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ADMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY

Applicants to Ponce Health Sciences University are selected on the basis of scholastic achievement, fitness and aptitude for the study and other personal qualifications. The Admissions Committees also gives consideration to the use of language, special aptitudes, mechanical skills, stamina, perseverance and motivation. Students are admitted on the basis of individual qualifications, regardless of handicap, sex, race, religion, age, national origin, marital status, neither sexual nor political orientation.

PHSU Admissions Office and the Admissions Committees act in accordance with “Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990” which includes changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, which became effective on January 1, 2009. Once the candidate is accepted, if he/she needs special accommodations, he/she is responsible to contact the Academic Affairs Office for further information. It is the student’s responsibility to make his/her condition known to PHSU Administrators and to seek out assistance.

Applicants with disabilities will be evaluated on a case by case basis in accordance with the medical technical standard guidelines as suggested by the Association of American Medical Colleges. All students must possess the physical and emotional capabilities required to independently undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) adheres to the CDC norms on adult immunization. The Office of Student Affairs is responsible for maintaining the documentation of student immunization and PPD status. The school of medicine requires annual tuberculin (intradermal) testing for actively enrolled students. Immunization requirements are:

**Hepatitis B:** All medical students are required to have been immunized against Hepatitis B. Such immunization consists of a series of three injections that should be completed prior to or as soon as possible after matriculation. Students who are not in compliance may be barred from participation in clinical activities at the discretion of the Dean's Office.

**Rubella:** Rubella immunity via history or documented vaccine or serological titer is required before a student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities.

**Rubeola:** Rubeola immunization is required for all students born after 1957. Students must provide physician documentation of receipt of two doses of vaccine or serologic evidence of immunity before a student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities.

**Mumps:** Mumps immunization is required. A physician documented history of immunization or documented evidence for immunity (serologic titers) is required before a student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities.

*Rubella, Rubeola and Mumps requirement is filled by 2 doses of MMR at least on year apart.*
Polio, Tetanus, Diphtheria: Students should be current in immunization against polio, tetanus and diphtheria. It is required before a student will be allowed to participate in clinical activities.

Varicella: Students with a history of varicella should have it documented. Students without a history of varicella must have a titer for varicella antibody determined. Students with a negative titer are recommended to undergo varicella immunization. Non immune students will not be permitted on some clinical services specifically Pediatrics.

PHSU requires annual specifically tuberculin (intra dermal) testing for actively enrolled students. Evaluation and management of medical students with positive tests or those whose test becomes positive during medical school will be through the PSM outpatient clinic.

Students in the third and fourth year should have the influenza vaccine before entering the clinical clerkships. It will be available at a reasonable cost at PHSU Outpatient Clinic.

These requirements may vary according to CDC and the Advisory Committee on Immunization practices and Centers of Disease Control (CDC) recommendation.

READMISSION POLICY

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) students dismissed from a program for academic reasons will not be readmitted to that program. No student will be allowed readmission to any program after dismissal for disciplinary reasons.

PHSU will consider for readmission students who voluntarily withdrew from the program for medical or personal reasons and were in good standing or Satisfactory Academic Progress at the time of the withdrawal.

The application for readmission will be submitted to the Admissions Office. Applicants must meet all requirements at the time of application for readmission. After evaluation by the Admission Committee, the candidate may be:

- Denied re-admission
- Admitted and one of the following:
  - Required to re-enter the first year class
  - Required to repeat incomplete (I) courses
  - Allowed full credit of work successfully completed
  - Transfer some credits to a different program
  - Other considerations.

A student readmitted to any program must abide by the curricular requirements and the rules and regulations in effect at the time of readmission.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at lectures and laboratory exercises is mandatory unless excused because of illness or by previous authorization of the professor in charge of the course. Each department will decide the relative weight to be given to the attendance in calculating the final grade.
Attendance to clinical activities involving patients, patient models and similar types of activities is considered part of the students’ professional responsibility and is mandatory. Absence may be excused after the student consults with the respective department chairperson. Three unexcused absences may adversely affect the final grade for a course.

Incomplete work due to illness or other serious circumstances during the course will be handled according to departmental policies, which must be provided to the students in writing at the beginning of each term. Faculty are not obligated to repeat lecture/laboratory topics that were presented at scheduled times and dates.

CREDIT HOURS POLICY

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) has revised the policy for the assignment of credit hours for existing and new academic programs and coursework in order to comply with the credit hour definition as required by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) to those institutions that receive Title IV funds from the US Department of Education.

At PHSU students will gain one credit hour for each 15 hours of scheduled class or faculty instruction. Every hour of required activity is considered a contact hour, including lecture, small group discussion and laboratory time.

In the Medicine Program the clinical clerkship rotation should not exceed 10 hours daily for a minimum of 50 hours a week. Students will gain 5 credits for each 4 week-rotation equivalent to a minimum of 200 hours. Eight-week rotations will be assigned 10 credits. Medicine students pay a fixed registration fee for each academic year.

The assignment of credit hours for practicum and internship courses in the Clinical Psychology and Public Health Programs must conform to the commonly accepted practices for such programs in institutions of higher learning.

Established and new courses should be reviewed by the corresponding curriculum committees for compliance and implementation of this policy.

The Office the Vice President for Academic Affairs will oversee the compliance of the credit hours’ policy described herein.

CROSS REGISTRATION POLICY

Upon the approval of the Program Directors, students enrolled in a Program will take courses from another graduate Program at PHSU. The courses taken from the other Program must not be offered in his/her Program.

A maximum of credit hours for cross registration is determined by the Program Director based on the maximum free elective courses in his/her Program’s curriculum.

The student must be a regular student in his/her Program and in satisfactory academic progress to be able to benefit from cross registration.
The process to be followed is:

1. Student must submit a written request to his/her Program Director of his/her intention with evidence of his/her status as regular student and satisfactory academic progress.
2. His/hers Program Director will consult with the other Program Director to receive authorization.
3. The primary Program Director will submit a written request to the Vice President of Academic Affairs for approval or disapproval. If it is approved, copy of the approval will be sent to the Registrar’s and Financial Aid Office.

The Program Director will inform the student of the decision.

WITHDRAWAL, DROP AND ADD

Withdrawal from School

A student that decides to withdraw from the School must submit a letter of resignation to the President stating their reasons for the withdrawal. Once the Dean has accepted the letter of resignation, the student shall proceed as follows:

1. The student must obtain a withdrawal form from the Registrar’s Office and fill out the required information about academic program and courses.

2. The student must obtain clearance for withdrawal from the following:
   a. Library: The Librarian must certify that the student does not have any outstanding debt or have any library materials checked out
   b. Finance Office: Must state that the student has no outstanding debts to the School before any other further step is taken.
   c. Financial Aid Office: Students who have applied for or obtained any kind of financial aid or loan through the School, must attend an exit interview and obtain the signature of the Director of Financial Aid.
   d. Student Affairs or any other department prescribed at the Clearance form. Students must obtain the signature of each Director or Dean.
   e. Registrar: After all signatures have been obtained, the Registrar will certify the student’s withdrawal and make the proper entry in their records.
   f. The student must settle all financial obligations with PHSU or no transcripts or certifications will be issued.
   g. The withdrawal is allowed until the last day of class (semester/trimester), before start the final exams.

Drop and Add

Medical students are not permitted to withdraw from individual courses. Exceptions are made when students are permitted to transfer to a five-year program. A “W” of Withdrawals will not be posted on the academic record.

It is the student’s responsibility to verify in the academic calendar, drop and add periods for each semester/trimester. A fee is required for each class dropped or added.
The student has the option to drop and add course until the first week of classes (beginning the semester/trimester). The Drop/Add Form will be initiated by the student and it is submitted to the Registrar’s Office within the deadline established.

After the first day of semester/trimester, added course must be paid in full at the time of the added. The maximum time allowed adding a course is the first week of the semester/trimester.

**Withdrawal**

In order to withdraw a course after registration the student must complete and submit the corresponding form to the Registrar’s Office. After the deadline established (approximately four weeks after the beginning of the semester/trimester) a “W” will be posted on transcript.

**ADMINISTRATIVE WITHDRAWAL POLICY**

The student that is not enrolled after the first week of classes, at the beginning of the academic period and does not have a leave or approved permission to be absent will be considered for administrative withdrawal and the institution might initiate the corresponding action.

**TRANSFER OF CREDITS**

The Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) is a higher education institution that offers graduate courses. PHSU has established the following institutional policy to guide the transfer of credits for the courses that students have taken in other academic institutions.

The maximum number of total credits that may be recognized shall not be more than 30 percent of the total number of credits in the curriculum, in order to complete the graduation requirements, except for the Medical Education Program.

A formal/written request for the transfer of credits must be filled at the Admission’s Office in the Deanship of Students Affairs. Requests for transfer of credits must be made no later than the second week of classes of the first trimester/semester for entering students at PHSU.

It is the responsibility of the student to facilitate the official catalog and transcript from the institution on which the courses were taken. Only original transcripts are accepted and must be sent directly from the University of Origin to the Registrar’s Office of PHSU. Only graduate courses from institutions accredited by the Puerto Rico Council of Education (PR-CE) or by a regionally accrediting agency (MSCHE or equivalent) are eligible for transfer of credits.

An ad hoc transfer of credits committee with representation from the Student Affairs and the Academic Affairs and a faculty member and the director of the program the student is enrolled evaluates the requests and make final decisions based on institutional and programmatic transfer of credit policies and procedures.
Doctor in Medicine Program

For the Medical Education Program, PHSU accepts transfer students from LCME accredited medical schools or from any medical school recognized in the International Medical Education Directory. The following requirements for transfer also apply for the Medical Education Program:

- Transfer students may only be accepted in the second pre-clinical (basic science) year or the first clinical year.
- Transfer students’ prior coursework and achievements must be comparable to the ones of the medical students in the class they will join.
- Transfer students to the first clinical year are required to take and pass the USMLE Step 1 prior to admission.
- The total years for completion of the MD degree include those years accepted for admission to PHSU.

Biomedical Sciences Program

Students who apply for admission to the Biomedical Sciences Program may transfer up to 21 credits related to the field of basic sciences. To be considered for transfer, the credits must have been obtained from a fully accredited higher education institution from Puerto Rico or USA.

The following additional requirements must be met to consider the requests for transferring credits of graduate courses to PHSU Biomedical Sciences Program:

- The requested courses were approved with at least a B grade.
- The student can demonstrate through formal written and/or oral examination that they possess the scientific knowledge, skills and values expected from the courses.

The following courses are frequently equivalent within Basic Sciences field and may be transferred from outside graduate programs:

1. Biochemistry
2. Microbiology
3. Physiology
4. Pharmacology
5. Histology/Cell Biology
6. Biostatistics
7. Neurosciences

Additional requests for transfer of credits of other graduate science courses may be considered on individual basis.
Master of Science in Medical Sciences Transfer Credits Policy

Purpose:
Some students of the Master in Science in Medical Science (MSMS) complete all graduation requirements but are unable to fulfill the minimum 3.0 GPA required for graduation. This is the result of a high credit load of several of the MSMS courses and a “C” in a major course may result in non-compliance with the required GPA. These students have to repeat courses to obtain higher grades so that the GPA increases to required levels. However, some of them are accepted to continue post graduate higher education training, such as medical education and are unable to repeat courses in our institution.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a mechanism so that these students complete their MSMS degree while enrolled at another post graduate higher education program.

Policy:
MSMS students that comply with all graduation requirements, except the minimum 3.0 GPA and are accepted in a medical education program or another doctoral program the next academic year after initiation of the MSMS program, may be eligible to get credit towards the MSMS degree from courses taken at another higher education institution.

The procedure to achieve this is the following:

• The student must submit the MSMS Transfer of Credits Request Form to the Registrar’s Office by the end of the first year of medical education or doctoral training.

• The student must be enrolled in an LCME accredited medical school, a foreign medical school that has been appropriately accredited according to ECFMG standards, or a doctoral program in an institution of higher education with regional accreditation (such as the Middle States Commission on Higher Education).

• After the student completes the course/s for which transfer credit is requested, the student must request that an official transcript be sent to Ponce Health Science University Registrar’s Office.

• The Associate Dean for Medical Education and the Assistant Dean for MSMS Program will evaluate the courses and grades in the transcript. A special analysis needs to be done for those students in medical schools where they have an “integrated” or “system based” curriculum.

• Only courses with A’s and B’s may be cross transferred to substitute former courses with a C. If the GPA increases at or above 3.0 of, the student will be certified as eligible for the MSMS degree.

• The Student Promotion Committee will evaluate the results and confirm to the Registrar if the student is a candidate for graduation.

• Students admitted to the MSMS prior to the creation of this policy are eligible and will be notified about this policy.

• The PHSU Registrar may establish an administrative fee for the time and efforts this entails.

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1 http://www.ecfmg.org/about/initiatives-accreditation-requirement.html  ECFMG® has announced that, effective in 2023, physicians applying for ECFMG Certification will be required to graduate from a medical school that has been appropriately accredited. To satisfy this requirement, the physician’s medical school must be accredited through a formal process that uses criteria comparable to those established for U.S. medical schools by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) or that uses other globally accepted criteria.
The policy is effective May 5, 2016 and will be in effect for two years, after which it will be revised by the Executive and Policy Committee.

**Clinical Psychology Programs**

Students who apply for admission to the PHSU doctoral programs in Clinical Psychology may transfer up to 24 graduate credits from institutions accredited by the PR-CE or MS-CHE or a regionally equivalent agency. The 24 transfer credits must be approved in programs related to the field of Clinical Psychology. Students with prior graduate work in a field outside mental health may transfer at least 18 credits depending on the nature of the program attended and the equivalency of the courses approved.

The following requirements will guide the evaluation process of those graduate courses submitted for approval:

1. Graduate courses need to be relevant to the field of Clinical/Professional Psychology
2. The requested courses were passed with at least a B grade.
3. The students can demonstrate in an objective manner or through formal written and/or oral examination that they possess the knowledge and skills expected from the courses.

