



**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES  
POLICY**

<b>POLICY NAME:</b>	<b>PROFESSIONALISM</b>
<b>RESPONSIBILITY For Development/Review:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> University Admin <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Dept. Chair/ Program Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Academic Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clinical Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Faculty <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Medical Director <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Administrative Secretary
<b>APPROVED BY:</b>	Faculty
<b>DATE CREATED:</b>	5/17/2013
<b>DATE REVISED:</b>	2/14/2024
<b>REVIEWED: Annually</b>	2/26/2025
<b>SUPPORTIVE DOCUMENTS:</b>	<i>Professionalism and Interpersonal Skills Self-Assessment Evaluation</i> <i>Professionalism and Interpersonal Skills Evaluation Rubric</i> <i>DPAS Student and Policy Handbooks</i>
<b>OCCURANCE:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Daily <input type="checkbox"/> Weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Monthly <input type="checkbox"/> Quarterly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yearly <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> As Needed
<b>PURPOSE:</b>	To define and publish the DPAS expectations of professionalism.
<b>POLICY:</b>	<p>Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one’s own. The sanctity of the patient-provider relationship requires the health care provider’s dedication to being accountable and reliable to oneself, the patient and the community. Physician assistants must know their professional and personal limitations. They must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice, sensitivity to diverse patient populations, adherence to legal/regulatory requirements and practice without impairment. The DPAS expects that students will conduct themselves with these competencies in mind.</p> <p>The DPAS will promote learning, personal responsibility, self-discipline, respect for others and self within the curriculum and expects that students will mirror this in clinical experiences, to build a trusting relationship with patients and fellow health care colleagues.</p> <p>PA students are required to conform to the highest standards of ethical and professional conduct as required of practicing PAs. These include, but are not limited to: respect, flexibility and adaptability, emotional resilience and stability, academic integrity, honesty and trustworthiness, accountability, and cultural competency.</p> <p>The classroom will model professionalism during all curricular components to assist students in gaining the tools of professional competence. Students will be responsible for maintaining timely attendance, preparedness, professional documentation, respectful handling of program resources and active participation in the program. Students are also required to check Mercyhurst University email once every 24-hours, including breaks and respond in a timely fashion or as directed.</p> <p>Students must maintain professional behavior with all written and verbal communication and interactions including all classroom/clinical experiences or any representation of the</p>

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	<p>DPAS or the University with the public, peers, professors, patients and preceptors. Displays of frustration/anger, which may be perceived by others as hurtful or offensive, will not be tolerated. This includes demeaning, offensive (including swearing), argumentative and threatening language/behavior, or language that is insensitive to race, gender, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation. Students should offer constructive criticism or suggestions in a thoughtful and reasoned manner that fosters respect and trust.</p> <p>The professional conduct of PA students is evaluated on an ongoing basis throughout the program. The DPAS will monitor behavioral and professional concerns utilizing a flag system.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For minor breaches in professionalism, faculty will notify the student, a yellow flag will be attached to the advising sheet and placed in the student file. A yellow flag is used to identify and document concerns and patterns of professional behavior violations. Yellow flag violations do not constitute immediate adverse action. Examples of behaviors that result in a yellow flag include but are not limited to: tardiness or absence, verbal or written communication that indicates lack of respect and/or not performed in a timely manner, use of unprofessional language, unprofessional attire, lack of preparation for required coursework or rotations.</li> <li>• For a more egregious breach of professionalism, faculty will meet with the student, a red flag will be attached to the advising sheet and placed in the student file. In addition, a red flag is used when the observed behavior constitutes a greater concern requiring a meeting of the Student Affairs committee to determine the need for immediate action. Examples of behaviors that result in a red flag include, but are not limited to: evidence of cheating on a test or assignment, chemical/alcohol impairment or presumed impairment, student communication or interaction that is openly discriminatory, demeaning, or could reasonably be physically harmful to another, repeated yellow flag offences, etc.</li> <li>• All incidents resulting in a red flag will prompt an advisor/faculty-student meeting and will be monitored by the Student Affairs committee as needed.</li> </ul> <p>A formal evaluation of each student’s professional behaviors will be conducted at the onset of the didactic and clinical years, and prior to completion of the program. The evaluation will be completed by the Student Affairs Committee.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During this evaluation, the committee will meet and assess each student’s professional behavior using the Behavioral and Professionalism Evaluation Rubric.</li> <li>• Additionally, students will complete the Professionalism Self-Assessment Evaluation.</li> <li>• Individual results from these evaluations will be reviewed by the student and their designated faculty advisor.</li> </ul> <p>Students are held to a high level of integrity and any breach will not be tolerated. Any violations of standards of professional conduct are grounds for disciplinary action including probation and/or dismissal from the DPAS.</p>
<b>OTHER NOTES:</b>	