

5.0 PROGRAMMATIC POLICIES & PROCEDURES: ACADEMIC

This section outlines the policies and procedures related to the academic practices of the SF PA Program. The program endeavors to maintain academic standards and policies that promote the achievement of program goals, competencies, and student learning outcomes.

5.1 PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The SF PA Program requires the successful completion of a 98-credit hour curriculum (A3.12e). The curriculum is consistent with the mission, goals, and competencies of the program; includes core knowledge about established and evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care; and is of sufficient breadth and depth to prepare the student for the clinical practice of medicine (B1.01a-d). The curriculum design also reflects content and course sequencing that builds upon previously achieved student learning (B1.02). Students in each cohort are expected to enroll full-time, take courses in the same order, and graduate at the same time.

5.1.1 DIDACTIC PHASE OVERVIEW & COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The didactic phase of the curriculum consists of the first four semesters of enrollment. Classes, labs, and most other program sanctioned activities occur on campus, though a few class-related activities, including interprofessional educational experiences, occur in the greater Fort Wayne area. During the didactic phase, students develop a foundational knowledge of human anatomy, human physiology, immunology, pathophysiology, pharmacology and pharmacotherapeutics, human behavior, and the genetic and molecular mechanisms of health and disease that permit application in clinical practice (B2.02a-e). Course descriptions are available on course syllabi and are published in the SF Graduate Catalog. The didactic phase curriculum is also repeated here:

- **PAC 505 Foundations of Clinical Medicine with lab:** A survey of the foundational topics necessary for a comprehensive approach to patient care. Students will learn relevant principles of anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, pharmacology and pharmacotherapeutics, and the genetic and molecular mechanisms of health and disease.
- **PAC 506 Patient Assessment and Documentation with lab:** In this lecture and laboratory-based course, students will begin to develop their patient interviewing, physical examination, and medical documentation skills. Lectures will emphasize the art of patient interviewing, the components of a comprehensive physical, and required sections of medical documentation. Laboratory experiences will allow students to cultivate their physical examination skills. Strong emphasis will additionally be placed on patient-centered communicative practices and professional behaviors becoming of a PA.
- **PAC 508 Infectious Disease and Immunology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of infectious disease and immunological medicine. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 509 Dermatology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the integumentary system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 514 Musculoskeletal and Rheumatologic Essentials I with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the musculoskeletal and rheumatologic systems. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative

measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.

- **PAC 518 Ophthalmology and Otorhinolaryngology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the ophthalmological and otorhinolaryngological systems. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 528 Hematology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of hematology. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 532 Cardiovascular Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the cardiovascular system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 535 Pulmonology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the pulmonology system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 537 Nephrology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the nephrology system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 539 Integrated Medicine I with lab:** Integrating knowledge from subsequent and concurrent modules, students will assimilate critical thinking skills, effective communication practices, and professional behaviors to develop differential diagnoses and appropriate treatment plans for diverse patient cases. Pertinent aspects of the PA profession, including scope of practice, evidence-based medicine practices, public health policies, and professional organizations, are emphasized to maximize compassionate and effective care for the whole patient. Legal, social, and ethical considerations are further explored as they relate to patient care.
- **PAC 558 Gastrointestinal and Nutrition Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the gastrointestinal system and nutritional medicine principles. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.