The following courses are frequently equivalent within mental health disciplines and may be transferred from other graduate programs:

- Research Methods
- Test Construction
- Cognitive Assessment and Practicum*
- Group Therapy
- Motivation and Emotion
- Child Psychopathology
- Child Psychotherapy
- Professional Ethics in Psychology
- History of Psychology
- Family Therapy*
- Clinical Psychopharmacology
- Human Sexuality
- Psychology of Addictions
- Geriatric Psychology
- Supervision
- Mental Health Administration
- Forensic Psychology
- Psychoeducational Assessment*
The following courses are not considered for transfer to PHSU Clinical Psychology Programs:

- PSY 522  Psychology of Personality
- PSY 515  Human Growth and Development
- PSY 523  Cognitive Psychology
- PSY 541  Fundamentals of Clinical Psychopathology
- PSY 511  Fundamentals of Neuroscience
- PSY 512  Neuroanatomy Laboratory
- PSY 645  Mood and Anxiety Disorders
- PSY 658  Projective Assessment of Personality
- PSY 667  Short-Term Psychotherapy
- PSY 662  Cognitive and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy
- PSY 747  Personality and Psychotic Disorders
- PSY 818  Clinical Health Psychology

In addition to those courses, the 1100 hours of required clinical practice in the PsyD or PhD programs cannot be transferred for other practice taken at other institutions. *requires demonstration of competence

**Public Health Program**

Students who apply for admissions may transfer up to 15 graduate credits to PHSU Public Health Program. The graduate courses must be relevant to the field of public health and related to the program’s core or elective courses. The Capstone Experience (CE) and Practicum courses taken at other institution cannot be transferred to PHSU Public Health Program.

To consider for transfer credits, the graduate courses must be taken at institutions accredited by the PR Council of Education or a US regional accredditor.

Students applying for transfer of credits must submit the application to the Office of Admissions during the beginning of the admissions process. Interested students are required to provide the institutional catalog and course syllabi. The PHSU Office of Admissions will refer the cases to the Public Health Program. The Program will establish and Evaluation Committee composed of two Public Health faculty to assess the graduate courses that students submitted for transfer. This Evaluation Committee will have the responsibility to evaluate:

- The comparability of the course content
- The course length: number of credits or contact hours (can be more but not significantly less)
- Grading system (the requested courses for transfer must be approved with at least B or Pass grade).

The Evaluation Committee will respond no later than the second week of classes of the first trimester/semester for entering students at PHSU.
SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY

Medical Education (Md)

A Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy has been established to ensure that medical students complete the academic program within the acceptable time frame and the minimally accepted quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements set forth by federal regulations have been met. The SAP applies to all medical students enrolled in Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine. Student’s academic progress is evaluated twice each academic year.

General Requirements
1. Time Frame for completion of the Academic Program
   A medical student will be allowed a maximum time frame of two semesters of enrollment beyond the standard required for the completion of the program. Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purpose of this measure.

   For transfer students, the total years for completion of a degree include those years accredited on admission to MD Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctor of Medicine – Four Year Program</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Completion of Program Requirements
   a. Course Requirement
      Students must complete all courses within the established time frame.

   b. Performance Requirement
      A student must pass each course. Any student failing to meet this standard of performance will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee to determine the action to be taken.

   c. Medical Licensure Exam Requirement
      A passing score for USMLE Step 1 is required to enroll for the second semester of the first clinical year. A passing score for USMLE Step 2 CK and taking the USMLE Step 2 CS are required for graduation.

   d. Professional Behavior Requirement
      The students must conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by the Ponce Health Sciences University and the corresponding accreditation agencies.

   e. Clinical Practice Examination (CPX)
      All medical students are required to take and pass a Clinical Practice Examination (CPX) at the end of their first clinical academic year.

Grade Requirement
The Ponce Health Sciences University Medical Program does not measure academic progress by cumulative grade point average. In order to graduate, the student should pass all required and electives courses.
Satisfactory Academic Progress will be reviewed each semester.

An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the professor. The student must complete the “I” (Incomplete) by the following semester or an “F” will be recorded for that course. The “I” (Incomplete) grades are part of the academic record as are the final grades.

**Academic Probation**

Any student failing to meet Ponce Health Sciences University medical program performance requirement will be referred to the School of Medicine Students Promotion Committee and placed on academic and financial aid probation. The following guidelines will be applied:

A. If the student fails one course, he/she should remediate the deficiency during the summer time.
B. If the student fails two or more courses or fails a course a second time, he/she may be considered for either repetition of courses or dismissal.
C. If the Students Promotion Committee determines that the student must repeat one or more courses during the summer or the next academic year, the student is considered in academic probation.
D. If the Students Promotion Committee determines to dismiss the student from the medical program, the student must be informed about his/her right to appeal.
E. If the dismissal decision is reversed by the due process, the student will be considered in academic probation.

**Appeal Process for Academic**

Students who are notified by the Associate Dean of Medical Education a decision of the Students Promotion Committee that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from the medical program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the School of Medicine Students Promotion Committee (SPC) and include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Associate Dean for Medical Education, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Medicine. The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The Dean of Medicine will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.

If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of Medicine. The Dean of Medicine will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of Medicine is final.
The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Department Chairperson, the Associate Dean for Medical Education or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.

In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of Medicine sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the institutional policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress published by the Office of Financial Aid.

**Enforcement**
The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all medical students a copy of this document upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine.

The President, Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as the Dean of Medicine, Associate Dean for Medical Education, Registrar and Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policy here set forth.

**Graduate Program in Biomedical Sciences (PhD)**

A Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy has been established to ensure that Biomedical Sciences students complete the academic program within the acceptable time frame and the minimally accepted quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements set forth by federal regulations have been met. The SAP applies to all PhD Biomedical students enrolled in Ponce Health Sciences University. Student’s academic progress is evaluated annually at the end of each academic year.

**General Requirements**

1. **Time Frame for Completion of the Academic Program**

   A student will be allowed a maximum time frame of three (3) years of enrollment beyond the standard of five (5) years required for the completion of the Program. Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purpose of this measure.

   The total credits for completion of a degree include those graduate courses accredited on admission to the Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Program in Biomedical Sciences</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   **Definition of Full Time**

   Students with an academic load of six credits or more per semester will be considered Full Time
doctoral students. A student solely enrolled in Thesis Research or Doctoral Dissertation will also be considered a Full Time student.

b. **Definition of Half Time**
   Students with an academic load of three to five credits per semester will be considered Half Time doctoral students.

c. **Definition of Part Time or Less Than Half Time**
   Students with an academic load less than three credits per semester will be considered Part Time doctoral students or Less Than Half Time student.

2. **Completion of Program Requirements**

   a. **Course requirement**
      - Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The PhD in Biomedical Sciences requires a minimum of 70 credits.

   b. **Performance requirement**
      - A student must complete each academic year with a minimum grade point average of 3.00. Any student failing to meet this standard performance will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee to determine the action to be taken.

      - At the end of the second year, the student must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Inability to comply with the GPA requirement will result in dismissal from the Program.

   c. **Qualifying examination requirement**
      - A Qualifying Examination must be taken upon completion of the second academic year or completion of the basic course work. The maximum time allow to take this examination is three years. A minimum passing score of 77% in the exam is a requirement for candidacy to the Doctoral Degree.

   d. **Doctoral Dissertation Requirement**
      - A Doctoral Dissertation according to the established guidelines with oral defense is required for graduation.

   e. **Professional Behavior Requirement**
      - Students must conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by Ponce Health Sciences University and the corresponding accreditation agencies.

*Grade Requirement*
In order to obtain a PhD in Biomedical Sciences, the student must complete all requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility and will be reviewed on a yearly basis.
1. A grade of “F” in any course will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee (SPC).
   
a. A student may have one opportunity to retake a failed or withdrawn (“W”) course and obtain a “C” or better grade. Failure to pass a given course on the second opportunity is grounds for dismissal from the Program.
   
b. A student with more than two “F” grades or “W” on record is grounds for dismissal from the Program.
   
2. Repeated courses with “C” or lower grades will remain on record, but the new grade will be used to compute the grade point average.
   
3. Graduate courses not offered at PHSU may be taken at other institutions with permission and approval from the Associate Dean of Biomedical Sciences and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.
   
4. Grades of “P” (Pass) or “NP” (Not Pass) are applicable to thesis research/dissertation and graduate seminars. When the research/dissertation activity requires more than one semester for its completion, the students receives a notation of “In Progress” (IP) for each semester and until the research/dissertation is completed.
   
5. A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will only be allowed under special circumstances. The student must remove the incomplete by the following semester or it will be replaced by the grade of “F”. The “I” grades are part of the academic record as are the final grades.
   
6. A student with a reversed dismissal is not in satisfactory academic progress and is considered both on academic and financial aid probation.

**Academic Probation and Financial Aid Eligibility**

A student failing to meet the grade requirements will be placed on academic probation for one semester, but will be eligible for financial aid. Students that fail to comply with grade requirements after the prescribed probation time will be referred to the School of Medicine Students Promotion Committee (SPC) and may result in dismissal from the Program.

**Appeal Process for Academic**

Students who are notified by the Associate Dean of Medical Education a decision of the SPC that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from Program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The student will request in writing a reconsideration to SPC and include all relevant documentation to support the petition. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Associate Dean for Medical Education, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Medicine. The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The Dean of Medicine will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.
If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of Medicine. The Dean of Medicine will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of Medicine is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Department Chairperson, the Associate Dean for Medical Education or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.

In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of Medicine sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**

Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the institutional policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress published by the Office of Financial Aid.

**Enforcement**

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all medical students a copy of this document upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine.

The President, Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as the Dean of Medicine, Associate Dean for Medical Education, Registrar and Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policy here set forth.

**Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology (PsyD and PhD)**

**Introduction**

This policy has been established to ensure an acceptable time frame for completion of the academic program and the minimally accepted quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements set forth by federal regulations are met.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all Clinical Psychology (Psy.D) Doctoral Students enrolled at Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU).

**General Requirements**

Time Frame for completion of the Academic Program

A Clinical Psychology Doctoral Student will be allowed a maximum time frame of three years of enrollment beyond the standard required for the completion of the program (five years). Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purpose of this measure.
The total years for completion of a degree include those graduate courses accredited on admission to our program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Clinical Psychology Doctorate</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition of a full time**: Students with an academic load of 6 credits or more per semester will be considered full time doctoral students. Students registered in doctoral dissertation are also considered full time students.

**Definition of half time**: Students with an academic load of 3 to 5 credits per semester will be considered half time students.

**Definition of less than half time**: Students with an academic load of less than 3 credits per semester will be considered less than half time or part-time students.

**Completion of Program Requirements**

**Course Requirement**
Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The Program requires a total of 86 credits.

**Performance Requirement**
A student must complete each academic year with a minimum grade point average of 3.00. Any student failing to meet this standard of performance will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee.

**Comprehensive Examination Requirement**
A Comprehensive Examination must be taken upon completion of the second academic year. A passing score in the exam is a requirement for candidacy to the Doctoral Degree.

**Clinical Practice Examination (CPX)**
Approval of the Clinical Practice Examination is required upon completion of the last academic year before the Clinical Internship.

**Doctoral Dissertation Requirement**
A Doctoral Dissertation with oral defense is required for graduation.

**Professional Behavior Requirement**
The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by Ponce Health Sciences University, the corresponding accreditation agencies, and the Clinical Practice Manual of the Psy.D. Program.

**Grade Requirement**
In order to graduate, the student should complete all requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility and will be reviewed on a yearly basis.
• A grade of "C" in any of the Clinical Courses (as identified in the program’s catalog) is not allowed. Any “C” grade in the Clinical Courses must be repeated.
• No more than two courses can be repeated in the entire program.
• Repeated courses with "C" grades will remain on record, but the new grade will be used to compute the grade point average.
• A grade of “F” in any course will result in referral to the Students Promotion Committee and considered for dismissal based on overall academic performance.
• Grades of “P” (Pass) or “NP” (Not Pass) are applicable to dissertation. When the dissertation activity requires more than one semester for its completion, the student receives a notation of “In Progress” (IP) for each semester and until the dissertation is completed.
• Grades of “P’ (Pass) or “NP” (Not Pass) are applicable to Practica and Internship. A grade of “NP” requires repetition. In case of a second “NP” grade in the same practicum or internship, the student will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee with a recommendation for dismissal.
• An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the professor. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the following semester or an administrative “F” will replace it.

**Academic Probation and Financial Aid Eligibility**

A student failing to meet the grade requirements will be placed on academic probation for one semester, but will be eligible for financial aid. At the end of the semester, if the student has not regained SAP, he/she loses financial aid for the following semester.

If the student is dismissed, but the dismissal decision is reserved by the due process, the student loses financial aid until SAP is reestablished.

**Appeal Process for Academic Probation**

Students notified that they are to be dismissed from the Psy.D. program, have the right to appeal the case in writing to PHSU President within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The Appeal or Due Process for Dismissal presented below must be followed.

The President will evaluate the appeal and the student's academic record. Rejection of the appeal by the President is final. If the President has a reasonable doubt about the student's capacity or academic record, he/she can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence.

The Ad-Hoc Committee will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the case will be heard. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit the report.

The President will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation, and makes the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours. Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. All decisions made by the President are final.

The same process described above will be followed in cases of unacceptable professional behavior. The corresponding Dean will refer the case to the Promotions Committee. If the recommendation of the Promotion Committee is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above will be activated.
Reinstatement of Financial Aid
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. It is the student's responsibility to request reinstatement of financial aid.

Enforcement
The Office of Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all students upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University, a copy of this document.

The President, the VP for Academic Affairs and the VP for Student Affairs, as well as the Registrar and Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policies set forth.

Doctor in Philosophy in Clinical Psychology Program (PhD)
Refer back to the Satisfactory Academic Progress for the Doctoral Program in Clinical Psychology (PsyD)

Doctoral Degree in Public Health (DrPH) in Epidemiology

Introduction
A Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) has been established to ensure that the Dr.PH-Epidemiology students completes the academic program within the acceptable time frame and with the expected quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the student financial aid requirements set forth by federal regulations have been met. Student's academic progress should be evaluated annually at the end of each academic year.

