JEFFREY PEARL, CHAIR
Physician Assistant Studies

RE: Physician Assistant Studies Degree Requirements

Enclosed is a copy of the Physician Assistant Studies degree requirements as approved by Graduate Council on May 15, 2020. These degree requirements are now the official requirements for the Physician Assistant Studies Graduate Group and will be posted on the Office of Graduate Studies program webpage:

https://grad.ucdavis.edu/programs/gnpa

Thank you for your efforts on behalf of graduate education.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Carlee Arnett, Chair
Graduate Council

CC: Jasmine Bonite, Project/Policy Analyst, Graduate Studies
    Madeline Verzola, Graduate Group Coordinator
    Lisa Badovinac, Assistant Dean, School of Nursing
    Felicia Murdoch, Policy Analyst
MASTER’S DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

1. Admissions Requirements:
   Applicants for admission to the Master of Health Services – Physician Assistant Studies (MHS-PAS) degree program must have:
   - A bachelor’s degree.
   - A minimum bachelor’s-degree G.P.A. of 3.0.
   - A minimum 2.7 G.P.A. in all science prerequisite coursework is required.
   - A minimum of 1,000 hours paid or volunteer experience in a clinical environment with direct patient exposure. Potential applicants should refer to the School of Nursing website at http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/nursing/education/education_nppa_clinical_experience.html if they are unclear about their clinical background. Completed Office of Graduate Studies application.
   - Meet the UC Davis requirements for Graduate Admissions.
   - A statement of purpose.
   - The application process may require an interview.
   - TOEFL (International applicants only)
   - Three letters of recommendation
   - Official transcripts from each institution attended

Admissions decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Meeting some or all of these criteria does not guarantee admission, but merely eligibility. Admission is competitive. Students applying for the physician assistant program must complete a Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) application and meet selection criteria. Following that process, a select pool of qualified applicants will receive an invitation to apply for UC Davis graduate admissions. UC Davis online applications are processed through UC Davis Office of Graduate Studies, which coordinates UC Davis graduate degree programs. All invited applicants must submit a completed Office of Graduate Studies application and meet UC Davis requirements for graduate admissions. An interview may be required.

The decision to recommend admission to the Dean of Graduate Studies will be made by the Recruitment, Admissions, and Fellowships Committee on the basis of available space and the competitiveness of applicants compared to the eligible pool.

An offer of acceptance is based on the premise that all data submitted on application materials (including but not limited to the UC Davis Graduate School, CASPA, and criminal background check applications) are true and accurate. Should there be
misrepresentation in or a violation of any of the terms of the application process, the University reserves the right to rescind the offer of acceptance at any time, or, disqualify the student at any time during their education.

a. **Prerequisites:**
   All prerequisites are required at the college level from an accredited school and must be included on the submitted transcript as part of the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) application process. Each prerequisite is expected to be one full course, either a quarter or a semester, and a minimum of three units, depending on the location where it was completed. Completion of prerequisite coursework from an accredited, online school is acceptable. Advanced Placement scores awarded in high school do NOT fulfill prerequisites. All prerequisites must be completed with a grade of C or better:

   - *One course in Human Anatomy with lab*
   - *One course in Human Physiology with lab*
   - One course in Chemistry with lab
     - (NOTE: Seminar courses will not fulfill this requirement.)
   - One course in microbiology or bacteriology with lab
   - One course in English composition
   - Two courses in social sciences. Ideal courses provide exposure to human or organizational behavior – such as psychology, sociology, ethnic studies, women’s studies or cultural anthropology (NOTE: Social science courses may be completed in two different subject areas or within the same subject area.)

*It is desired that the human anatomy and human physiology prerequisite courses be completed within the past five years of the date of application. Competitive applicants should self-assess their strengths. If it has been a number of years since courses were completed, applicants may want to consider retaking them.