- **PAC 562 Neurology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the neurological system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 563 Musculoskeletal and Rheumatologic Essentials II with lab:** An engagingly thorough continuation of the approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the musculoskeletal and rheumatologic systems. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 566 Endocrinology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the endocrine system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 568 Integrated Medicine II with lab:** Integrating knowledge from subsequent and concurrent modules, students will assimilate critical thinking skills, effective communication practices, and professional behaviors to develop differential diagnoses and appropriate treatment plans for diverse patient cases. Pertinent aspects of the PA profession, including scope of practice, evidence-based medicine practices, public health policies, and professional organizations, are emphasized to maximize compassionate and effective care for the whole patient. Legal, social, and ethical considerations are further explored as they relate to patient care.
- **PAC 572 Evidence Based Research:** A survey of the defining principles of evidence-based research considered foundational to the practice of medicine. Students will learn to search, interpret, and evaluate medical literature. Emphasis is placed on framing research questions, using databases to identify scholarly sources, identifying types of sampling methods, interpreting basic biostatistical methods, assessing article quality, and understanding the limits of medical research.
- **PAC 575 Capstone Project:** Students expand upon the research skills acquired earlier in the curriculum to complete a scholarly project under faculty mentorship. The selection of a topic will be followed by a detailed literature search and compilation of findings into an analytical literature review. The course culminates with a formal presentation of students' scholarly works.
- **PAC 582 Behavioral Health Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of behavioral health medicine. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 583 Urology Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the urology system. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 584 Women's Health Essentials with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of women's health medicine. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and

laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.

- **PAC 587 Lifespan Medicine with lab:** An engagingly thorough and integrated approach to surveying the disease processes and sequelae of the lifespan, including pediatric and geriatric populations. Modular components include instruction on foundational scientific principles, including related anatomy (including human dissection), physiology, pathophysiology, and genetic and molecular concepts. Students will expand history taking and physical examination skills, learn to order and interpret diagnostic and laboratory studies, and methodically devise a differential diagnosis. Pharmacologic therapeutics and clinical interventions, as well as patient education, health maintenance, and preventative measures, are also included. Significant emphasis is placed on the development of problem-solving and clinical reasoning skills, as well as behaviors necessary for professional practice.
- **PAC 588 Surgical Essentials with lab:** Students will learn the fundamentals of care needed for interactions with surgical patients, including pre-operative evaluation, and peri- and post-operative principles. Students will additionally practice suturing skills and demonstrate donning and doffing of surgical PPE.
- **PAC 589 Integrated Medicine III with lab:** Integrating knowledge from subsequent and concurrent modules, students will assimilate critical thinking skills, effective communication practices, and professional behaviors to develop differential diagnoses and appropriate treatment plans for diverse patient cases. Pertinent aspects of the PA profession, including scope of practice, evidence-based medicine practices, public health policies, and professional organizations, are emphasized to maximize compassionate and effective care for the whole patient. Legal, social, and ethical considerations are further explored as they relate to patient care.

5.1.2 CLINICAL PHASE OVERVIEW & COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

The clinical phase of the curriculum consists of the final three semesters of enrollment. Each student is required to complete nine clinical courses. These courses include supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) with preceptors who enable students to meet program defined learning outcomes for family medicine, emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, behavioral and mental health care, and women's health (including prenatal and gynecologic care) (A3.12d; B3.07a-g). Students will also complete three elective rotations. The final course on the student's transcript, PAC 650, is a 0-credit hour, non-letter graded course that represents student completion of the programmatic requirements specified in [section 5.5.2](#). Course descriptions are available on course syllabi and are published in the SF Graduate Catalog, as well as repeated here.

- **PAC 641-PAC 649 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience I-IX:** These structured clinical practice experiences provide students with a licensed preceptor-supervised rotation in a variety of clinical disciplines, including family medicine, emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, women's health (including prenatal and gynecological care), and behavioral and mental health care. Students will rotate through clinical settings in the emergency department, inpatient and outpatient settings, and the operating room. Throughout rotations, students will be provided opportunities to demonstrate knowledge in history taking, physical examination skills, formulation of a differential diagnosis, ordering and interpretation of laboratory and diagnostic exams, clinical interventions, medical and drug knowledge, health maintenance, patient education, basic sciences, and professional etiquette. Students' application of oral and written communication, interprofessional team care, evidence-based medicine practices, problem-solving/critical thinking skills, cultural sensitivity, and understanding of the PA role will be emphasized as they apply to patient care.
- **PAC 650 PA Requirements for Program Completion.** This course serves only as an administrative checklist designed to ensure that the student has satisfied all requirements for programmatic completion.

