediatric intensive care unit at Texas Children’s Hospital. She earned her Physician Assistant and Master of Public Health degrees from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Her professional passions include delivering high-quality medical care in areas that are underserved, and pediatric health/development.



Clinical Phase

Clinical Year Calendar

Please see below for the rotation dates for the clinical year.

Rotation Schedule	
Rotation 1	08/21-09/29/2023
Rotation 2	10/02-11/10/2023
Rotation 3	11/13-12/22/2023
Rotation 4	01/02-02/09/2024
Rotation 5	02/12-03/22/2024
Rotation 6	03/25-05/03/2024
Summative Testing Week	05/06-05/10/2024
Rotation 7	05/13-06/21/2024
Rotation 8	06/24-08/02/2024
Graduation	08/03/2024

General Goals of the Clinical Year

The clinical year advances students from the classroom setting to an active, hands-on learning environment to prepare them for a lifetime of continued refinement of skills and expanded knowledge as a practicing PA. The goals specific to the clinical year include:

- Apply didactic knowledge to supervised clinical practice.
- Develop and sharpen clinical problem-solving skills.
- Expand and develop the medical fund of knowledge.
- Perfect the art of history taking and physical examination skills.



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- Sharpen and refine oral presentation and written documentation skills.
- Develop an understanding of the PA role in health care delivery.
- Prepare for the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam
- Develop interpersonal skills and professionalism necessary to function as a cohesive member of a medical team.

Physician Assistant Competencies

The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, clinical technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem solving, interpersonal skills and professional behavior. These competencies are demonstrated within the scope of practice, whether medical or surgical, for each individual physician assistant as that scope is defined by the supervising physician and appropriate to the practice setting. (NCCPA)

Preceptor Guidance

Definition of Preceptor Role

The preceptor is a vital part of the teaching program. Preceptors will serve as role models for the student and, through guidance and teaching, will help the student improve skills in history taking, physical examination, effective communication, physical diagnosis, succinct recording and reporting, problem assessment, and plan development including a logical evidence-based approach to further studies and therapy.

Preceptor Responsibilities

Preceptor responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Orient students at the onset of the rotation with the practice/site policies and procedures and review the expectations and objectives for the rotation.



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- Provide ongoing and timely feedback regarding clinical performance, knowledge base, and critical thinking skills. This can be done with the student informally each week or at a designated time and can be formally reported to the clinical coordinator by submitting mid-rotation and end-of-rotation evaluations.
- Supervise, demonstrate, teach, and observe clinical activities in order to aid in the development of clinical skills and ensure proper patient care.
- Delegate to the student increasing levels of responsibility for clinical assessment and management as appropriate to the student's experience and expertise.
- Participate in the evaluation of clinical skills and medical knowledge base through the following mechanisms:
 - a. Direct supervision, observation, and teaching in the clinical setting.
 - b. Direct evaluation of presentations (including both oral and written)
 - c. Assignment of outside readings and research to promote further learning.
- Audit and co-sign charts in order to evaluate the student's ability to write appropriate and complete progress notes, histories, physical examinations, assessments, and treatment plans.
- Complete and promptly return the evaluation forms provided by the program reflecting on student knowledge and skills as well as their improvement throughout the rotation.
- Promptly notify the PA program of any circumstances that might interfere with the accomplishment of the above goals or diminish the overall training experience.
- Maintain an ethical approach to the care of patients by serving as a role model for the student.
- Demonstrate cultural competency through interactions with patients.
- Spend a few minutes each week in a candid summary discussion with the student as to whether each is meeting the other's needs and expectations, and what changes need to be made in the roles and relationship.
- Provide timely feedback to the student and the program regarding student performance.



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The Preceptor–Student Relationship

The preceptor should always maintain a professional relationship and adhere to appropriate professional boundaries with the PA student. Social activities and personal relationships outside of the professional learning environment should be appropriate and carefully selected so as not to put the student or preceptor in a compromising situation. Contact through web-based social networking sites (e.g., Facebook, Instagram) should be avoided until the student fully matriculates through the educational program or completes the rotation where the supervision is occurring. If the preceptor and student have an existing personal relationship prior to the start of the rotation, a professional relationship must be maintained at all times in the clinical setting. Please consult the Director of Clinical Education regarding specific school or university policies regarding this issue.

Clinical Faculty Restricted as Health Providers

The clinical instructors/ faculty/ preceptors for the PA Program will not participate as health care or mental health providers for students in the PA program. The only exception to this policy would be in emergency situations.