*Physician assistant program applicants may complete a combined human anatomy and human physiology series course: Part I and Part II with labs. Series courses are offered in two parts and are completed over the course of two quarters or two semesters. Series courses must be completed in full and must include a lab component. If applicant only completes one part of the series course, the student must additionally complete a course in either human anatomy or human physiology to fulfill the requirement. Mammalian or animal will not fulfill this requirement.

b. **Deficiencies:**
   Applicants are not admitted with deficiencies in admissions or prerequisite requirements listed above.
2. **M.A., M.S., M.A.S., LL.M, etc. and Plan I, II or both M.H.S (Master of Health Services) Plan II.**
   This degree requires the completion of 135 units of graduate courses as listed below. A comprehensive final examination in the major subject is required of each candidate. No thesis is required.

3. **Course Requirements – Core and Electives (total # units): 135 units**
   The MHS-PAS degree program requires a minimum of 135 units.

   The 135 units are broken down as follows:
   - Academic Core: 22 units
   - Clinical Didactic: 46 units
   - Clinical Skills: 16 units
   - Supervised Clinical Practice: 51 units

   Full-time students must enroll for 12-16 units per quarter. Courses that fulfill any of the program course requirements may not be taken S/U unless the course is normally graded S/U. Once course requirements are completed, students can take additional classes as needed. Per Graduate Council approval (2019), MHS-PAS degree program students take 12-16 units per quarter.

   In all courses, students are graded on specific course content and professionalism. To pass a class, a student must earn a passing performance in both the course content and professionalism.

   If a student receives a failing grade (69% or below) in a course in the program, they will be required to re-take the course at the next available offering of the same course. If a student receives a failing grade (69% or below) in any Clinical Didactic and/or Clinical Skills course (see list below) in the program, the student will not be able to progress to the next quarter of Clinical Didactic nor Clinical Skills courses until the student retakes the course and receives a passing grade.

   a. **Core Courses (total # units): 135 units**
      The MHS-PAS degree program requires a minimum of 135 units as described below. The core courses are:

      **Academic Core** (22 academic units)
      - NRS 201: Health Status and Care Systems (4 quarter units)
      - NRS 204: Research Skills for Nursing Science and Health-Care Leadership (4 quarter units)
      - NRS 210Y: Applied Health Informatics (4 quarter units)
      - NRS 242A, B, C: Implementation Science for Clinicians (6 quarter units over 3 quarters)
      - NRS 243A: Leadership in Professional Practice (2 quarter units)
      - NRS 243B: Leadership in Professional Practice (2 quarter unit)
Clinical Didactic (46 didactic units)
- NRS 250: Foundations of Primary Health Care (7 quarter units)
- NRS 251A: Primary Health Care (8 quarter units)*
- NRS 251B: Primary Health Care (8 quarter units)*
- NRS 251C: Primary Health Care (8 quarter units)*
- NRS 251D: Primary Health Care (6 quarter units)*
- NRS 260: Foundations of Behavioral Health (1 quarter unit)
- NRS 270: Foundations of Pharmacology (2 quarter units)
- NRS 271 A, B, C: Pharmacology (6 quarter units over 3 quarters)*

Clinical Skills (16 clinical units)
- PAS 400: Basic Clinical Skills (4 quarter units)
- PAS 410 A-F Series: Advanced Clinical Skills (10 quarter units over 6 quarters)*
- PAS 440: Preparation for Clinical Practice (2 quarter units)

Supervised Clinical Practice** (51 Clinical Units)
- NRS 450 A-E Series: Supervised Clinical Practice
- NRS 451-459 Series: Supervised Clinical Practice

*Note: The NRS 251 and NRS 271 Clinical Didactic Course Series and PAS 410 Clinical Skills Course Series have prerequisite requirements where students must successfully pass each course in succession before progressing to the next course in the series.
**Note: To be eligible to enroll in Supervised Clinical Practice (NRS 450 and 451-459 Series), a student must have neither pending Office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs (OSSJA) action nor Y grade(s).

b. Elective Courses (total # units): 0 units
Elective courses may be selected (only with Graduate Advisor approval) so as to form an individualized Plan of Study that supports the student’s topic area.

c. English Language Requirement
Students who have not obtained a previous degree at an approved English-medium institution or demonstrated English-language proficiency through an appropriate exam (e.g. TOEFL) are required to complete appropriate English-language courses, as described in the policy Graduate Student Course Requirements – English as Second Language (GC2018-02). Courses taken in satisfaction of this requirement do not count towards the units required for graduation.