5.1.3 PROGRAM ACADEMIC PLAN

The 98-credit hour curriculum is shown in the image below. Each student is required to complete supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) with preceptors who enable students to meet program defined learning outcomes for family medicine, emergency medicine, internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, behavioral and mental health care, and women's health (including prenatal and gynecologic care) (A3.12d; B3.07a-g).

**Master of Science
Physician Assistant Studies (27 MONTHS)**

Fall I	Spring I	Summer I
PAC 505 Foundations of Clinical Medicine with Lab (2.5 cr.)	PAC 528 Hematology Essentials with Lab (2 cr.)	PAC 558 Gastrointestinal & Nutrition Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)
PAC 506 Patient Assessment & Documentation with Lab (2.5 cr.)	PAC 535 Pulmonology Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)	PAC 562 Neurology Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)
PAC 508 Infectious Disease & Immunology Essentials with Lab (2 cr.)	PAC 532 Cardiovascular Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)	PAC 563 Musculoskeletal & Rheumatologic Essentials II with Lab (2 cr.)
PAC 509 Dermatology Essentials with Lab (2 cr.)	PAC 537 Nephrology Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)	PAC 566 Endocrinology Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)
PAC 514 Musculoskeletal & Rheumatologic Essentials I with Lab (3 cr.)	PAC 539 Integrated Medicine I with Lab (4 cr.)	PAC 568 Integrated Medicine II with Lab (4 cr.)
PAC 518 Ophthalmology & Otorhinolaryngology Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)	PAC 572 Evidence Based Research (1 cr.)	PAC 575 Capstone Project (1 cr.)
15 credit hours (15 credit hours total)	16 credit hours (31 credit hours total)	16 semester credit hours (47 credit hours total)
Fall II	Spring II	Summer II
PAC 582 Behavioral Health Essentials with Lab (2 cr.)	PAC 641 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience I (4 cr.)	PAC 644 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience IV (4 cr.)
PAC 588 Surgical Essentials with Lab (1 cr.)		
PAC 583 Urology Essentials with Lab (2 cr.)	PAC 642 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience II (4 cr.)	PAC 645 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience V (4 cr.)
PAC 584 Women's Health Essentials with Lab (3 cr.)	PAC 643 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience III (4 cr.)	PAC 646 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience VI (4 cr.)
PAC 587 Lifespan Medicine with Lab (3 cr.)		
PAC 589 Integrated Medicine III with Lab (4 cr.)		
15 credit hours (62 credit hours total)	12 credit hours (74 credit hours total)	12 credit hours (86 credit hours total)
Fall III		
PAC 647 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience VII (4 cr.)		
PAC 648 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience VIII (4 cr.)		
PAC 649 Supervised Clinical Practice Experience IX (4 cr.)		
PAC 650 PA Requirements for Program Completion (0 cr.)		
12 credit hours (98 credit hours total)		

5.1.4 ACADEMIC CREDIT OFFERED BY THE PROGRAM

The SF PA Program requires the successful completion of a 98-credit hour curriculum (A3.12e). This includes:

- 62 credit hours in the didactic phase (semesters one through four)
 - 15 credits during the first semester
 - 16 credits during the second semester
 - 16 credits during the third semester
 - 15 credits during the fourth semester
- 36 credits hours in the clinical phase (semesters five through seven)
 - 12 credits during the fifth semester
 - 12 credits during the sixth semester
 - 12 credits during the seventh semester

5.1.5 ADVANCED PLACEMENT DEFINITION & POLICY

The SF PA Program defines 'advanced placement' as a waiver of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for applicants to the program and/or a waiver of required coursework included in the PA curriculum for currently enrolled students in the program which results in the student advancing in the curriculum without completing required curriculum components at SF.

The SF PA Program will not award or grant advanced placement credit for any applicant or enrolled student that would allow curricular advancement without completing required curricular components (A3.13c, A3.16a-c).

All matriculated and enrolled students must complete each required component of the SF PA Program curriculum to graduate from the program. No transfer credit, academic placement credit, prior learning assessment, or credit by portfolio will be accepted toward graduation from the program.