Scope
This policy applies to all Dr. PH in Epidemiology students enrolled at Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU).

General Requirements
A. Time Frame for Completion of the Academic Program
A student will be allowed a maximum time frame of three (3) years of enrollment beyond the standard of five (5) years required for the completion of the Program.

The total credits for completion of a degree include those graduate courses accredited on admission to the Program.

Time Frame for Completion of the Academic Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Doctoral Program in Public Health in Epidemiology</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Definition of Full Time
Students with an academic load of six credits or more per trimester will be considered a full time doctoral students. Student solely enrolled in the Doctoral Dissertation will also be considered a full time student.

Definition of Part Time
Students with an academic load of less than six credits per trimester will be considered a part time doctoral student.
B. Completion of the Dr.PH Requirements

1. **Course Requirement:**
   Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The Program requires a minimum of 61 credits.

2. **Performance Requirement:**
   a. A student must complete each academic year with a minimum grade point average of 3.00. Any student failing to meet 3.00 point GPA standard of performance or failing any course will be placed on probation and referred to the PHSU Student Promotion Committee.
   b. A minimum grade of B may be obtained in required and selective courses.
   c. A minimum grade of C could be obtained in elective courses.

3. **Qualifying Examination Requirement:**
   A Qualifying Examination (Comprehensive Exams) must be taken upon completion of the second academic year. If the student fails to approve the Qualifying Examination, the student must enroll in independent study courses during the next trimester. Independent courses are offered to give the students the opportunity to achieve the competences in the areas failed in the Qualifying Examination. Independent courses should be approved entirely during the next trimester. A maximum of 6 credits will be allowed to be taken as independent studies. Any student failing to meet this standard performance will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee.

4. **Doctoral Dissertation Requirement:**
   A Doctoral Dissertation according to the established guidelines with a research proposal defense and Oral Dissertation Defense is required to obtain the Degree of Doctor in Public Health with specialty in epidemiology.

**Grade Requirement**

In order to graduate, the student must complete all requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00 GPA in scale of 4.00 point. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility and will be reviewed on a yearly basis, at the end of each academic year.

   a. One “F” or one “NP” in any of the courses, or a cumulative GPA less than 3.00 in the academic year is not allowed. A grade of “F” in any course will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee, to be considered for dismissal from the academic program.
   b. The student may have a maximum of two elective courses with C in record.
   c. A student repeating a course or with a GPA less than 3.00 will be considered in academic probation.
   d. If the student fails to obtain a grade of B or more in a repeated course, he/she will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee for a consideration of dismissal from the academic program.
   e. Courses with “F” grade will remain on record after they are successfully repeated, but only the new grade (s) will be used to compute the grade point average.
   f. Grades of “P” (Pass) or “NP” (No Pass) are applicable to the qualifying examination. Grades of “IP” (In Progress), “P” (Pass) or “NP” (No Pass) are applicable to the research proposal defense and dissertation.
   g. When the research/dissertation activity requires more than one trimester for its completion, the student will receive a grade of “In Progress” (IP) for each trimester and until the research/dissertation is completed.
   h. A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the faculty member teaching that particular course. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the end of the following trimester or an administrative “F” will replace it.
   i. Graduate courses not offered at PHSU could be taken at other institution only with permission and approval of the Dr. PH Coordinator, Associate Dean for Public Health and the Dean for Health Sciences.
j. If the student obtained a reversed dismissal, he/she wont be in satisfactory academic progress and is considered both on academic and financial aid probation.

**Professional Behavior Requirement**
The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by the Ponce Health Science University at all times.

**Commitment to Public Health Philosophy**
It is expected that every student be committed to the betterment of our fellow human beings as exposed by the philosophy that governs the Public Health Profession.

**Academic Probation and Financial Aid Eligibility**
Any student failing to meet the grade requirement might be place on academic probation for one trimester, but will be eligible for financial aid. Students that fail to comply with grade requirements after the prescribed probation time will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee for dismissal from the program.

**Appeal Process for Academic and Financial Aid Probation**
Students notified that the Public Health Students Promotion Committee (SPC) decided to dismiss them from the Dr.PH Program, or that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year, will have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the Public Health Students Promotion Committee (SPC). The letter should include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they would change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Associate Dean for Public Health, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Health Sciences. The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the last notification. The Dean of Health Sciences will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.

If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing the date and time set to appealing meeting. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of Health Sciences. The Dean of Health Sciences will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of Health Sciences is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Associate Dean for Health Sciences or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.
In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of Health Sciences sustains the decision after the appealing process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

**Reinstatement of Financial Aid**
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. It is the student’s responsibility to request reinstatement of financial aid.

**Enforcement**
The President, the Dean for Academic Affairs and the Dean for Student Affairs, the Registrar and the Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policies set forth.

**Master Degrees in Public Health**

MPH (General, Epidemiology and Environmental)

**Introduction**
A Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) has been established to ensure that the MPH student completes the academic program for the MPH Degree within the acceptable time frame and with the required quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the student financial aid requirements set forth by federal regulations have been met. Student’s academic progress should be evaluated annually at the end of each academic year.

**Scope**
This policy applies to all MPH students enrolled at Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU).

**General Requirements**

A. Time Frame for Completion of the Academic Program

A student will be allowed a maximum time frame of two (2) years of enrollment beyond the standard of two (2) years required for the completion of the Program.

The total credits for completion of a degree include those graduate courses accredited on admission to the Program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master’s in Public Health</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>4 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Definition of Full Time**
Students with an academic load of six credits or more per trimester will be considered full time master degree students.

**Definition of Part Time**
Students with an academic load of less than six credits per trimester will be considered a part time MPH student.
A. Completion of the MPH Requirements
   1. Course Requirement – Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The Program requires a minimum of 55 credits.
   2. Performance Requirement:
      i. A student must complete each academic year with a minimum grade point average of 3.00. Any student failing to meet 3.00-point GPA standard of performance or failing any course will be placed on probation and referred to the PHSU Student Promotion Committee.
      ii. A minimum grade of B may be obtained in required and selective courses.
      iii. A minimum grade of C could be obtained in elective courses.
   3. Culminating Experience Requirement:
      i. Capstone – A Capstone or Comprehensive Exams (general and specialty) will be required to obtain the MPH degree. The Capstone will require to develop and present a research proposal. After the proposal is complete, the student should defense the project in public and provide a final manuscript following the established guidelines.
      ii. Comprehensive Exams – A Comprehensive Exams (General and Specialty) must be taken upon completion of the second academic year. If the student fails the general, the specialty or both exams, he/she will have another opportunity to achieving all Public Health competences. Any student failing to meet this standard performance will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee.

Grade Requirement
In order to graduate, the student must complete all requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00 GPA in scale of 4.00 point. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility and will be reviewed on a yearly basis, at the end of each academic year.

   a. One “F” or one “NP” in any of the courses, or a cumulative GPA less than 3.00 in the academic year is not allowed. A grade of “F” in any course will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee, to be considered for dismissal from the academic program.
   b. The student may have a maximum of two elective courses with C in record.
   c. A student repeating a course or with a GPA less than 3.00 will be considered in academic probation.
   d. If the student fails to obtain a grade of B or more in a repeated course, he/she will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee for a consideration of dismissal from the academic program.
   e. Courses with “F” grade will remain on record after they are successfully repeated, but only the new grade(s) will be used to compute the grade point average.
   f. Grades of “P” (Pass) or “NP” (No Pass) are applicable to the qualifying examination. Grades of “P” (Pass) or “NP” (No Pass) are applicable to the capstone.
   g. A grade of “I” (Incomplete) will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the faculty member teaching that particular course. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the end of the following trimester or an administrative “F” will replace it.
   h. Graduate courses not offered at PHSU could be taken at other institution only with permission and approval of the MPH Track Coordinator, Associate Dean for Public Health and the Dean for Health Sciences.
i. If the student obtained a reversed dismissal, he/she wont be in satisfactory academic progress and is considered both on academic and financial aid probation.

**Professional Behavior Requirement**
The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by the Ponce Health Science University at all times.

**Commitment to Public Health Philosophy**
It is expected that every student be committed to the betterment of our fellow human beings as exposed by the philosophy that governs the Public Health Profession.

**Academic Probation and Financial Aid Eligibility**
Any student failing to meet the grade requirement might be place on academic probation for one trimester, but will be eligible for financial aid. Students that fail to comply with grade requirements after the prescribed probation time will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee for dismissal from the program.

**Appeal Process for Academic and Financial Aid Probation**
Students notified that the Public Health Students Promotion Committee (SPC) decided to dismiss them from the MPH Program, or that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year, will have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the Public Health Students Promotion Committee (SPC). The letter should include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they would change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Associate Dean for Public Health, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Health Sciences. The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the last notification. The Dean of Health Sciences will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.

If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing the date and time set to appealing meeting. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of Health Sciences. The Dean of Health Sciences will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of Health Sciences is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Associate Dean for Health Sciences or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.
In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of Health Sciences sustains the decision after the appealing process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

**Reinstatement of Financial Aid**
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. It is the student's responsibility to request reinstatement of financial aid.

**Enforcement**
The President, the Dean for Academic Affairs and the Dean for Student Affairs, the Registrar and the Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policies set forth.

**Master of Science in School Psychology**

**Introduction**
This policy has been established to ensure an acceptable time frame for completion of the academic program and the minimally accepted quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements, set forth by federal regulations, are met.

**Scope**
This policy applies to Psychology Students enrolled in the Masters in Science in School/Clinical Psychology at Ponce Health Sciences University.

**General Requirements**

1. **Time Frame for completion of the Academic Program**
   A School Psychology Student will be allowed a maximum time frame of 2.5 years of enrollment beyond the 2.5 years standard required for the completion of the program. Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purpose of this measure.

   The total amount of years for completion of the degree includes those graduate courses accredited on admission to the School Psychology Program.

   a. Definition of a full time: Students with an academic load of 6 credits or more per semester will be considered full time graduate students.
   b. Definition of half time: Students with an academic load of 3 to 5 credits per semester will be considered half time students.
   c. Definition of less than half time: Students with an academic load of less than 3 credits per semester will be considered less than half time or part-time students.

2. **Completion of Program Requirements**
   a. Course Requirement
      Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The Program requires a total of 62 credits.
   b. Performance Requirement
      A student must maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00 for every semester. A student
failing to meet this standard of performance will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee.

c. Comprehensive Examination Requirement
   The program requires approval of a Comprehensive Examination covering core areas of the field.

d. Professional Behavior Requirement
   The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional behavior set forth by Ponce Health Sciences University, the corresponding accreditation agencies and the Clinical Practice Manual of the School Psychology Program.

**Grade Requirement**

In order to graduate, the student should complete all requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility and will be reviewed on a yearly basis.

1. No more than two courses may be approved with a grade of C.
2. Obtaining a grade of C in a third course will require that student repeat such course(s).
3. Repeated courses with "C" grades will remain on record, but the new grade will be used to compute the grade point average.
4. A grade of “F” in any course will result in referral to the Students Promotion Committee and considered for dismissal based on overall academic performance, including GPA in the program.
5. Grades of “P” (Passed) or “NP” (Not Pass) are applicable to Practice. A grade of “NP” requires repetition. In case of a second “NP” grade in the same practicum, the student will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee with a recommendation for dismissal.
6. An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the professor. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the following semester or an administrative “F” will replace it.

**Appeal Process for Academic Affairs**

Students who are notified by the Program’s Dean a decision of the Students Promotion Committee that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from the program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the Students Promotion Committee (SPC) and include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Program’s Dean, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of the School of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (SBBS). The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The Dean of SBBS will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.
If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of SBBS. The Dean will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the SBBS Dean is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Program Dean or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.

In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of SBBS sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the institutional policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress published by the Office of Financial Aid.

**Enforcement**
The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all health sciences students a copy of this document upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University.

The President, Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as the Program Dean, Registrar and Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policy here set forth.

**Master of Sciences in Medical Sciences (MSMS)**

A Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy has been established to ensure that student of Master of Sciences in Medical Sciences complete the academic program within the acceptable time frame and the minimally accepted quality of performance.

**General Requirements**

1. **Time Frame for completion of the Academic Program**
   A student of Master of Sciences in Medical Sciences will be allowed a maximum time frame of two semesters of enrollment beyond the standard required for the completion of the program. Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purpose of this measure.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Master of Sciences in Medical Sciences</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>2 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

   a. **Definition of Full Time** – students with an academic load of six credits or more per semester will be considered Full Time Masters students.
b. **Definition of Half Time** – students with an academic load of three to five credits per semester will be considered Half Time Masters students.

c. **Definition of Part Time or Less than Half Time** – students with an academic load less than three credits per semester will be considered Part Time Masters students or Less Than Half Time student.

2. **Completion of Program Requirements**

   a. **Course Requirement**
   Students must complete *all courses* within the established time frame. The Program requires a minimum of 40 credits for graduation.

   b. **Performance Requirement**
   A student must maintain a minimum 3.00 point GPA in a scale of 4.00 point by the end of the year. Any student failing to meet 3.00 point GPA standard of performance or failing any course will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee.

   c. **Comprehensive Qualifying Examination Requirement (CQX)**
   A Comprehensive Qualifying Examination must be taken at the end of the academic year. The maximum time allowed to take this examination is three attempts within one year according to the program time frame. A passing score for CQX is required for graduation.

   d. **Professional Behavior Requirement**
   The students must conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by the Ponce Health Sciences University and the corresponding accreditation agencies. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility.

**Grade Requirement**

In order to graduate, the student should complete all requirements and maintain a minimum grade point average of 3.00 point in a scale of 4.00 point by the end of the year and pass the CQX. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility.