d. Summary:
A minimum course load is 12-16 units each academic quarter. The core courses total 135 units and optional electives units will be planned and determined by the student and their Graduate Advisor. Waivers and substitutions for core courses may be granted by exception upon approval of Graduate Advisor and appropriate Office of Graduate Studies authority.
4. Special Requirements:

Students are expected to uphold the professional and ethical conduct as per the State of California Physician Assistant Board's "Manual of Disciplinary Guidelines and Model Disciplinary Orders", as well as to follow HIPAA guidelines. A violation will result in disciplinary actions or course failure, which may impede the student’s ability to make progress toward their degree.

Before entering clinical sites, students are required to complete a health screening and immunizations. Consistent with UC Davis Health requirements, students are required to successfully complete criminal background checks. Students are required to successfully complete drug tests.

Please refer to the NSHL Graduate Group General Student Handbook for policies and procedures.

5. Committees:

a. **NSHL Executive Committee:**
   Duties of the Executive Committee include the following:
   - Act as the Membership Committee: Approval of new members and review of continuing members for retention in the NSHL Graduate Group.
   - Upon recommendation from the Educational Policy and Curriculum Development Committee will submit curriculum changes to Graduate Council for review and approval.
   - Determine and implement policy for the good of the Programs and to represent the interests of the Program generally to various University and other constituencies.
   - Address other NSHL Graduate Group issues as needed.

b. **Admissions Committee:**
   **NSHL Recruitment, Admissions and Fellowship Committee:**
   The functions of this committee shall include:
   - Recommending applicants to the Office of Graduate Studies for admission to the program.
   - The committee shall also be responsible for recruiting graduate students, ensuring proper marketing of all degree programs, creating standard of practices around admissions, and shall enlist the services of an ad hoc recruitment committee for these tasks.
   - Other activities including student mentorship and making recommendations regarding the mentored research component of the program (such as pairing students with mentors).
The Recruitment, Admissions and Fellowship Committee has jurisdiction over all graduate degree programs housed under the NSHL Graduate Group. Due to the unique needs of each degree program, there will be an Admissions Sub-Committee for each program. Each sub-committee will have oversight for a particular program and will be accountable to the Recruitment, Admissions and Fellowship Committee.

All Admissions Sub-Committees should have at least four members plus one Chair with the same appointment terms as the Recruitment, Admissions and Fellowship Committee. Faculty will self-nominate or nominate a colleague to serve as a chair for a two-year term, and the final decisions will be made by the Executive Committee. Each Sub-Committee must have a majority of members who themselves hold the degree by the program overseen.

The sub-committee will provide proposals and reports to the larger faculty group for discussion. Any faculty member is welcome to join any sub-committee meeting as a visitor. Topics addressed are then reported back to the faculty as a whole at subsequent meetings. Areas of oversight and review may include, but are not limited to:

- Review of applications and recommendation of applicants to the Recruitment, Admissions and Fellowship Committee.
- Recruiting graduate students for the appropriate program, including, but not limited to, participating in marketing, recruitment and outreach events.

b. Course Guidance or Advising Committee:
NSHL Education Policy and Curriculum Development (EPCD) Committee:
This Committee is charged with making recommendations regarding the educational policy and curriculum development of the NSHL Graduate Group. The committee will forward suggested programmatic changes to the Executive Committee for review, before sending out to the NSHL Graduate Group for vote. If the NSHL Graduate Group members vote in person at the meeting or by email to adopt changes, the Executive Committee will submit them to the Graduate Council for final approval. All members will be notified when changes have been approved by Graduate Council.

Other Educational Policy and Curriculum Development committee members’ activities include:

- Developing, coordinating, and facilitating additional graduate program offerings such as integrated workshops and seminars.
- Monitoring the quality of courses offered under the auspices of the NSHL Graduate Group, supervision of teaching evaluation feedback and teaching experience of graduate students, and overseeing the qualifying examination process.
- Creating policies and participating in quality improvement for cross-program and interprofessional educational items.
The Education Policy and Curriculum Development Committee has jurisdiction over all graduate degree programs housed under the NSHL Graduate Group. Due to the unique needs of each degree program, there will be an EPCD Sub-Committee for each program. Each sub-committee will have oversight for a particular program and will be accountable to the Education Policy and Curriculum Development Committee.