Expected Progression of PA student

PA students are trained to take detailed histories, perform physical examinations, deliver oral presentations of findings, and develop differential diagnoses. As the year continues, they should be able to more effectively come up with an assessment and plan, though this will involve discussion with the preceptor. If the preceptor deems it necessary, students initially may observe patient encounters. However, by the end of the first week, students should actively participate in evaluating patients. As the preceptor feels more comfortable with the student's skills and abilities, the student should be allowed progressively increasing supervised autonomy.

Orientation and Communicating Student Expectations

Orientation of the student to the rotation site serves several purposes. Orientation facilitates a quicker transition in allowing the student to become a member of the medical team. It also



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establishes a feeling of enthusiasm and belonging to the team as well as helping students develop the functional capability to work more efficiently.

On the first day of the rotation (or when possible, prior to the rotation), the student should take care of any administrative needs, including obtaining a name badge and computer password, and completing any necessary paperwork, EMR training, and additional site-specific training, as needed.

Early on in the clinical rotation, it is recommended that the preceptor and student formulate mutual goals in regards to what they hope to achieve during the rotation. The preceptor should also communicate their expectations of the student during the rotation.

Expectations can include (but not limited to):

- Hours.
- Interactions with office and professional staff.
- General attendance.
- Call schedules Overnight/weekend schedule.
- Participation during rounds and conferences.
- Expectations for clinical care, patient interaction, and procedures.
- Oral presentations.
- Written documentation.
- Assignments/ supplemental reading.
- Write-ups.
- Anything additional that the preceptor deems necessary.

Safety and Security

Safety and security are of utmost importance to the MTSU PA Studies Program. We ask that each preceptor create a safety and security orientation prior to the arrival of students. As a preceptor the safety and security of the PA students should always be taken into consideration.



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If students feel unsafe in any capacity while on rotation it is requested that they report to the clinical preceptor and/or the Director of Clinical Education immediately.

Preparing Staff

The staff of an office or clinic has a key role in ensuring that each student achieves their potential on rotation. By helping the student learn about office, clinic, or ward and the location of critical resources, they help a student become functional and confident. Students, like their preceptors, depend on staff for patient scheduling and assistance during a patient's visit. Students should communicate with the staff about procedures for making appointments, retrieving medical records, bringing patients into examination rooms, ordering tests, retrieving test results, and charting.

The preceptor should not assume that receptionists, schedulers, and nursing staff automatically know what role the student will have in a practice. The preceptor should inform the staff about how the student will interact with them and with patients. Consider having a meeting or creating a memo with/for staff in advance of the student's arrival to discuss:

- Student's name,
- Student's schedule (when they will be in the office),
- Student's expected role in patient care,
- Expected effect of the student on office operation, and
- How patients will be scheduled for the student.

Many sites find it helpful to create their own written orientation manual, which is given to the student prior to the first day of the rotation. This helps the students quickly become more efficient. Creating such a site-specific orientation/policy handbook can be delegated to the students you host, with each subsequent student adding to a document that you as the preceptor maintain and edit.

PA Student Clinical Attendance Policy

Students are expected to communicate with preceptors any special scheduling needs they may have during the rotation — in particular, when they may be out of the clinical setting for either



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personal reasons or program-required educational activities.

Attendance during the clinical year is mandatory and imperative to the success of the PA student. A student should average 36 hours per week with a maximum of 330 hours over the entirety of the rotation (and as long as the rotation allows the student to meet the learning outcomes). These hours can include evenings, nights, weekends, and holidays; duty periods must not exceed 24 hours in duration. No student should miss a clinical day without alerting the clinical preceptor and the Director of Clinical Education. As a preceptor we ask that you document all absences and tardiness that occurs over the rotation for each student.

In the case of quarantine based on positive exposure, the student will alert the clinical preceptor and the Director of Clinical Education about the exposure. If the student is unable to complete the learning outcomes for the rotation due to quarantine the student will be able to complete contingency guidelines available for each rotation to ensure learning outcomes are met. It is the student's responsibility to notify both the clinical preceptor and the Director of Clinical Education regarding the time needed for quarantine.

Further, Tardiness and early leave will not be tolerated unless it is outside the students control. Students must notify the program and their preceptors of any anticipated tardiness or early departure for any reason. If the student is repeatedly late to the rotation and/or leaving early on more than two occasions during the rotation without proper documentation/approval the student will be asked to meet with the clinical coordinating team.

Please be aware travel days are not recognized by the PA program as appropriate absent days. The student should plan to arrive on the first day of the rotation, as scheduled. Any unexpected absences from the PA student should be brought to the attention of the Clinical Coordinating Team as soon as possible.