1. A grade of “F” in any course or student with less than 3.00 points GPA will be referred to the Student Promotion Committee (SPC).
2. A grade of “F” in any of the courses or a cumulative GPA less than 3.00 is not allowed. Any F grade must be repeated. No more than 2 failures are allowed in the Master Program.
3. A student repeating a course or with a GPA less than 3.00 is considered in academic probation.
4. If the student fails to obtain a 3.00 point GPA or better after repeating course(s), he/she will be considered for dismissal from the academic program.
5. Courses with “F” grades will remain on record after they are successfully repeated, but the new grade(s) will be used to compute the grade point average.
6. Grade of “P” (Pass) or “NP” (No Pass) is applicable to the Comprehensive Qualifying Examination. A grade of “NP” requires repetition. The maximum time allowed to take this examination is three attempts. In case of a third “NP” grade, the student will be considered for dismissal from the academic program.
7. An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the faculty member. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the end of the following semester or an administrative “F” will replace it.

8. A student with less than 3.00 points GPA or has No-Pass grade in the CQX is not in satisfactory academic progress and is considered in academic probation.

9. If the dismissal decision is reversed by due process, the student will not be considered in SAP and will be placed on academic probation for one semester.

**Professional Behavior Requirement**

The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by the Ponce Health Sciences University. In case of unacceptable professional behavior, the corresponding Dean or the Program Chairperson will refer the case to the Promotions Committee. If the recommendation of the Student Promotion Committee is to dismiss the student, the student has the right to follow the appeal process.

**Appeal Process**

Students who are notified by the Associate Dean of Medical Education a decision of the Students Promotion Committee (SPC) that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from the master’s program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will request reconsideration in writing to the School of Medicine SPC and include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Associate Dean for Medical Education, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Medicine. The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The Dean of Medicine will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.

If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of Medicine. The Dean of Medicine will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of Medicine is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Department Chairperson, the Associate Dean for Medical Education or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.
In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of Medicine sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the institutional policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress published by the Office of Financial Aid.

**Enforcement**
The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all medical students a copy of this document upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine.

The President, Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as the Dean of Medicine, Associate Dean for Medical Education, Registrar and Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policy here set forth.

**Postgraduate Certificate in Neuroscience of Learning**

**Introduction**
This policy has been established to ensure an acceptable time frame for completion of the academic program and the minimally accepted quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements set forth by federal regulations are met.

**Scope**
This policy applies to all Students enrolled in the Postgraduate Certificate in Neuroscience of Learning at Ponce Health Sciences University.

**General Requirements**

1. **Time Frame for completion of the Academic Program**
   A Neuroscience of Learning Student will be allowed a maximum time frame of two years of enrollment beyond the standard required for the completion of the program (one year). Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purpose of this measure.

   The total years for completion of a degree include those graduate courses accredited on admission to our program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Standard</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neuroscience of Learning</td>
<td>1 years</td>
<td>3 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Completion of Program Requirements**

   a. Course Requirement
Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The Program requires a total of 18 credits.

b. Performance Requirement
A student must Pass each course, each semester. Any student failing to meet this standard of performance will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee.

c. Professional Behavior Requirement
The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by Ponce Health Sciences University

Grade Requirement
In order to graduate, the student should complete all courses with a grade of PASS. Satisfactory Academic Progress is required for financial aid eligibility.

1. Grades of “P” (Pass) or “NP”(No Pass) are applicable to this Program. A grade of “NP” requires repetition. In case of a second “NP, the student will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee with a recommendation for dismissal.
2. An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the professor. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the following semester or an administrative “NP” will replace it.

Appeal Process for Academic Affairs
Students who are notified by the Program’s Academic Dean a decision of the Students Promotion Committee that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from the program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the Students Promotion Committee (SPC) and include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. After the meeting, the SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Program’s Academic Dean, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (SBBS). The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The SBBS’ Dean will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The SBBS’ Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.
If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. After the meeting, the Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the SBBS’ Dean. The Dean will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of the SBBS is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The SBBS’ Academic Dean, the SBBS’ or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.

In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the SBBS’s Dean sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affairs. Any additional appeal should be submitted to the PHSU President.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the institutional policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress published by the Office of Financial Aid.

**Enforcement**
The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all health sciences students a copy of this document upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University.

The President, Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as the Dean of SBBS, the Registrar and Financial Aid Director will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policy here set forth.

**Professional Certificate in Family and Couples Therapy**

**Introduction**
This policy has been established to ensure an acceptable time frame for completion of the academic program and the minimally accepted quality of performance. This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements set forth by federal regulations are met.

**Scope**
This policy applies to all students enrolled in the Professional Certificate Program in Family and Couples Therapy at Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU).

**General Requirements**

1. **Time Frame for completion of the Program**
   A Student will be allowed a maximum time frame of one year of enrollment beyond the standard required for the completion of the program (one year)
2. **Completion of Program Requirements**
   1. **Course Requirement**
      Students must complete all courses within the established time frame. The Program requires a total of 21 credits and 100 hours of clinical practice.

   2. **Performance Requirement**
      A student must complete each trimester with a Passing (P) grade.

   3. **Professional Behavior Requirement**
      The students should conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by Ponce Health Sciences University

**Grade Requirement**
In order to graduate, the student should complete all program requirements. An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the faculty. The student must remove the “I” not later than the following year.

**Financial Aid Eligibility**
A student failing to meet the program requirements will be dismissed. Students notified that they are to be dismissed from program, have the right to appeal the case in writing to the University President within seven working days after receiving the notification.

**The Appeal or Due Process for Dismissal**
Students who are notified by the Program’s Academic Dean a decision of the Students Promotion Committee that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from the program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the Students Promotion Committee (SPC) and include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. After the meeting, the SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Program’s Academic Dean, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Behavioral and Brain Sciences (SBBS). The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The SBBS’ Dean will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The SBBS’ Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.
If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. After the meeting, the Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the SBBS’ Dean. The Dean will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of the SBBS is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The SBBS’ Dean, or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.

In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the SBBS’s Dean sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Vice-President for Academic Affair. Any additional appeal should be submitted to the PHSU President.

Reinstatement of Financial Aid
Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. It is the student's responsibility to request reinstatement of financial aid.

Enforcement
The Office of the VP for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all students upon admission to PHSU, a copy of this document.

Bachelor of Science in Nursing

Introduction
Satisfactory academic progress is a cumulative measure of a student’s performance and includes all periods of the student’s enrollment. Both quantitative and qualitative standards are used to evaluate satisfactory academic progress in the BSN Program. Quantitative and qualitative standards are measured every term.

Quantitative standards include grades on quizzes, exams, care plans and other measurement tools. Qualitative standards for practice, as a registered nurse requires many competencies, such as the functional abilities listed below:

- Ability to see, hear, touch, smell, and distinguish colors
- Ability to speak and write with accuracy, clarity, and efficiency
- Manual dexterity, gross, and fine motor movements
- Ability to learn, think critically analyze, assess, solve problems, and reach sound judgments
- Emotional stability and ability to accept responsibility and accountability

Scope
All students must satisfactorily demonstrate these competencies in the didactic, laboratory, and clinical courses throughout their program of studies.
**General Requirement**
A nursing student will be allowed a maximum time frame of two years of enrollment beyond the standard of four years required for the completion of the program. Summer enrollment is considered part of the academic year for the purposes of this measure.

To ensure that a student is making sufficient academic progress in order to meet the maximum timeframe requirement, the student must complete 67% of all credits attempted. Development and skill courses are included in the timeframe calculation but not in the rate of progress calculation.

This policy also ensures that the Student Financial Aid requirements set forth by federal regulations have been met. The SAP applies to all nursing students enrolled in Ponce Health Sciences University School of Nursing. Student’s academic progress is evaluated each trimester of the academic year.

For transfer students, the total years for completion of a degree include those years accredited on admission to the BSN Program.

**Course Requirement**
Students must complete **all courses** within the established time frame.

**Performance Requirement**
A student must pass each course. Any student failing to meet this standard of performance will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee to determine the action to be taken.

**Professional Behavior Requirement**
The students must conduct themselves in accordance with the norms for professional conduct set forth by the Ponce Health Sciences University and the corresponding accreditation agencies.

**Grade Requirements**
Students will not attain Satisfactory Academic Progress and will be referred to the School of Nursing Students Promotion Committee to be considered for dismissal if any of the following occur:

- Earning an “F” or “WF” in two or more courses in one trimester
- Earning an “F” or “WF” in a nursing course after having had two “F’s” or “WF’s” in previous trimesters
- Earning an “F” or “WF” in the same nursing course taken twice
- Earning less than a 2.50 semester GPA in two consecutive trimesters

Students receiving one “F” in one trimester, but has a trimester GPA of 2.5 or greater will be given an academic warning and will be placed on “Probation”. Students on probation must meet with the Dean of Nursing at the beginning and throughout the trimester.
Appeal Process

Students who are notified by the Dean of Nursing regarding decision of the Students Promotion Committee that he/she must repeat failed courses during the next academic year or to be dismissed from the nursing program, have the right to appeal the decision within seven working days after receiving the notification.

The appeal or due process presented below must be followed.

The student will appeal in writing to the School of Nursing Students Promotion Committee (SPC) and include all relevant documentation to support the request. The Committee will evaluate the reasons and evidence submitted to determine if they change their initial decision. The SPC has 48 hours to submit its decision to the Dean of Nursing, who will notify the decision to the student.

If the SPC sustains the adverse decision, the student has the right to appeal to the Dean of Nursing. The appeal must be submitted in writing within seven working days after receiving the notification. The Dean of Nursing will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. The Dean can appoint a three-member Ad-Hoc Committee to re-evaluate all evidence. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final.

If an Ad-Hoc Committee is appointed, they will notify the student in writing of the date and the time when the appeal will be evaluated. The Ad-Hoc Committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit a recommendation to the Dean of Nursing. The Dean of Nursing will consider the Ad-Hoc Committee recommendation and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

Any decision will be reported to the student in writing. The decision made by the Dean of Nursing is final.

The same process described above will be followed in the case that the adverse decision made by the Committee is for non-academic reasons, such as unacceptable professional behavior. The Department Chairperson, the Dean of Nursing or the VP for Student Affairs will refer the case to the SPC. If the recommendation of the SPC is to dismiss the student, the appeal process described above may be activated.

In the event that an adverse decision is made due to non-academic reasons and the Dean of Nursing sustains the decision after the appeal process, the student may appeal to the Provost/Vice-President for Academic Affairs and then to the President.

Financial Aid Eligibility

Financial Aid eligibility is contingent upon satisfactory academic progress. Please refer to the institutional policy on Satisfactory Academic Progress published by the Office of Financial Aid.

Enforcement

The Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs shall have primary responsibility for overseeing this policy and will provide all nursing students a copy of this document upon admission to Ponce Health Sciences University School of Nursing.

The President, the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs, as well as the Dean of Nursing, Registrar and Financial Aid Manager will receive all pertinent data to ensure proper enforcement of the policy here set forth.
ADMINISTRATION ANNOTATION AND GRADING SYSTEM

For administrative purpose, the University has established the following annotation system:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Annotation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>Not Pass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IP</td>
<td>In Progress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applies only to Dissertation/Thesis and Field Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Extended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Applies only to Internship and Field Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AW</td>
<td>Administrative Withdrawal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Dismissal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Repeated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modifier to another grade</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The difference between “IP” and “E” is that when “IP” is recorded it implies that a new registration process occurs for the student to continue for the next academic period. When “E” is recorded, the student continues activities of the course without involving a separate registration. (Refer to Academic Programs’ section for the grading system)

CHANGE OF GRADE POLICY

Once the professor reports the grade for a course to the Registrar’s Office, it is not subject to amendment without the written authorization of the faculty member and Program Director. The only reasons for a change of grade are the following:

1. Removal of incomplete grade. An “I” (Incomplete) grade will only be allowed under very special circumstances as determined by the professor. The student must remove the “I” (Incomplete) by the following semester or an administrative “F” will replace it.
2. A clerical error made by the Professor or Registrar.
3. When fraud or unethical conduct by the student has been proven in the obtainment of the grade.

A student who wishes to appeal a grade must do so within thirty (30) calendar days of its award. At the end of each semester/trimester a copy of the students grades will be sent to the address indicated on the student’s registration form.
CLINICAL PRACTICE EXAMINATION

1. All medical students are required to take and pass a Clinical Practice Examination (CPX) to be given at the end of their first clinical academic year.

2. Written feedback concerning individual performance will be provided to each student.

3. Students not meeting the acceptable level of performance will receive guided learning to overcome areas of low performance during one or more of the fourth year required clinical rotations. A modified version of the exam will be given after completion of the guided learning experience.

Satisfactory completion of this additional guided learning fulfills the requirement to pass this examination.

GUIDELINE FOR THE VALUE OF ATTENDANCE/PARTICIPATION IN THE PRE-CLINICAL COURSES OF THE MD PROGRAM

The Attendance Policy of Ponce Health Sciences University published in the institutional Catalog establishes that:

Attendance at lectures and laboratory exercises is mandatory unless excused because of illness or by previous authorization of the professor in charge of the course. Each department will decide the relative weight to be given to the attendance in calculating the final grade.

Attendance to clinical activities involving patients, patient models and similar types of activities is considered part of the students’ professional responsibility and is mandatory. Absence may be excused after the student consults with the respective department chairperson. Three unexcused absences may adversely affect the final grade for a course.

Incomplete work due to illness or other serious circumstances during the course will be handled according to departmental policies, which must be provided to the students in writing at the beginning of each term. Faculty are not obligated to repeat lecture/laboratory topics that were presented at scheduled times and dates.

The Medicine Program Curriculum Committee approved the following guideline:

- An attendance log with the signature of the student will be maintained for each academic activity as required by the Registrar.
- Students with less than 75% of attendance to academic activities at the mid-term of the course will be given an appointment with the course director for the mid-course feedback. Students will be referred for counseling services as deem necessary.
- Students with less than 75% of attendance at the end of the course will be referred to the Students Promotion Committee for failure to comply with school policies and regulations. Sanctions may include a written admonition.
- Each course director can assign points for participation as part of the final grade using the audience response system.
Points for attendance to clinical activities involving patients, patient models, small group discussions, laboratories can also be assigned, particularly for courses with pass/fail grades in which attendance/participation is the main assessment method.

