

University of Saint Francis | Physician Assistant Studies Program

Program Competencies | Updated 3-2026

1. Practice within the scope of the physician assistant role while recognizing personal and professional limitations.
2. Apply clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities to all aspects of patient care.
3. Demonstrate self-directed learning by identifying knowledge gaps, retrieving and appraising evidence, applying findings to patient care, and reflecting on outcomes.
4. Communicate effectively with patients and families by utilizing patient centered interpersonal skills that incorporate mutual respect with the patient and effective provider-patient interactions.
5. Document patient encounters accurately in accordance with legal and professional standards.
6. Elicit and evaluate a problem-oriented and comprehensive history that is patient-centered from patients of any age and gender.
7. Perform and evaluate a focused and comprehensive physical examination for patients of any age and gender.
8. Apply ethical principles and legal standards relevant to professional practice.
9. Formulate an appropriate problem list and differential diagnosis by integrating risk factors, epidemiology, and findings from history and physical examination.
10. Present diverse patient cases clearly and concisely to collaborating providers while incorporating relevant clinical data.
11. Perform patient education which considers social determinants and promotes treatment adherence, informed decision-making, and lifestyle modification.
12. Implement age- and gender-appropriate preventative care strategies, including screening, immunizations, risk reduction counseling, and health promotion.
13. Select, order, and interpret laboratory and diagnostic studies to refine the differential diagnosis and guide management decisions.
14. Develop, implement, and monitor cost-effective pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic treatment plans across the lifespan.
15. Perform indicated diagnostic and therapeutic procedures safely and competently, to include informed consent and providing appropriate counseling and follow-up care.
16. Apply medical knowledge of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions to evaluate and manage patients across the lifespan.
17. Distinguish between emergent and non-emergent patient presentation and initiate timely evaluation and stabilization using evidence-based practice.
18. Incorporate public health and patient safety strategies to improve the quality of patient care.
19. Demonstrate professionalism in clinical practice, including ethical conduct, integrity, respect, and patient advocacy.
20. Collaborate effectively with interprofessional healthcare teams, recognizing and respecting the roles of other healthcare professionals.
21. Integrate foundational biomedical sciences to explain normal anatomy and physiology, human behavior, mechanisms of health and disease, and therapeutic principles relevant to patient care across the lifespan.
22. Participate in reflective practice to support professional development, resilience, and purposeful engagement with patients, communities, and the PA profession.