Clinical Year Inclement Weather Guidelines

Students should use caution during inclement weather and stay current on local road conditions. They are encouraged to use their best judgment when traveling to the clinical rotation sites. Students need to alert both the clinical coordinating team and their clinical preceptor if they are unable to attend a clinical rotation due to weather conditions or if they are expected to be late due to inclement weather. Excused absences due to weather conditions will be at the discretion of the preceptor and the Director of Clinical Education.



Supervision of the PA Student

During a student's time at the clinic or hospital, the preceptor must be available for supervision, consultation, and teaching, or designate an alternate preceptor. Although the supervising preceptor may not be with a student during every shift, it is important to clearly assign students to another MD, DO, or PA who will serve as the student's preceptor for any given time interval. Having more than one clinical preceptor has the potential to disrupt continuity for the student but also offers the advantage of sharing preceptorship duties and exposes students to valuable variations in practice style, which can help learners develop the professional personality that best fits them. In the case where supervision is not available, students may be given an assignment or may spend time with ancillary staff (x-ray, lab, physical therapy, etc.), as these experiences can be very valuable. The preceptor should be aware of the student's assigned activities, at all times.

Students are not employees of the hospitals or clinics and, therefore, work entirely under the preceptor's supervision. Students are not to substitute for paid clinicians, clerical staff, or other workers at the clinical sites. On each rotation, it is the student's responsibility to ensure that the supervising physician or preceptor also sees all the student's patients. The preceptor can provide direct supervision of technical skills with gradually increased autonomy in accordance with the PA student's demonstrated level of expertise. However, every patient must be observed, and every procedure evaluated prior to patient discharge. The preceptor must document the involvement of the PA student in the care of the patient in all aspects of the visit. The preceptor must also specifically document that the student was supervised during the entirety of the patient visit. The PA student will not be allowed to see, treat, or discharge a patient without evaluation by the clinical preceptor.

Informed Patient Consent Regarding Student Involvement in Patient Care

The patients are essential partners in this educational endeavor as well. All efforts will be made to observe strict confidentiality, respect patient privacy and dignity, and honor their preferences regarding treatment. All students complete HIPAA training prior to their clinical year. However, patients must be informed that a physician assistant student will participate in their care, and the



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patient's consent must be obtained. This may be done through standardized forms at admission or on a person-by-person basis. If the patient requests a physician and refuses the PA student's services, the request must be honored. Patients must know that they will see their regular provider, and they should have an explicit opportunity to decline student involvement.

Documentation

If allowed by the preceptor and/or facility, PA students may enter information in the medical record. Preceptors should clearly understand how different payors view student notes as related to documentation of services provided for reimbursement purposes. Any questions regarding this issue should be directed to the Director of Clinical Education. Students are reminded that the medical record is a legal document. All medical entries must be identified and signed as a PA student (PA-S). The preceptor cannot bill for the services of a student. Preceptors are required to document the services they provide as well as review and edit all student documentation. Although student documentation may be limited for reimbursement purposes, students' notes are legal and are contributory to the medical record. Moreover, writing a succinct note that communicates effectively is a critical skill that PA students should develop. The introduction of EMRs (electronic medical records) presents obstacles for students if they lack a password or are not fully trained in the use of specific EMR systems. **Under no circumstances is a student allowed to log into an EMR using the provider's credentials.** In these cases, students are encouraged to hand-write notes, if simply for the student's own edification, which should be reviewed by preceptors whenever possible for feedback.

Medicare Policy

Medicare reimbursement requires limited student participation in regards to documentation. Students are allowed to document only aspects of the history that include the past medical history, family history, social history, and review of systems. The preceptor must document the History of Present Illness (HPI), Physical Exam (PE), and all medical decision-making for proper billing. Following is a link to the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), which provides direct access to CMS rules regarding student documentation.

<https://practicingclinicians.com/the-exchange/cms-final-rule-np-and-pa-preceptor-documentation-updates--success->



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Prescription Writing

Students may dictate/transcript prescribing information for the preceptor, but the physician must sign all prescriptions. More specifically, the student's name is not to appear on the prescription. For clinical rotation sites that use electronic prescriptions, the preceptor MUST log into the system under their own password and personally sign and send the electronic prescription. Further, at no time should the student carry or deliver signed prescriptions. These guidelines must not be violated by the student or the preceptor.

Student Evaluation

The evaluation is designed to promote communication between preceptor and student. Preceptors are encouraged to discuss strengths and weaknesses observed to encourage students about their strengths as well as provide opportunities to improve upon their weaknesses. The evaluation also reflects on student knowledge and skills as well as their improvement throughout the rotation. The preceptor's evaluation of the student is tremendously important. On required rotations (i.e., core rotations required by MTSU PA Studies Program for all students prior to graduation), a passing evaluation from the preceptor is mandatory. If deemed "pre-entrustable" (fail) the student may be requested to remediation and possibly repeat the rotation as specified by the program. The final grade for a clinical rotation and the decision to pass or fail a student are ultimately made by MTSU PA Studies Program.