All Curriculum Sub-Committees should have at least four members plus one Chair with the same appointment terms as the Education Policy and Curriculum Committee. Faculty will self-nominate or nominate a colleague to serve as a chair for a two-year term, and the final decisions will be made by the Executive Committee. Each Sub-Committee must have a majority of members who themselves hold the degree by the program overseen.

The sub-committee will provide proposals and reports to the larger faculty group for discussion. Any faculty member is welcome to join any sub-committee meeting as a visitor. Topics addressed are then reported back to the faculty as a whole at subsequent meetings. Areas of oversight and review may include, but are not limited to:

- Continuous quality improvement for the Program: Quarterly review of student evaluations, faculty self-evaluations, course grades, licensure pass rates, program completion, and other data points.
- Curriculum review
- Student Progress
- Program-specific topics

d. Thesis Committee or Comprehensive Examination Committee:
The Comprehensive Exam Committee consists of three faculty members. This Committee will consist of at least the Graduate Advisor and at least one additional Graduate Group Faculty Member. The Graduate Advisor may serve as chair of the committee and can be included as one of the three required faculty members. All members of the Comprehensive Examination Committee must sign to pass the Comprehensive Examination.

6. Advising Structure and Mentoring:
The Graduate Advisor, who is nominated by the Chair of the program and approved by the Dean of Graduate Studies, is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, and registration information. The Graduate Advisor may serve as the Chair of the Comprehensive Committee. The Graduate Advisor is a key figure for each graduate student throughout their program of study, but particularly during the period prior to advancement to candidacy. Students will partner with their Graduate Advisor to walk through program of study to ensure completion of all requirements.

Please refer to the NSHL Graduate Group General Student Handbook for the Mentoring Guidelines.
7. **Advancement to Candidacy:**

The student is eligible for Advancement to Candidacy after successful completion of half of the core course requirements, at least one quarter before completing all graduate program degree requirements, and must have maintained a minimum GPA of 3.0 in all course work undertaken except those courses graded S or U. Advancement usually occurs by the end of spring in year two (8th quarter). The student must file the appropriate paperwork with the Office of Graduate Studies and pay the candidacy fee in order to be officially promoted to Master’s Candidacy.

The Candidacy for the Degree of Master form can be found online at: [http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/](http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/forms/). A completed form includes a list of courses the student will take to complete degree requirements. If changes must be made to the student’s course plan after they have advanced to candidacy, the Graduate Advisor must recommend these changes to Graduate Studies. Students must have their Graduate Advisor sign the candidacy form before it can be submitted to Graduate Studies. If the candidacy is approved, the Office of Graduate Studies will send a copy to: the Graduate Program Coordinator, the Graduate Advisor and the student. If the Office of Graduate Studies determines that a student is not eligible for advancement, the department and the student will be told the reasons for the application’s deferral. Some reasons for deferring an application include: grade point average below 3.0, outstanding “I” grades in required courses, or insufficient units.

8. **Comprehensive Examination and/or Thesis requirements:**

   a. **Thesis Requirements (Plan I):**
      
      N/A

   b. **Comprehensive Examination (Plan II):**
      
      The comprehensive examination requirement is passing an online exam plus a simulated comprehensive objective structured clinical exam (OSCE) by the student that is administered by the Comprehensive Examination Committee, who are members of the NSHL Graduate Group.