**Dissertation**

A student registered in dissertation will be considered a full-time student. The cost of the dissertation will be $2,184 per registration. The grading system will be: IP for In Progress, S for Satisfactory, and NS for Non-Satisfactory. The maximum time allows will be in accordance with the program time frame.

**Leave of Absence**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the definition, policy and process for students requesting a Leave of Absence at Ponce Health Sciences University.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all students at PSHU. Authority to review and approve a leave of absence is held with the Registrar, Financial Aid Director and Vice President for Academic Affairs.

**Definitions**

*Leave of Absence*: Defined as an authorized temporary interruption of a student’s program of studies due to documented extenuating personal circumstances or medical reasons.

**Policy**

A student must request from the Registrar’s office an LOA at least 30 days prior to the LOA commencement date, unless medical circumstances require immediate authorization (e.g., automobile accident). A personal or medical leave may be authorized when a student is experiencing compelling personal and medical circumstances that are temporarily affecting his/her academic progress. The students must submit a physician’s note certifying the medical problem or reason. The total time of leave cannot exceed 180 days within a 12 month period. A student who fails to return after an authorized LOA will be academically withdrawn and an R2T4 calculation will be performed and subsequently an exit counseling instructional letter will be sent to the student.

**Military Leave**

The purpose of this policy is to establish the definition, policy and process for students requesting a Military Leave at Ponce Health Sciences University.

**Scope**

This policy applies to all students at PSHU. Authority to review and approve a military leave held with the
Vice President of Students Affairs, Registrar, Financial Aid Director and the Vice President of Academic Affairs.

Definitions

Military Leave: Defined as an authorized temporary interruption of a student’s program of studies due to a call to be into active military service.

Policy

Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) supports its students who are members of a military reserve unit or the National Guard and are called into active military service by the United States. To assist them as well as protect and safeguard their status as PHSU students, the University has adopted the following guidelines:

A student in good standing should immediately file a written request for a Military Leave with the Dean of the appropriate School in which the student is enrolled along with a copy of the military orders. All documentation must be delivered to the Office of the Registrar.

A Military Leave will be granted for the term of service stipulated in the military orders. Any request to extend the Military Leave should service require more than the period stipulated in the original orders, will be processed once official documentation from the student’s branch of service is received by the Registrar and a written extension request is submitted by the student. To facilitate the return process, the Dean’s Office will notify the Registrar so the student’s record will be flagged as a Military Leave.

The student will receive a full refund of tuition and fees paid to PHSU if the request for a Military Leave is filed prior to the last day to drop classes.

The student will have a choice of three options if the request for a Military Leave is received after the last day to drop classes:
  a. A full refund of tuition and fees, no credit awarded for work completed during the semester.
  b. An Incomplete grade in all courses with the right to complete all coursework at a future date without further payment of tuition or fees and a designation that the incomplete was incurred due to active military service. A student returning from Military Leave will have one Academic Year to complete their incomplete coursework once he/she is re-enrolled.
  c. A grade in each course, if the professor of each class believes sufficient work has been completed.
  d. Options B & C may be combined should circumstances warrant.

Student benefits (Student Health Insurance, etc.) will be terminated on the date of withdrawal. For a refund of a pro-rata portion of any premium paid for health insurance coverage, the student is required to provide a written request for a refund to the insurance carrier as provided in the certificate of coverage. Please contact the Office of Student Affairs for information.

All applicable financial aid awards will be refunded to the appropriate agencies, and repayments of federal student loans will be calculated in accordance with federal guidelines.
Students on Military Leave will be required to return university property, such as university computer equipment, library books, laboratory equipment, etc. in order to receive a refund or re-enroll.

Re-enrollment from Military Leave:
A student returning from Military Leave shall be guaranteed a place in a class at the beginning of the semester in which they seek to re-enroll.

If a student elected to take an incomplete in a course, upon re-enrollment the student should follow PHSU policies and regulations regarding the processing an Incomplete coursework as applicable to their course of study. The Office of Students Affairs and the Office of the Registrar will give the proper orientation to the student. If the course is no longer offered, or if the faculty member is no longer with the Institution, the returning student will receive a full tuition credit for a replacement course and the possibility of co-validation of coursework with current PHSU offerings will be considered.

A policy cannot address every circumstance that may arise when students are called to active duty. A student should consult with the Vice President for Student Affairs and the Office of the Registrar. Appeals of a decision may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of the corresponding school in which the student is enrolled.

Process flowchart:

**STUDENT RECORDS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

The University adheres to all applicable federal, Commonwealth, and local regulations concerning the privacy or confidentiality of student records, including, but not limited to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Faculty members are required to strictly comply with the University’s FERPA policy in their administration and use of student record.

_The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA)_

For the purposes of this policy, Ponce Health Sciences University has used the following definition of terms.
1. Student
   Any duly registered person who attends or has attended any of the Ponce Health Sciences University academic programs.

2. Educational Records
   Any record (in handwriting, print, tapes, film or other medium) maintained by Ponce Health Sciences University is an agent of the School, which is directly related to a student, except:
   a. A personal record kept by a staff member if kept in the sole possession of the maker of the record; the record must not be accessible or revealed to another person, except a temporary substitute for the maker of the record.
   b. Records created and maintained by the Ponce Health Sciences University to comply with the federal rules and regulation a privacy preservation concerns.
   c. An employment record of an individual, whose employment is not contingent on their student’s status, provided the record is used only in relation to the individual’s employment.
   d. Records made or maintained by a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, or other recognized professional or paraprofessional if the records are used only for treatment of a student and made available only to those persons providing the treatment.
   e. Alumni records containing student(s) information after they are no longer in attendance at the Ponce Health Sciences University and which do not relate to the person as a student.

(Note: A college or university is required by Section 99.7 of the FERPA regulations to provide students annual notification of their FERPA* rights. Its policy must include the method it will use to inform students.)

   - Students will be notified of their FERPA rights annually by publication in the student handbook;
   - Students will be notified of FERPA rights annually by publication in the student bulletin; or
   - Students will be proved a statement of their FERPA rights in their registration packets.

3. Procedure to Inspect Education Records
   Students may inspect and review their own academic records upon approval of the Registrar.

   Students should submit to the Registrar or Record Officer a written request, which identifies precisely as possible the record or records he or she wishes to inspect.

   The Record Custodian or an appropriate University staff person will make the needed arrangements for access as promptly as possible and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. Access must be given in 15 days or less from receipt of the request.

   When a record contains information about more than one student, the student may inspect and review only the record related to the student.

   * The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

4. Right of University to Refuse Access
   Ponce Health Sciences University reserves the rights to refuse to permit a student to inspect the following records:
a. Letters and statements of recommendation for which the student has waived the right of access, or which were placed in the file before, January 1, 1975.
b. Records connected with an application to attend Ponce Health Sciences University it that application was denied.
c. Those record which are excluded from the FERPA definition of education records.

5. Refusal to Provide Copies
(Note: With an understanding that if cannot deny students access to their records, Ponce Health Sciences University is required to describe the circumstances in which it may deny students a copy of their education records.)

Ponce Health Sciences University reserves the right to deny transcripts or copies of records not required to be made available by FERPA in any of the following situations:
a. The student has an unpaid financial obligation to the University.
b. There is an unresolved disciplinary action against the student.

6. Fees for Copies or Records
The fee for copies will be $3.00 each. (Note: A college or university may not charge for search and retrieval of the records; however, it may charge for copying time and postage).

7. Types, Locations and Custodians of Educations of Records
(Listing required. Types, Locations and Custodians are examples)
The following is a list of the types of records that Ponce Health Sciences University maintains their locations and their custodians.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Custodian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Applicants Records</td>
<td>Admission’s Office</td>
<td>Vice President for Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Admissions Records of Matriculated Students</td>
<td>Registrar’s Office</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cumulative Academic Records (Current Students, after graduation, withdrawals and transferred students)</td>
<td>Registrar’s Office</td>
<td>Registrar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disciplinary Records</td>
<td>Student Affairs Office</td>
<td>Vice President for Student Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Documents for Financial Aid</td>
<td>Financial Aid Office</td>
<td>Director of Financial Aid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8. Disclosure of Education Records
Ponce Health Sciences University will disclose information from a student’s education records only with the written consent of the student, except:

a. The school officials who have a legitimate educational interest in the records. A college or university is required to specify the criteria for school officials and for legitimate educational interest. The following are Ponce Health Sciences University criteria: A school official is:
   • A person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic or research, or support staff position.
- A person elected to the Board of Trustees.
- A person employed by or under contract to Ponce Health Sciences University to perform a special task, such as the attorney or auditor.
- A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official is:
  - Performing a task that is specified in his or her position description or by a contract agreement.
  - Performing a task related to a student’s education.
  - Performing a task related to the discipline of the student.
  - Providing a service of benefit relating to the student or student’s family, such as health care, counseling, job placement, or financial aid.

b. To officials of another school, upon request, in which a student seeks or intends to enroll. FERPA requires a college or university to make a reasonable attempt to notify the student of the transfer unless it states in its policy that is intends to forward records on request.

c. To certain official of the U.S. Department of Education, the Comptroller General, and state and local educational authorities, in connection with certain state or federally supported education programs.

d. In connection with a student’s request for or receipt of financial aid as necessary to determine the eligibility, amount, or conditions of the financial aid, or to enforce the terms and conditions of the aid.

e. If required by a state law requiring disclosure that was adopted before November 19, 1974.

f. To organizations conducting certain studies for or behalf of the Ponce Health Sciences University.

g. To accrediting organizations to carry out their functions.

h. To parents of an eligible student who claim the student as a dependent for the income tax purposes.

i. To comply with a judicial order or a lawfully issued subpoena.

j. To appropriate parties in a health or safety emergency.

k. Directory information so designated by Ponce Health Sciences University.

l. The result of any disciplinary proceeding conducted by the Ponce Health Sciences University against an alleged perpetrator of a crime of violence to the alleged of that crime.

m. PHSU complies with the FERPA USA Patriot Act: Public Law 107-56: DCL April 12, 2002 Section 507. PHSU follows the provisions outlined in the regulations as follows: PHSU only discloses personally identifiable information from an education record to appropriate parties in connection with an emergency if knowledge of the information is necessary to protect the health and safety of the student or other individuals.

9. Record of Request for Disclosure
Ponce Health Sciences University will maintain a record of all requests or disclosure of information from student’s education records. The record will indicate the name of a party making the request, any additional party to whom it may be re-disclosure and the legitimate interest the party had in requesting or obtaining the information. The record may be requested and reviewed by the parent or eligible student.

10. Directory Information
(Note: Disclosure of Directory Information is optional. If the opinion is exercised, a college or university is required to list the items it has designated as Directory information).

Ponce Health Sciences University designated the following items as Directory Information: student name, address, telephone number, date and place of birth, major field of study, participation in officially recognized activities and previous school attendance and photograph, email, height and weight, honors,
education. Ponce Health Sciences University may disclose any of those items without prior written consent, unless notified in writing to the contrary by the student.

The following are not considered as part of the directory information: social security number, religion, ID Number, gender, race, grades, nationality and GPA.

11. Correction of Education Records
(Note: Ponce Health Sciences University includes in its policy a procedure for the correction of records).

Students have the right to ask to have records corrected that they believe are inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of their privacy rights. Following are the procedure to correct a record:

a. A student must ask the official Ponce Health Sciences University to amend a record. They should write Ponce Health Sciences University official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record they want changed, and specify why it is inaccurate or misleading.

b. Ponce Health Sciences University, registrar or Record Officer, may comply with the request or it may decide not to comply. If it decides not to comply, Ponce Health Sciences University, registrar or Record Officer, will notify the student of the decision and advise them of their right to a hearing to challenge the information believed to be inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s rights.

c. Upon request, Registrar of Ponce Health Sciences University, will arrange for a hearing, and notify the student, reasonable in advance, of the date, place, and time of the hearing.

d. The hearing will be conducted by a Hearing Committee of three members who are disinterested parties; however, the hearing committee members may be officials of the Institution. The student shall be afforded a full and fair opportunity to present evidence relevant to the issues raised in the original request to amend the student’s education record. The student may be assisted by one or more individuals, including an attorney.

e. Ponce Health Sciences University Hearing Committee will prepare a written decision based on the evidence presented at the hearing and it will be submitted to the President to take the corresponding action. The decision will include a summary of the evidence presented and the reason for the decision.

f. If the President decides that the challenged information is not inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s right of privacy, it will be notifying the student that they have a right to place in the record a statement commenting on challenged information or a statement setting forth reasons for disagreeing with the decision.

g. The statement will be maintained a part of the student’s education records as long as long as the contested portion is maintained. If Ponce Health Sciences University discloses the contested portion of the record, it must also disclose the statement.

h. If the President decides that the information is inaccurate, misleading, or in violation of the student’s right of privacy, the President will order the registrar to amend the record and notify the student, in writing, that the record has been amended.

12. The Solomon Amendment and FERPA
The Solomon Amendment requires institutions to provide directory-type information on students who are 17 years of age or older upon request of representatives of the Department of Defense for military
recruiting purposes. This information—“student recruiting information”—includes: student’s name, address, telephone listing, date and place of birth, level of education, academic major, degrees received, and the most recent previous education institution at which the student was enrolled.

A request for student recruiting information under Solomon must be honored unless there is an exception in the law which precludes the institution from providing the requested information. The most important exceptions are that the university:

a. Have a long-standing policy of pacifism based on historical religious tradition;
b. Certify that such information is not collected by the institution;
c. Certify that each student concerned has formally requested to withhold “directory information” under FERPA from third parties.

The definitions of the terms “directory information” (FERPA) and “student recruiting information” (Solomon) are not synonymous.

All students have the right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning alleged failures by the University to comply with the requirements of FERPA.