Preceptors are encouraged to perform a brief end-of-rotation evaluations privately with colleagues and staff to get additional insight into the student's professionalism and effectiveness as a team player with all members of the health care team. These comments are as helpful contributions to student evaluations. Additionally, staff feedback may improve the student experience from one rotation to another and can help efficiency while also maximizing educational opportunities.

Evaluations are specific to each rotation for the MTSU PA Studies Program, this is designed to specifically highlight the learning outcomes necessary to pass the rotation and successfully graduate from the program. These outcomes are introduced to the student and preceptor on the course syllabi provided. They are then re-introduced for the mid-point evaluation and finally assessed on the final preceptor evaluation. This design is to establish transparency of the



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learning outcomes/required measures for both preceptor and student. Each learning outcomes is graded “Entrustable” (Pass) and “Pre-entrustable” (fail). The grades of entrustable vs pre-entrustable are further described on the final preceptor evaluation form.

Below is the schedule for submission of the evaluations for every rotation:

- Mid-Rotation Evaluation: Monday of Week 4 by 9AM
- Final Preceptor Evaluation: Friday of End of Rotation (the Friday of the final week) by 5PM
- Student Evaluation of Rotation: Friday of End of Rotation (the Friday of the final week) by 5PM

While students may have only one formal/graded evaluation during the clinical rotation, it is imperative that they receive regular daily positive and constructive feedback from their preceptors to help improve their clinical performance.

Rotation Specific Clinical Objectives

Please refer to the syllabus provided with this preceptor handbook for rotation-specific clinical learning objectives.

Student Responsibilities

In addition to adhering to the standards of professional conduct, students are expected to perform the following during their clinical rotations:

- Obtain detailed histories and conduct physical exams, develop a differential diagnosis, formulate an assessment and plan through discussion with the preceptor, give oral presentations, and document findings.
- Perform and/or interpret common lab results and diagnostics.
- Educate and counsel patients across the lifespan regarding health-related issues.
- Attend clinical rotations as scheduled in addition to grand rounds, lectures, and conferences, as available.
- Demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, and flexibility during the



clinical year.

Standards of Professional Conduct

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. It involves placing the interest of the patient above one's own interest. PAs are required to conform to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct. As stated with NCCPA PA Competencies regarding professionalism a student is expected to exhibit:

- Understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the physician assistant.
- Professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers.
- Respect, compassion, and integrity.
- Accountability to patients, society, and the profession.
- Commitment to excellence and on-going professional development.
- Commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent, and business practices.
- Sensitivity and responsiveness to patients' cultures, ages, genders, and abilities.
- Self-reflection, critical curiosity, and initiative.
- Healthy behaviors and life balance.
- Commitment to the education of students and other health care professionals.

During clinical year professionalism in the MTSU PA Program is of great importance, this specifically means the ability to:

- Utilize professional communications with the clinical team and PA department staff, sites, preceptors, and others encountered in the clinical year, at all times.
- Complete credentialing and grading requirements promptly.
- Ensure timely communication with the Clinical Coordinating team regarding EOR testing.
- Generate and complete/submission of assigned rotation coursework, including final patient encounter logs.



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- Complete the evaluations by due dates required.

PA students are expected to adhere to the same high ethical and professional standards required of certified PAs. The professional conduct of PA students is evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the professional phase (i.e., the didactic and clinical years) of the program. Violations which are deemed “pre-entrustable” with regards to professionalism behaviors may include, but are not limited to, disruptive behavior, non-appearance for rotation, inappropriate reactions to criticism or inappropriate behaviors while on-site, poor interpersonal skills, HIPAA violations, late submission of patient log/preceptor evaluations, etc. Excessive and unexcused absences, tardiness, and early departure from clinical rotations are considered professionalism issues.

If preceptors observe any concerns about a student’s professionalism, please contact the Director of Clinical Education immediately.

Identification of Physician Assistant Students Policy

White Coats

All physician assistant students must wear the appropriate Middle Tennessee State University physician assistant Studies long-sleeved white lab coat in the clinical setting unless prohibited by a certain facility or setting (operating rooms, etc.). The lab coat must have the official program-issued MTSU Physician Assistant Program patch affixed to the left sleeve as well as the student's full name and the credentials PA -S embroidered on the coat. Coats must be buttoned, clean, pressed, and maintained at all times.

