

GVSU PAS Program Student Attendance Policy

The mission of the GVSU PAS program is: *To prepare highly competent physician assistants who embrace diversity, equity, and inclusion; lead and advance the profession; and provide quality patient-centered healthcare in all communities and settings. We strongly believe that in-person delivery of the program's curriculum fosters the sharing of ideas and practices necessary to fulfill this mission. As a result, we expect students to attend all classes and clinical days. We have learned in recent years that 'attendance' can be accomplished virtually when dictated by special circumstances. We also recognized the need for flexibility in provision of 'excused absences' (see below). We follow the Grand Valley State University student policy on attendance (<https://www.gvsu.edu/catalog/navigation/academic-policies-and-regulations.htm> - anchor-45) with the following additional program-specific guidelines:*

1. Attendance on all class days and clinical days is mandatory. Tardiness is considered unprofessional behavior and may result in disciplinary action. Students are required to be seated and ready to begin class on time so as not to disrupt learning at either campus.
2. A student admitted to the Grand Rapids campus must attend classes in Grand Rapids, and a student admitted to the Traverse City must attend classes in Traverse City. Exceptions may be considered by the Instructor of Record (IOR). Students must submit written requests in advance to the IOR and site director.
3. Students should utilize semester breaks for vacations, weddings, and other travel. Unless otherwise designated, semester breaks begin after 7:00 p.m. on Friday and end on Monday at 6:00 a.m. The first four semesters follow the GVSU academic calendar, which is printed in each GVSU catalog and is available on the GVSU website (<https://www.gvsu.edu/registrar/academiccalendar.htm>). Vacations are not permitted during class days, defined as 6:00 a.m. Monday through 7:00 p.m. on Friday. The schedule during the final three semesters differs from the GVSU academic calendar. The Clinical Year Calendar (excluding individual schedules) will be provided to students roughly one year in advance of the start of the clinical year. Students should use this calendar to plan vacations, weddings, and travel during the clinical year.
4. Students may request an excused absence during the didactic phase of the program for acute medical illness by notifying the IOR, the PAS Program Director, Department Chair, and/or Site Director via email by 9:00 a.m. or a minimum of one hour prior to the class. Students are responsible for missed material, assignments, or testing due to their absence.
5. Students may request an excused absence during the clinical phase of the program for acute medical illness by notifying the clinical coordinator and the preceptor (as applicable) as soon as possible but no later than 9:00 a.m. on the day of the absence, preferably by phone. If the clinical coordinator or preceptor cannot be reached by phone, the student must leave a voice message or send an e-mail indicating the absence, the reason for the absence, and a contact number where the student can be reached. Students may be required to provide documentation from a treating medical provider for absences during the clinical year (i.e., for prolonged illness, absences immediately before or after a break, absences immediately before an exam, patterns of recurrent illness, etc.). Students must meet the minimum threshold of an average of 32 clinical hours per week for each clinical rotation. If students do not meet the minimum threshold for clinical experience, they will be required to make up the clinical time which may delay graduation.

6. Students with prolonged medical absences may apply for a Medical Leave of Absence by contacting the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair. A note from the treating healthcare provider will be required. Requests should be submitted to the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair. (See PAS Program Leave of Absence Student Policy).
7. Students attending the **annual Michigan Academy of Physician Assistant (MAPA), or the American Academy of Physician Assistant (AAPA) meetings** will be excused from clinical rotations and/or classes whenever feasible. A student must submit an attendance request to the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair and all instructors one month **prior to the conference**. Students who fail to submit a written request will not be permitted to attend the meeting. Requests for additional conference time will be reviewed on an individual basis. Students will be excused to attend the Student Academy of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (SAAAPA) activities at the AAPA conference for a maximum of three days plus one day of travel before and after. Students will be asked to provide a reflection on the CME activities attended.
8. Students are expected to attend all didactic and clinical exams. Students must notify the instructor by phone or e-mail at least one hour prior to the scheduled exam time if they are unavailable due to illness or personal tragedy. **Absence due to illness immediately prior to an exam or the day of an exam will require a note from the treating healthcare provider.** Failure to notify the instructor will result in a failing grade for the exam, and the student will be ineligible for a retest examination.
9. Students are provided up to three bereavement days for the death of an individual of significant relationship to the PAS student at the discretion of the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair in accordance with the GVSU Student Policy on Attendance. (<https://www.gvsu.edu/catalog/navigation/academic-policies-and-regulations.htm> - anchor-45)
10. Students are allowed two **excused** absence days during the four semesters of didactic education. Excused absence days may not be used on days with examinations, meetings, and other mandatory events (laboratory events are considered mandatory). Excused absences must be arranged and approved in advance with the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair. Requests for excused absences should be submitted by e-mail to PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair. Such requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students are responsible for material and assignments missed for any excused absence.
11. Students are allowed two **excused** absence days during the clinical year. Any absences above the two excused absences may decrease the grade for the course and/or extend clinical time. Students may use up to one absence day in a single rotation. Excused absence days may not be used for end-of-rotation meetings, examinations, or other mandatory events, such as an IPE event. Excused absences must be arranged and approved in advance by the clinical coordinators. Requests for excused absences will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Students are responsible for material and assignments missed for any excused absence. Students must still meet the minimum threshold of an average of 32 clinical hours per week for each clinical rotation.
12. Absenteeism not reported as outlined above will be considered unexcused regardless of cause. Unexcused absences and tardiness are unprofessional behavior that may result in referral to the PAS Program's Student Academic Life Committee for disciplinary action.

Refer to the PAS Program Professionalism Policy and the PAS Program Policy and Procedure for Disciplinary and Professionalism Review.