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER USE AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

ponce health sciences university (PHSU) is committed to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of Social Security numbers (SSNs). PHSU is cognizant of the risk the improper disclosure of SSNs can have on individuals who have entrusted the information to PHSU, including the risk of identity theft. The collection, management and display of SSNs be controlled, and that the use of a SSN as an identification number is limited. A SSN may not be used as a primary identifier in a University system and never be used on any public list.

- SSNs may only be requested in certain cases, such as when required by law or for business purposes with certain third party providers, with appropriate disclosure of its use.
- On-line and off-line systems that maintain SSN data must have adequate security controls implemented to protect its confidentiality and integrity.
- PHSU Primary ID (“UPI”) number will serve as the primary identification number for University students, faculty and staff. A UPI is assigned to all persons affiliated with the University, and is displayed on the University’s ID Card.

Violations of this policy are to be reported to the University’s Compliance Officer.

Scope

This policy sets forth the framework for PHSU’S collection, management and use of Social Security numbers (SSN) and is applicable to all PHSU units.

- This policy will not apply to clinical and patient systems maintained by PHSU that are required to use the SSN for billing and healthcare coordination purposes.
- SSNs are considered an identifier under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

Requirements for Appropriate Use and Management of Social Security Numbers ("SSNs")

1. Collection of SSNs for University records
   1.1 SSNs may be collected and recorded when needed by federal or state governmental agencies or by outside third parties mandated to collect SSN information (example: health care providers, student's loans, etc.).
   1.2 PHSU employees authorized to collect SSNs may request a SSN during the execution of their duties if a primary means of identification, such as the UPI number, is not known or available.
   1.3 PHSU employees may not collect SSNs, except for those purposes noted below. Enrollment: Those wishing to enroll in academic offerings at the
       1.3.1 PHSU- both credit and non-credit - may be required to provide a SSN for secondary identification purposes. IRS regulations require PHSU request a SSN as a Taxpayer ID number for use in tax reporting. In addition, any student applying for Financial Aid must provide a SSN to the University. If a person enrolling in PHSU academic offering - credit or non-credit - cannot provide a SSN, certain services, such as transcripts, enrollment verification, tax reporting, and financial aid may not be available to the individual, and the University cannot guarantee a complete academic record for the individual.
       1.3.2 Immigration Law: A SSN may be collected as necessitated by immigration law or regulations.
       1.3.3 Certification Exams/Cooperative Experiences/Internships: A SSN is required to be collected and reported for students who are taking certification exams if mandated by the certifying agency. Students participating in internships OR Coop experiences may also require the student to provide a SSN for the other entity.
       1.3.4 Employment: Any person employed by PHSU must provide a SSN as the taxpayer ID number as directed by the IRS. This includes all employees, including part-time and student employees. Providing the SSN is a condition of employment. Applicants for employment must also provide a SSN, if requested, for mandatory background checks.
       1.3.5 Employee Benefits: If required by a benefits provider, the SSNs of dependents may be collected to receive service. PHSU may also release an employee's SSN to benefit providers.
       1.3.6 Payment for Personal or Professional Services: Any person providing services to PHSU as an independent contractor, invited speaker (honorarium) or research subject for which payment will be made, must provide a SSN as the taxpayer ID number per IRS regulations. These taxpayer ID numbers will be stored in the Finance Department as part of the vendor record.
       1.3.7 Other Entities: The SSN may be released to entities outside PHSU where required by federal or state law, regulation or procedure, or if the individual grants permission.
2. Maintaining the Security and Privacy of SSNs
   2.1 All records containing SSNs, whether on or off-line, will be considered confidential information and should be maintained appropriately to protect the confidentiality and integrity of this information.
   2.2 PHSU will take reasonable precautions to protect SSNs for all individuals who provide it.
   2.3 A SSN may not be used as a primary identifier in PHSU system.
   2.4 If and when records including SSNs are no longer needed, disposal of the records must follow University information retention and destruction policies and procedures.
   2.5 SSNs are considered to be confidential data and may not be used for purposes of data mining.
   2.6 SSNs may not be used, in part or in whole, as a user ID or password for accessing a computer system or for generating any type of identifier.
   2.7 SSNs in their entirety or in any portion may not be used nor posted where they can be exposed to the public, including time cards, class rosters, grade rolls, and bulletin board announcements.
   2.8 SSNs may not be used as an identifier for the collection of data for research or academic purposes.

3 Security Controls for Computer Systems Maintaining SSNs
   3.1 Systems storing SSNs must contain security controls that protect the integrity and confidentiality of this information. Controls must include:
      3.1.1 Authorization controls that require a user ID and password and that restrict access to information on the system based on an individual’s job responsibilities.
      3.1.2 Network security controls, in which any system with SSNs must be protected by a network firewall and any other security control ordered by IT Department.

4 SSNs Shared with Third Parties
   4.1 SSNs may not be shared with third parties, with the exceptions of:
      4.1.1 As required or permitted by law.
      4.1.2 With the consent of the individual.
      4.1.3 Where the third party is an agent or contractor for the University and has demonstrated that controls are in place to prevent unauthorized distribution.

Sanctions

It shall be the responsibility of each unit/Department of PHSU to meet the requirements set forth in this policy. Violation of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. Violation may also result in civil and criminal penalties based on state and federal privacy statutes. PHSU acknowledges that a violation of this Policy is subject to administrative penalties from the Consejo de Educación not less than $500 up to $5,000. (Law 186 for 2006, Article 2.)

Additional Information

For additional information about this policy, or to file a report, contact the University’s Compliance Officer.
DIVERSITY POLICY

The mission of School of Medicine of Ponce Health Sciences University is to provide high quality education in medicine to the population we serve, through an innovative curriculum, while preparing students to be ethical practitioners. Our institution strives to provide students and faculty an exposure to a diverse population so they can succeed in an increasingly diverse workplace and global communication culture.

In the publication of the Association of American Medical Colleges, Roadmap to Diversity, in its second edition of 2014, it is exposed that a key driver for high-quality health care in this time of unequal access to health care, is to educate. They state: “A shared objective of the majority of U.S. medical schools is to arrive at a destination where a diverse class—including a racially and ethnically diverse class—enhances teaching and learning for all students and contributes to graduates’ capacity to provide comprehensive, high-quality medical care in all communities.” An academic environment that fosters the interaction among a diverse student and faculty body will significantly contribute to prepare our graduates to provide the high-quality care all communities deserved.

Several racial and ethnic minority groups as well as people from socioeconomically disadvantaged backgrounds are significantly underrepresented among health professionals in the United States. Underrepresented minority groups have traditionally included African-Americans, Mexican Americans, Native Americans and mainland Puerto Ricans. Numerous public and private programs aim to remedy this underrepresentation by promoting the preparedness and resources available to minority and socioeconomically disadvantaged health professions candidates and the admissions and retention of these candidates in the health professions pipeline and workforce.

Being Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine a medical school in Puerto Rico, in accordance to the mission “to provide high quality education to the population we serve” our students and faculty members are mainly Puerto Ricans and Hispanics for which one of the groups we define as diverse for our academic community of students, faculty and administrators is Non-Hispanic group. Anyone who is not from Hispanic or Latino origin/ethnicity adds diversity to our academic environment.

The MD Students Admission Committee had already identified diversity as a desirable characteristic in the student body in its policy: The school values having a diverse student population from all areas of the country and therefore accepts candidates from the mainland; nontraditional academic background; etc. When completing the medical career, our students are better equipped to care for patients in a diverse society.

Two other groups that will add diversity in our student body and eventually to the physicians’ workforce are low socioeconomic status and first generation university students. We strongly believe that having these groups represented among our students will help prepared our graduates to better address the issues related to health disparities in our communities. The Junta de Planificación de Puerto Rico defines low socioeconomic status when individual or family income is under $19,000.00 annually. First generation university students are those whose parent neither have nor attained a college degree.

All administrative and academic units of the medical education program will develop programs, partnerships and make ongoing systematic efforts for to enhance the recruitment and retention of the diverse groups identified in this policy to our student body, faculty and senior administrative staff. They also should document and monitor these efforts and its effectiveness in achieving representation of these
groups in our academic community.

Approved by the Medicine Program Policy Committee 12-12-2014
Legal Review 1-30-2015

GRIEVANCE POLICY

Any student has the right to submit to the Office of the Vice-President for Student Affairs a written report
of a concern or complaint of any violation to the PHSU policies and/or professional ethic without any
retribution or consequences.

Violation to PHSU regulations will not be tolerated. Verbal, psychological or physical abuse such as
speaking insultingly, engaging in schemes to undermine the self-esteem of the person; or any
discriminatory practices or adverse activity will not be tolerated.

Procedure

Any member of the academic community will report any incident of abuse or violation to PHSU policies.
The incident should be reported to the Vice President for Student Affairs or designee.

The Vice President for Student Affairs or designee will gather all pertinent information on reported cases.
Early communication and intervention will lead to the resolution of the incident.

If the incident is resolved, no further action will be taken. A description of the incident must be in writing.
The report of a resolved incident will contain the description of the action plan followed.
A follow up on the incident will be made between six or eight weeks to assure that there has been no
retribution.

If the incident is not resolved, the Vice-President will appoint three members as Investigation Committee
to re-evaluate the case. All parties involved will be informed of the composition of the committee and will
have the opportunity to present any disagreement on the membership of the committee and the reasons
for the challenge. If necessary; the School’s legal counsel will be notified of the case and will be kept
informed of the progress of the investigation. The Investigation Committee will review the information and
make a recommendation to the Vice-President for further action. The Vice-President will inform the
student of the decision. The whole process should be addressed within three months.

After receiving the notification by the Vice-President, the student has the right to appeal the decision in
writing to the President of PHSU within seven working days.

The appeal, or Due Process presented below must be followed.

Appealing (Due Process)

The President will evaluate the appeal and the investigation report. Rejection of the appeal by the
President is final. However, the President may overturn the decision. If the President has a reasonable
doubt, about the student’s allegation or the investigation, he/she can appoint an Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of members of the faculty, student body and administration to reevaluate all evidence.

The Ad Hoc committee will notify the student in writing of the date and time when the case will be heard. The Ad Hoc committee has the discretion to re-interview the persons involved if necessary. The committee has seven (7) working days to submit to the President its report. The President will receive the Ad Hoc committee recommendations and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

All decisions, favorable or unfavorable, will be reported to the student in writing. All decisions made by the President will be final.

**TUITION PAYMENT AND REFUND POLICY**

For more details of PHSU tuition and fees please refer to: [www.psm.edu -TUITION & FEES](http://www.psm.edu)

ALL TUITION AND FEES ARE PAYABLE ON OR BEFORE REGISTRATION.

Ponce Health Sciences University reserve the right to increase the tuition or other fees as deemed necessary.

*Change in Tuition Cost*

Tuition is set by the Ponce Health Sciences University Board of Directors and is subject to change without previous notice. It is the students’ responsibility to arrange to pay their total tuition, fees and full charges in order to complete their registration if they wish to be admitted to classes. Students who may be eligible for financial assistance should consult the financial aid office as early as possible.

**Refund Policy**

Complete withdrawals and/or DROP of individual courses

1. Registration Deposit guaranteeing admissions is not refundable.
2. Students withdrawing prior to start classes will receive complete refund for tuition and fees.
3. After beginning classes there will be no refund on fees.
4. Students withdrawing on or before the end of the first week of classes will receive 80% refund of tuition.
5. Students withdrawing after the first week of classes or during the second week of the particular semester or trimester will receive 50% refund of tuition.
6. After the second week of classes, there will be no refund.

*Title IV Refund Policy*

The School will determine the percentage of attendance and the amount of financial assistance that the student did not earn when a student withdraws, takes an approved leave of absence, is expelled, or
otherwise fails to complete the enrollment period for which the student was charged. The Department of Education Title IV funds will be returned according to the federal regulations and within a thirty days (30) period from the official date of withdrawal. All other non-Title IV funds will be refunded according to institutional refund policy.

The student’s first year registration deposit guaranteeing admission is not refundable.

**USE OF SCHOOL NAME AND FACILITIES**

Individuals or student organizations do not have the authority to use the School name in legal nor official transactions. Neither the faculty or student body will use the School stationary and envelopes except for official business.

Permission to use classrooms or other facilities of the School, including affiliates, loaned or leased space, must be requested in writing from the Vice President of Students Affairs and from Administration. Permission must also be secured in written form. Only organizations and students in good standing have the right to use School facilities.

**USE OF SPEAKERS, DEMONSTRATIONS, ACTIVITIES, AND DISTRIBUTION OF PRINTED MATERIALS**

Outside speakers can only be invited to participate in School activities after approval by the pertinent Dean and ratification by the President.

Demonstrations must be carried outside the School or hospital grounds and must not interfere with the normal work or educational activities.

Any activity can be approved by the pertinent Dean. Any extracurricular activity belongs to students must have the written approval of Student Affairs Dean or designee.

Approval for posting or distributing printed materials must be obtained from the Office of Student Affairs. Unauthorized announcements will be removed and discarded. Posting is only permitted on the designated Bulletin Boards.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Ponce Health Sciences University subscribes to the principle of Academic Integrity or Academic Honesty:

Any type of academic dishonesty by students or faculty is unacceptable behavior at Ponce Health Sciences University. Two specific forms of academic dishonesty are cheating and plagiarism. The following sections describe Ponce Health Sciences University’s official policy in relation to these two forms of academic dishonesty.

**Cheating**

Cheating is defined by Merriam-Webster Dictionary as: to get something by dishonesty or deception. Cheating suggests using trickery that escapes observation. In an academic setting cheating usually refers to
obtaining or sharing information using deception during examinations or other academic assignments.

Ponce Health Sciences University will enforce compliance with academic integrity and professional behavior. Any student that cheats in any examination incurs in an intolerable behavior that may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the institution. Department faculty, chairpersons and program directors must ensure that appropriate supervision is available for all examinations. Faculty members have the primary responsibility to ensure the security and supervision of their examination.