      The scope of the online exam is the candidate’s clinical coursework and preparation for clinical practice. The online exam portion will mimic the content and format of the national licensing examination for the PA national certification. The scope of the OSCE is multi-station assessment that includes a standardized patient encounter and clinical skills evaluation in alignment with the National Accrediting body standards from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant.
i. **Timing:**
   Fulfillment of the Comprehensive Examination is the last requirement of the M.S. Plan II. A student may take the comprehensive examination once they have advanced to candidacy and completed all required coursework. For most students, the exam is taken at the end of the 9th quarter.

ii. **Outcome:**
   Students must earn a passing score of at least 70% on both portions of the Comprehensive Examination to receive a passing score to graduate. The online and OSCE exam scores are presented to the Comprehensive Exam Committee for a vote. If there is a unanimous vote to pass a student, the committee signs the memo attesting that the student has successfully completed the comprehensive examination.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Competency Online Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Simulated Comprehensive Objective Structured Clinical Exam</td>
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<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
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If a student does not pass either portion (the written exam or OSCE) the Comprehensive Exam Committee may recommend that the student be reexamined one more time, but only if the student’s Graduate Advisor concurs with the committee. The second exam will cover any (or all parts) of the original exam that were not passed on the first attempt. The second exam must take place within one quarter of the first exam. The format of the second exam is the same as that of the first exam. A student who does not pass on the second attempt is subject to disqualification from further graduate work in the program.

Once passed, the Master’s Report Form is signed by the Program Graduate Advisor and then forwarded to the Office of Graduate Studies. The deadlines for completing this requirement are listed each quarter in the campus General Catalog (available online at the website of the Office of the Registrar or from the Bookstore). A candidate must be a registered student at the time the program submits the form. The program must file the report with Graduate Studies within one week of the end of the quarter in which the student’s degree will be conferred.

9. **Normative Time to Degree:**
   - Normative time:
     - From matriculation to degree: 9 quarters / 27 months
     - From admission to advancement to candidacy: 8 quarters / 24 months
   - Maximum time for degree completion: 13 quarters / 36 months
10. Typical Time Line and Sequence of Events:

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<th>SUMMER</th>
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<td>NRS 243A: Leadership in Professional Practice</td>
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<td>NRS 270: Foundations of Pharmacology</td>
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<td>PAS 410A: Advanced Clinical Skills</td>
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<td>PAS 400: Basic Clinical Skills – Patient Interview &amp; Physical Exam</td>
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**Supervised Clinical Practice**
- NRS 450A-E Series
- NRS 451-459 Series

**TOTAL UNITS**

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**Advance to Candidacy.**

### COURSE CATEGORY

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<th>CATEGORIE</th>
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<tr>
<td>Academic Core Courses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clinical Didactic Courses</td>
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<td>Clinical Skills Courses</td>
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<td>Supervised Clinical Practice</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROGRAM TOTAL</td>
<td>135</td>
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11. Sources of Funding:

Students will be funded based on the PSDT state funding model. They will receive 33% return-to-aid. This is in line with the other PSDT programs in the UC System. As a land grant university, affordability and accessibility are important to our campus. The success in achieving these goals will be measured by size of applicant pool, diversity of applicant pool and student cohorts, and level of student debt upon graduation.

The primary goal for student support is to ensure that financial issues do not prevent talented students from matriculating and graduating from the program. Financial Aid staff will provide prospective and enrolled students with information and resources to facilitate access to their educational needs. The School of Nursing will award aid to students based on the program’s mission as well as student financial need, ensuring federal, state, and university compliance. These awards will include a combination of need-based and merit-based grants and scholarships.

The School of Nursing will encourage students to compete for campus, state, federal, and foundation awards and fellowships. As is true for all graduate programs, students will be eligible to receive available Graduate Program Fellowship Allocation Funds and students will be eligible to compete for campus-wide fellowships. Additionally, the vigorous development campaign has established endowments to fund additional stipends and scholarships, and other funding sources are available to nursing students. Students in graduate nursing education programs are eligible for targeted financial aid programs in addition to those available to all UC Davis graduate students.

The School of Nursing provides debt counseling for all students. In addition, the School of Nursing regularly updates a list of external funding opportunities to share with students. This resource is available to students and prospective applicants on the public website here: https://health.ucdavis.edu/nursing/academics/pdfs/POSSIBLE_SCHOLARSHIPS_All_Programs_10-19-2018.pdf.

12. PELP, In Absentia and Filing Fee Status:

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave) and Filing Fee status can be found in the Graduate Student Handbook: http://www.gradstudies.ucdavis.edu/students/handbook/1.html.