Picture ID badges

All physician assistant students must wear their MTSU physician assistant studies program picture ID while in the program. It must be attached to their white coat or on their clothes and must be easily clearly visible. While in the clinical setting, physician assistant students must be easily identifiable to distinguish them from physicians, medical students, other health care profession students, and graduates. Additionally, students may be required to use the site-



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specific identification such as picture IDs or name badges and they must comply with these requirements.

Verbal Identification

All physician assistant students must always identify themselves as a physician assistant student to avoid confusion. They must never identify themselves as a graduate physician assistant, physician, medical student, resident or any other type of medical professional. While in the MTSU physician assistant studies program they must not use any previously earned titles such as PhD, RN, EMT or any other to avoid confusion. In addition, if someone mistakes a PA student for another medical professional the PA student must correct them immediately.

Encounter logging

To ensure patients are seeing a wide variety of patients across the life span and in different clinical setting the MTSU PA Studies Program requires students to enter patient encounters and procedures into an online logging system. Students are expected to be thorough and honest when tracking these experiences. Students are asked to keep logging up to date. Daily entry is encouraged. Clinical faculty will do random reviews throughout the rotation to ensure students comply. Encounter logging is not required to happen during the time physically on site. We encourage the preceptor to also remind the student of logging requirements, as able.

Specific Program Policies

Please refer to the PA Studies Student Handbook [here](#) for program-specific policies on the following:

- Substance use
- University Harassment Policies and PA Studies Program mistreatment Policy
- Background Check
- Drug Screening
- Immunization and Screening Policies



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- HIPAA training
- Infectious and Environmental Hazards Policy
- OSHA Bloodborne Pathogen Training

The following link to the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) provides information about federal laws that protect students against racial, sexual, or age discrimination:

<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/know.html>

Print out of the above policies are available at the MTSU PA Studies Program and can be delivered directly to the preceptor, if requested.

The Preceptor–Program Relationship

The success of clinical training of PA students depends on maintaining good communication among the student, the PA program, preceptors, and the Director of Clinical Education. All members of the team should share contact information.

If a preceptor has a question or concern about a student, they should contact the Director of Clinical Education as soon as possible. The program strives to maintain open faculty–colleague relationships with its preceptors and believes that, should problems arise during a rotation, by notifying appropriate program personnel early, problems can be solved without unduly burdening the preceptor. In addition, open communication and early problem solving may help to avoid a diminution in the educational experience.

Liability Insurance

Each PA student is fully covered for malpractice insurance by the MTSU PA Studies program. Students completing a rotation with a preceptor or site that may end up becoming an employer must maintain a PA student role in the clinic and should not assume responsibilities of an employee until after matriculation from the program. This includes appropriate, routine supervision with the preceptor of record and within the scope of the agreed-upon clinical experience for the student. This is essential in preserving the professional liability coverage provided by the university and is important to protect both the student and the employer in the case that legal action is sought by a patient. Even more critical is the occasional opportunity, or



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suggestion, from a potential employer to participate in patient-care activities outside of the formal rotation assignment prior to graduation. While these opportunities may be attractive and are seemingly benign, they must be avoided at all costs, as the university's liability coverage does not cover the student in these circumstances.

In addition, if a PA student is working in a paid position in a different health-care related capacity any time during their PA education, that individual is not permitted to assume the role of a PA student while on duty as a paid employee. Even in a shadowing capacity, it is not appropriate for a student to represent themselves or participate in the care of any patient outside of the role for which they are being paid. Liability insurance will not cover any student assuming the PA student role outside of an assigned clinical rotation.

Preceptor Development

Preceptors can access specific tools for each of the topics listed below in electronic form which can be accessed on the PAEA website at: <https://paeaonline.org/resources/public-resources/paea-news/tips-for-making-precepting-painless-other-resources>

- Incorporating students into Patient Care/Workflow
- The One-Minute Preceptor
- Ask-Tell-Ask Feedback Model
- SNAPPS: A six-step learner centered approach to clinical Education
- Introducing/Orienting PA Student to Your Practice
- Tailoring Clinical Teaching to an Individual Student

Print out of the above resources are available at the MTSU PA Studies Program and can be delivered directly to the preceptor, if requested.

Final Note

Lastly, thank you again for your time and efforts with the MTSU PA Studies Program and physician assistant education. Without you this program would not be possible. If you have any



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questions/concerns or would like paper copies of the above resources, please do not hesitate to contact the Director of Clinical Education. We look forward to working with you and offering a top-tier education to the MTSU PA Studies Students.

Sincerely,

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