Any type of communication among students during examination is strictly prohibited. All pagers and cellular phones must be turned off and must remain off throughout the examination. It is prohibited to use any unauthorized electronic devices.

Ponce Health Sciences University recognizes that it may be difficult in some cases to prove with certainty whether a certain behavior is sufficient evidence of cheating. The following behaviors during an examination could be considered as evidence of cheating:

- Looking at another person’s examination.
- Talking to another student during an examination.
- Consulting notes or materials, including use of electronic devices, not specifically authorized by the instructor during an examination.
- Employing a surrogate to take an examination.
- Falsifying a signature or misrepresenting someone on attendance sheets for a class, examination or any compulsory didactic activity.
- Stealing a test or any other material.
- Engaging in any act that a reasonable person would conclude, when informed of the evidence, to be a dishonest means of obtaining information.

Any student observed with a behavior considered evidence of cheating during an examination will be reported to the Department Chairperson or Program Director. This person will evaluate the evidence and if found positive, will inform the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs. They will investigate the incident and if cheating is proven, the student will be referred to the Student’s Promotion Committee or the President with a recommendation for dismissal from Ponce Health Sciences University.

In order to minimize the opportunity that any student may incur in such behavior a series of precautions are recommended to be taken by faculty members before and during examinations.

Recommendations Before the Examination:

- **Attend examined groups with more than 25 examinees by two persons, one of which would be a faculty member.**
- **Divide groups larger than 50 students in two groups. Each group will be attended by two proctors, one of which would be a faculty member.**

- **Plan the seating of the students ahead of time. Assign seats in a way that may not be predictable by students.**
- **Number all tests. Use a sign-in sheet for each row, by examination number, to record where students sit.**
• Prepare several versions of the same test with different questions order. Ensure that you prepare the appropriate code for each test.
• Only allow on the desk pencils and any other material authorized by the department providing the examination.
• Erase all messages on the boards before the examination starts.
• Check all bulletin boards for material related to the content of the examination.
• Establish some rules to control visits to the restroom during the examination.

Recommendations During the Examination:
• Constantly supervise the examination to identify any suspicious behavior that suggests cheating.
• If students raise their hands for any complaint, attend them one at a time.
• If for an extreme reason the student must temporarily leave the room, have one of the proctors accompany him.
• If a student exhibits behavior suspicious of cheating but not enough to qualify as evidence, record the name and inquire about the behavior after the examination.

If Evidence of Cheating is Observed During an Examination, the Person Observing the Behavior Should:
• Allow the student to complete the examination.
• Wait to the end of the examination and call the student aside.
• Confront the suspicious conduct, identify those involved and record their names.
• Notify the student about the findings and that PHSU policy requires to file a report.
• If a student appears to be using notes or has visible notes, promptly and discreetly confiscate the notes. These materials may be important evidence during a later investigation.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by the Random House Webster Dictionary (1997) as: the unauthorized use of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own. Ponce Health Sciences University considers such behavior as unacceptable from any person of the academic community. Behaviors that are considered examples of plagiarism include:

1. Appropriating ideas by another author as the presenter’s original ideas.
2. Copying word by word the work of another person without due citation.
3. Downloading information from the internet and presenting it as original work.
4. Presenting work as the result of the presenter’s independent effort without acknowledging the contribution of co-authors or collaborators.
5. Taking a report or work done by another person (or purchasing it from internet or other sources) and presenting it as his/her own.
6. Any other action in which people are lead to believe that what is presented is an original work when it is not.

Informal Procedure of Intervention with Alleged Plagiarism

Ponce Health Sciences University recognizes that in some occasions, people unknowingly engage in conduct which could be defined as plagiarism. The Institution encourages an informal approach to resolving concerns about plagiarism. In the case that a faculty member observes a conduct of alleged plagiarism in a student or other faculty member, an informal discussion about the problem may resolve and clarify the issue. This will
be the first step and will be initiated by the person observing the conduct. Every attempt should be made to respect the rights of the alleged violator.

**Formal Procedure of Intervention with Alleged Plagiarism**

A formal procedure occurs when a faculty member and a student or member of the academic community who allegedly engaged in plagiarism are unable to reach agreement on the alleged violation and resolution, or when the faculty member believes that the alleged violation is so serious as to warrant a formal proceeding.

If a member of the academic community decides to make a formal allegation of plagiarism by a student or other member of the academic community, she or he will make a written report to the Department Chairperson or Program Director. This person will evaluate the evidence and if found positive, will inform the Vice President of Academic Affairs and the Vice President for Student Affairs. They will investigate the incident and if plagiarism is proven, the guilty person will be submitted to disciplinary action which will depend on the seriousness of the violation and the particular situation in which the event occurred. Possible actions include one or more of the following:

1. A note or letter to the individual’s record.
2. Requirement to complete an alternative assignment or examination.
3. Repetition of a course.
4. A failing grade for an assignment.
5. A failing grade for a course.
6. Dismissal from Ponce Health Sciences University.
7. Any other disciplinary action exposed in the Offenses and Sanctions PHSU Policy.

A specific undesirable behavior that has been described in academic environments is termed “self-plagiarism”. In self-plagiarism a person presents as new a piece of work that has already been presented for other purposes. In the sciences, self-plagiarism generally refers to the practice of submitting an article or presentation with the same data to more than one journal or scientific forum. The new article or presentation may differ only slightly from the original by changes to the title, format or order of the authors.

Ponce Health Sciences University encourages an informal approach as described previously to resolve concerns about self-plagiarism.

Any student or member of PHSU academic community who has been subjected to a disciplinary action because of cheating or plagiarism has the right to appeal the adverse decision. This appeal will be done according to the regular Due Process Policy of Ponce Health Sciences University.

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST IN THE STUDENT-FACULTY RELATIONSHIP**

**Policy Statement**

The health professionals and faculty/staff who provide psychiatric/psychological/personal counseling or
other sensitive medical and healthcare services to University (PHSU) students will have no involvement in the academic, professionalism, or disciplinary evaluation, promotion, or dismissal of students receiving those services.

**Purpose of Policy**

It is essential to have a separation of roles to assure confidentiality in the provision of health and counseling services to PHSU students and absence of conflict of interest in PHSU student evaluation, promotion, and dismissal.

**Procedure**

Members of the PHSU faculty assigned to evaluate students or to make decisions regarding the promotion or possible disciplinary action of students for whom they have provided psychiatric/psychological/personal counseling or other sensitive health services are obliged to report the conflict of interest to the block or clerkship director so that the student or faculty/staff can be reassigned to preclude any conflict of interest, real, perceived, or potential.

Students who have been assigned to a course, preclinical experience or clinical clerkship rotation in which they would be evaluated by a member of the faculty or staff who has provided them with psychiatric/psychological counseling or other sensitive medical or health services, should report the real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest to the block or clerkship director as soon as they receive the assignment so that there will be no involvement of said faculty/staff in the academic evaluation or promotion of the student. Students that do not report such conflict of interest by 2 days after the initial contact with the faculty member resign to their right to be assigned a different evaluator.

In the event that the student or faculty has not been re-assigned after reporting of the conflict, the student should report the matter to the Vice President of Students Affairs for resolution. Similarly, if faculty or students are involved in a hearing for a possible adverse action related to academic, professionalism, or disciplinary matters, they should notify the Chairperson of the Student Promotion Committee or the Vice President of Students Affairs if one or more members of the hearing committee has provided a student with any psychiatric/psychological counseling or other sensitive medical or health services, so that the faculty can be excused from the committee.

Evaluation instruments shall include a disclaimer in which faculty members attests that they have not had a professional relationship with students that could affect their judgment upon evaluation of the students.

**STANDARDS OF CONDUCT IN THE TEACHER-LEARNER RELATIONSHIP**

Ponce Health Sciences University adapts and incorporates the AAMC model of Standards of Conduct in the Teacher- Learner Relationship, and encourages faculty and students to familiarize themselves and pledge adherence to this policy statement:

Preparation for a career in the health care professions demands the acquisition of a large fund of knowledge and a host of special skills. It also demands the strengthening of those virtues that are expected in the health provider/patient relationship and that sustain the health profession as a moral enterprise. This policy statement serves both as a pledge and as a reminder to teachers and learners that their conduct in fulfilling their mutual obligations is the medium through which the profession inculcates its ethical values.
Guiding Principles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Duty</th>
<th>Ponce Health Sciences University faculty has a duty, not only to convey the knowledge and skills required for delivering the profession’s contemporary standard of care, but also to inculcate the values and attitudes required for preserving the profession’s social contract across generations.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td>The learning environments conducive to conveying professional values must be suffused with integrity. Students learn enduring lessons of professionalism by observing and emulating role models who epitomize authentic professional values and attitudes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Respect</td>
<td>Respect for every individual is fundamental to the ethics of the health professional. Essential for nurturing that ethics is the mutual respect for every individual by students, novice members of the profession, as well as by their teachers, as experienced and esteemed professionals. Given the inherently hierarchical nature of the teacher/learner relationship, teachers have a special obligation to ensure that students, interns and residents are always treated respectfully.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Commitments of Faculty

1. We pledge our utmost effort to ensure that all components of the educational program for students, interns and residents are of high quality.
2. As mentors for our students, interns and resident colleagues, we maintain high professional standards in all of our interactions with patients, colleagues, and staff.
3. We respect all students, interns and residents as individuals, without regard to gender, race, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation; we will not tolerate anyone who manifests disrespect or who expresses biased attitudes towards any student, intern or resident.
4. We pledge that students, interns and residents will have sufficient time to fulfill personal and family obligations, to enjoy recreational activities, and to obtain adequate rest. We monitor and, when necessary, reduce the time required to fulfill educational objectives, including time required for “call” on clinical rotations, to ensure student’s, intern’s and resident’s wellbeing.
5. In nurturing both the intellectual and the personal development of students, interns and residents, we celebrate expressions of professional attitudes and behaviors, as well as achievement of academic excellence.
6. We do not tolerate any abuse or exploitation of students, interns or residents. We encourage any student, intern or resident who experiences mistreatment or who witnesses unprofessional behavior to report the facts immediately to appropriate faculty or staff; we treat all such reports as confidential and do not tolerate reprisals or retaliations of any kind.

Commitments of Students, Interns, and Residents
1. We pledge our utmost effort to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors required to fulfill all educational objectives established by the faculty.

2. We cherish the professional virtues of honesty, compassion, integrity, loyalty and dependability.

3. We pledge to respect all faculty members and all students, interns and residents as individuals, without regard to gender, race, national origin, religion, or sexual orientation.

4. As health professionals in training, we embrace the highest standards of the profession and pledge to conduct ourselves accordingly in all of our interactions with patients, faculty colleagues, and staff. As well as fulfilling our own obligations as professionals, we pledge to assist our fellow students, interns and residents in meeting their professional obligations.

**HONOR CODE**

In the pursuit for academic, personal and professional excellence, every student signs an Honor Code which delineates PHSU’s standards of conduct and the student’s commitment to such principles.

*Honor Code Statement of Principles*

**Preamble**

In their pursuit for academic, personal and professional excellence, students of the Ponce Health Sciences University have adopted this Honor Code. The principles of this Honor Code are intended to aid students in maintaining a high level of ethical conduct in concordance with the educational philosophy of our institution. These are standards to enable students to determine the propriety of their conduct in relation to peers, members of the faculty, administration and patients.

**Principles**

- Students have the responsibility to uphold and maintain the highest degree of personal and professional integrity.

- Students are encouraged to seek appropriate counsel if deemed necessary.

- Ethical growth should be coincident with academic growth among the student body.

- To evidence the need to combine personal honor with communal responsibility the following precepts are specifically, but not exclusively, expected to guide the conduct of each member of the Ponce Health Science University student body:

  - Each student must work independently and honestly on all examinations.

  - Plagiarism is considered a major ethical offense.

  - Each student will be trustful and dutiful in carrying out clinical and academic responsibilities.

  - The success of the Honor Code depends on the personal integrity, mutual trust, and cooperation of all members of the Ponce Health Sciences University community: students, faculty and administration.
**Reporting**

A student or faculty member who observes or suspects a violation of the Honor Code shall submit a written report of the incident to the Dean of Students or Vice President for Academic Affairs. That representative will deliver the report of the incident to the President who will authorize an investigation. The President will appoint two investigators from the Ponce Health Sciences University who will notify the accused student of the alleged violation, his/her rights, and the date of the Promotion Committee hearing. All suspected violations would be heard at the Promotion Committee.

**Due Process**

A student charged with violating this code is guaranteed the following safeguards:

- The student must be informed in writing of any charges at least 48 hours before the case is heard by the Promotion Committee.

- The student has the option of being excused from any tests, assignments, or examinations for a period no longer of two days before or after the meeting of the Promotion Committee.

- The student has the right to be represented by counsel of his/her choosing at the Promotion Committee hearing.

- The student has the right to present witnesses at the Promotion Committee hearing.

- The student has the right to confront the accusers and to cross-examine any witnesses at the Promotion Committee.

- The student has the right to examine any evidence prior to the Promotion Committee hearing.

- All records of prior social or academic infractions having no direct bearing on the present charges shall be excluded from evidence.

- The student has the right, in the event of a not guilty verdict, to request that this finding be made public.

**Sanctions**

The following actions will be taken against a student who is found guilty of a violation of the Honor Code:

1. *Reprimand such as:* warning letter, verbal or written admonition, place of letter with findings of violation in the formal academic record.
2. *Probation:* Any probation rendered by Promotion Committee shall be entered into the student’s academic record, but shall be removed upon the defendant’s graduation.
3. *Failure of Course:* The Promotion Committee will recommend to the President of the Ponce Health Sciences University and subject to his final authority, that a student be given a failing mark in a course connected to the Honor Code violation.
4. *Suspension:* The student will be suspended for a minimum of one academic semester/trimester, and this will be entered permanently in the School academic record. The conditions for reintegration shall be stated in the order of suspension and must at least require the repetition of the academic semester in which the violations(s) occurred.
5. **Expulsion:** Permanent dismissal from Ponce Health Sciences University.

