

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 'anticipated absences' (see below).*

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, Program Director, 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 (Clinical Year) differs from the GVSU academic calendar. The Clinical Year Calendar (excluding individual schedules) is 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. In the event of an unanticipated absence during the didactic phase of the program, students must notify the IOR via email by 9:00 a.m. or at least one hour before class. The IOR will determine if further notification to the PAS Program Director, Department Chair, or Site Director is necessary. Students are responsible for any missed material, assignments, or assessments due to their absence.
5. In the event of an unanticipated absence during the clinical phase of the program, students must notify the clinical coordinator and the preceptor 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 and/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 are 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 is required. Requests should be submitted to the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair. (See PAS Program Student Leave of Absence Policy).
7. Students attending the **annual Michigan Academy of Physician Assistant (MAPA) or the American Academy of Physician Assistant (AAPA) meetings** are 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 are not permitted to attend the meeting. Requests for additional conference time is reviewed on an individual basis. Students are 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 are asked to provide a reflection on the CME activities attended. Clinical year 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 are required to make up the clinical time which may delay graduation.
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 requires a note from the treating healthcare provider.** Failure to notify the instructor results in a failing grade for the exam and the student is 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.
10. Requests for anticipated absences during the didactic phase may be approved in extenuating circumstances and will be reviewed- Students should meet with their advisor to discuss their options. After the discussion with the student's advisor, the absence request must be approved in advance by the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair. Absence requests for days with examinations, meetings, and other mandatory events (laboratory events and small group discussions are considered mandatory) will not be granted. Students are responsible for referring to the syllabus for further information regarding missed classes.
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 are 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. Additional excused absences are allowed due to the following: (a) participation in an intercollegiate event, (b) religious holidays, (c) military duty, (d) jury duty or appearance

in court, and (d) birth or adoption of a child at the discretion of the PAS Program Director and/or Department Chair.

3. Absenteeism not reported as outlined above is considered unexcused regardless of cause. Unexcused absences and tardiness are unprofessional behaviors that result in a grade reduction and may lead to 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.