A combination of the above penalties deemed appropriate by majority vote of the Promotion Committee based on the severity of the infraction, past academic and other performance of the student, the student’s attitude, and the student’s potential for future performance.

**APPEALING (DUE PROCESS) to the president**

The President will evaluate the appeal and the investigation report. Rejection of the appeal by the President is final. However, the President may overturn the decision. If the President has a reasonable doubt, about the student’s allegation or the investigation, he/she can appoint an Ad Hoc Committee, comprised of members of the faculty, student body and administration to reevaluate all evidence.

The Ad Hoc committee will notify the student in writing of the date and time when the case will be heard. The Ad Hoc committee has the discretion to re-interview the persons involved if necessary. The committee has seven (7) working days to submit to the President its report. The President will receive the Ad Hoc committee recommendations, and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

All decisions, favorable or unfavorable, will be reported to the student in writing. All decisions made by the President will be final.

**INDEPENDENT STUDY COURSE**

Independent study courses are designed to give flexibility to academic programming and to allow students to complete academic requirements under special conditions in addition to special course offerings. These special conditions include but are not limited to:

1. Availability of the professor.
2. The student requires the course to comply with his/her program sequence or for graduation, and the course is not being offered or the session is closed.
3. Inability to attend classes due to health reasons or other attenuating circumstances as approved by the Program Director.

Special restrictions will that apply:

Any student will, with the recommendation of academic advisor, and the professor and Program Director’s approval, enroll in independent studies for a maximum of nine (9) credit hours of the total credit hours required for graduation. Students must have completed 18 credits before requesting independent studies.

The following guidelines govern all independent studies courses:

1. Only theoretical courses will be taken as independent studies.
2. No clinical, research or courses requiring laboratory can be taken as independent study.
3. An independent study course will not exceed one academic semester/trimester. The student will not, in a given semester/trimester, take more than two independent study courses.
4. Courses being offered during the same session will not be taken as independent studies unless authorized by the Program Director.

5. During the session in which the student is enrolled in an independent studies course, the student must be registered in the institution as a regular student.

6. Under no circumstances will independent studies be authorized to students who have previously obtained a grade of “C” or lower in same course.

7. The registration fees for independent study are the same as for regular courses.

8. An independent study course complies with the following required course regulations:
   a. The grade for the course is due at the end of the regular session.
   b. Registration for the course is during the regular registration period.
   c. The student is required to take a written examination and/or additional requirements as approved by the professor.
   d. The independent study course is based on the official syllabus.

9. The procedure for registering for an independent studies course is:
   a. The student must receive a clearance from the Registrar and the Program Director.
   b. The student must obtain signed permission from the professor who will teach the course.
   c. The permission form is then administratively forwarded to the Program Director who finally approves all independent studies.
   d. A student/Professor Agreement Form must be filled out and signed at the Registrar’s Office.
   e. Filling of the session registration form with the Registrar.

INSURANCE FOR STUDENTS

Health Insurance

Each student is required by the School to carry comprehensive medical care insurance. Individuals, who choose to be covered by a plan other than the School's Health Insurance Plan, must present proof of coverage at the time of registration.

For a more complete description of healthcare services available, the student is advised to consult the Medical Plan Brochure or visit the webpage: [http://www.ssspr.com/SSSPortal](http://www.ssspr.com/SSSPortal)

Disability Insurance

Beginning in the fall of 2001, is required that all Ponce Health Sciences University students have a disability insurance; due to the fact of risk during health fairs, volunteer jobs, summer programs, researches, clinical experiences, medical rotations and electives. The student who has his/her own disability insurance must present evidence during registration. In case of not having evidence of a policy or does not have insurance, he/she must submit the application through the school’s arrangement.

INTERPERSONAL ABUSE

Personal abuse will not be tolerated at PHSU. Verbal, psychological or physical abuse such as speaking insultingly, engaging in schemes to undermine the self-esteem of the person; or any other such activity will not be tolerated.
Any incident of abuse reported by any member of the academic community. The incident should be reported to the Vice President of Students Affairs or designee.

The Vice President of Students Affairs or designee will gather all pertinent information on reported cases of personal abuse. The School’s legal counsel will be notified of all such cases and will be kept informed of the progress of the investigation at all times. Early communication and intervention will lead to the resolution of the incident.

If the incident is resolved, no further action will be taken. A description of the incident must be in writing. The report of a resolved incident will contain no names. A follow up on the incident will be made after six or eight weeks to assure that there has been no retribution.

If the incident is not resolved, in consultation with the Legal Counsel of the school, an Ad Hoc committee appointed by the President, and comprised of members of the faculty, student body and/or administration will re-evaluate the case. All parties involved will be informed of the composition of the committee and will have the opportunity to present any disagreement on the membership of the committee and the reasons for the challenge. Appeals would be followed as described above. Psychological counseling will be available for the parties involved as needed and availability.

The Ad Hoc committee will review the information and make a recommendation to the President for further action. The whole process should be addressed within three months.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU), as an educational institution and as an employer, values equality of opportunity, human dignity and racial/ethnic and cultural diversity. Accordingly, the University prohibits and will not engage in discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, sex, age, marital status, familial status, sexual orientation, political affiliation, disability, or status of veteran. Further, the University will continue to take affirmative steps to support and advance its values consistent with the PHSU mission. This policy applies to admission, students, employment and access to and treatment in PHSU programs and activities. This is a commitment made by the PHSU and is in accordance with federal, state and/or local laws and regulations.

OFFENSES AND SANCTIONS

Offenses

Some of the following offenses will be considered and submitted for disciplinary action by the School authorities:

1. Violation of professional conduct, such as plagiarism, cheating, etc.
2. Violation to federal and state law in the School premises.
3. Misuse, damage or destruction of School property.
4. Illegal appropriation of School property.
5. Failure to comply with School policies and regulations.
6. Any intent or act to threaten, intimidate, interfere with fellow students and/or employees.
7. Any intent or sexual harassment against fellow students, employee, and/ or visitor within the premises of Ponce Health Sciences University.
8. Carelessness in the operation or use of equipment which will risk his own personal safety or that of other person.
9. Originate or spread false rumors or statements affecting the image of the School or any of its components.
10. Any discriminatory practices based upon sex, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, age, marital status, political affiliation, disability, violation of privacy rights, student abuse or mistreatment.
11. Contribute to, or facilitate unsanitary conditions or poor housekeeping in the School.
12. Failure to observe study/work attendance regulations constantly such as:
   a. Being late or absent without a reasonable excuse or authorization.
   b. Leaving the place of study/duty during didactical activities/working hours without authorization or excuse.
   c. Reporting to study/work under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs in the School premises.
13. Failure to observe parking regulations on the school lots.
14. Failure to observe the “No smoking” Policy in Ponce Health Sciences University.
15. Overtime or irregular break times without previous authorization
16. Possession, use or distribution of illegal drugs as well as the abuse of alcohol in the school premises will be considered a grave personal misconduct, and a cause of recommendation for dismissal.

Sanctions

Any offense or violation to the School policies or regulations will be subjected to sanctions. These sanctions include, but are not limited to:

1. Warning
2. Verbal admonition/reprimand
3. Written admonition/reprimand
4. Placement of letter with finding of violation as charged:
   Ordinarily, if the finding of violation as charged is made, the finding and sanctions will be included in the formal academic file. Any findings in the permanent file shall be included in any future reports(s) concerning the student, unless specified otherwise by the Committee. Alternatively, the Committee could recommend that the findings and sanctions be included in an impermanent file, which is maintained by the Student Affairs Office or Human Resource Office
5. Mandatory participation and successful completion of a counseling or rehabilitation program.
6. Suspension for a Definite Time: Exclusion from classes and other activities with forfeiture of academic credit, as set forth in the notice of suspension, for a definite time beginning immediately. Sanction for cheating shall ordinarily include a recommended failure in the course involved with authorized withdrawal in other concurrent courses, regardless of the time in the school year when the offense is committed. If the suspension is for more than one term, the suspension shall begin immediately and shall be served in consecutive terms.
7. Indefinite Suspension: Termination of student/employee’s status, subject only to formal readmission, with no right to petition for readmission before the expiration of a calendar year from the date of suspension.
8. Probation
9. Expulsion: Permanent dismissal from Ponce Health Sciences University.
REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION

PHSU Admissions Office and the Admissions’ Committee act in accordance with “Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990” which includes changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, which became effective on January 1, 2009.

PHSU is committed to provide reasonable accommodation for a student academically qualified who has a disability. ADA defines “qualified individual” as an individual who, with or without reasonable accommodation, can perform the essential functions of the position that such individual holds or desires. All applicants accepted to PHSU must be able to meet the technical standards described in the PHSU Admissions Policy on Technical Standards.

Accepted candidates that need special accommodations are responsible to contact the Office of Academic Affairs. It is the student’s responsibility to make their condition known to PHSU administrators and to seek out assistance. The impairment must be one that substantially limits a major life activity.

Students with disabilities must submit a written request for special accommodation to the Office of Academic Affairs. The request should be accompanied by a report from a licensed professional, such as a physician or psychologist, establishing the specific condition for which the accommodation is necessary.

The report should include:
1. the specific diagnosis of the disability
2. specific tests administered to the student that will assist to determine the need for the accommodation requested (report the specific test results and findings)
3. prior accommodations granted at other institutions
4. type of academic accommodations that have worked in the past
5. the specific accommodations and/or assistive devices recommended and in cases of temporary disabilities the time period the accommodations are required
6. the professional credentials of the evaluator that qualify him/her to make the particular diagnosis, including information about professional certifications
7. the date of the report shall not be more than six months prior to the date the request for accommodation is received at the Vice President of Academic Affairs Office

The report from the licensed health professional is required when you submit the request for accommodation.

The determination will be done on a case by case basis considering students’ needs and in consultation with institution’s officials and professional consultants as deemed necessary. All the documentation and information provided for the determination will be kept confidential.

Guidelines for physical, visual and other disabilities provided by organizations like the National Board of Medical Examiners, the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC) for the American Medical College Admission Test (MCAT), the Educational Testing Services (ETS) and other professional organizations will be revised during the determination. The student will ask to provide additional information. The day for the accommodation to come into effect will vary according the period necessary to evaluate and implement the accommodation and usually will take one to four weeks if all the required information is provided.
Accommodations that are not considered reasonable because they impose extraordinary difficulty or burden for the institution or require fundamental changes of academic standards or coursework may be declined. Determinations may be appealed to the corresponding Program’s Dean.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT**

**Definition**

Harassment on the basis of sex is a violation of Section 703 of Title VII of the Federal Law of Civil Rights. Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitute sexual harassment when:

1. submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly as a term or condition of a student's academic status
2. submission to or rejection of such conduct by a student is used as the basis for decisions affecting the academic status of such individual, or
3. such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with a student's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment.

Sexual harassment will be considered and submitted for disciplinary action by the Administrative authorities of the Ponce Health Sciences University.

Any act of sexual harassment will cause for disciplinary action, including dismissal.

**Disciplinary Measures, Due Process and Penalties**

Disciplinary action will be taken against any faculty member or a non-academic employee or student after the application of the following process:

1. Any student or member of PHSU will submit a written report about any act of misconduct by an employee, faculty member, or student to the Office of Student Affairs.
2. After receiving the written report, the Dean of Student Affairs will designate a special committee (under certain circumstances this could be the Committee of Student Affairs of the Academic Senate) to initiate an investigation of the written report. The following must be taken in to consideration by the committee:
   a. seriousness of the violation reported
   b. evidence to sustain the offense reported
   c. previous record and past performance of the student, employee, or faculty member against whom the report has been submitted
3. Recommendations of the special committee will be directed to the Dean of Student Affairs in the case of a student. In the case of an employee or faculty member, these will be addressed to the Dean.
4. If necessary, the Vice President of Students Affairs will conduct a formal or informal administrative hearing in which all parties interested in the case will be able to express their views on the case under investigation.
5. At the discretion of the Vice President of Students Affairs, a written report describing the findings of
this administrative hearing will be directed to the President of the Institution with recommendations
for the course of action.

6. The President or his/her designated, after receiving the report from the Vice President of Students
Affairs, will order disciplinary action, including but not limited to warnings, suspensions without pay,
and dismissal.

7. The final decision to dismiss an employee, faculty member, or student will be taken by the President
of the University.

An employee, faculty member or student, has the right to appeal the decision of the President or his delegate,
through legal representation.

TEACHOUT POLICY

LAST REVISED: September of 2014

REFER QUESTIONS TO: VP of Academic Affairs

SCOPE: This policy applies to administration and faculty in all programs of Ponce Health Sciences University
(PHSU).

Policy

The decision to close a degree or certificate program requires substantial planning and careful consultation
with all those affected. Every effort should be made to inform everyone affected as fully as possible about
the conditions leading to a decision of such importance, and all available information should be shared. As
the immediate interests of current students and faculty are most directly affected, their present and future
prospects require sensitive and timely attention and involvement. The university teach-out policy aims to
protect the interests of students and faculty and to satisfy the requirements established for the University
by the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE) and the Consejo de Educacion de Puerto
Rico (CEPR) during this process.

In accordance with Federal regulations, the University is required to submit a teach-out plan to MSCHE and
CEPR for approval if any of the following occurs:

a. The institution notifies MSCHE and CEPR that it intends to cease operation entirely.

b. MSCHE or CEPR terminates accreditation or the candidacy of an institution.

c. The USDE notifies either MSCHE or CEPR that it has initiated an emergency action against the
institution or an action to limit, suspend, or terminate an institution participating in any Title IV,
Higher Education Act program.

d. A State Licensing or authorizing agency notifies either MSCHE or CEPR that an institutions license or
legal authorization to provide an educational program has been or will be revoked.

More specifically, if the University decides to close an educational program, or the entire institution, one of
the following options must be followed:
a. Execute a Teach-Out Plan. The teach-out option occurs when the institution "teaches-out" currently enrolled students; no longer permanently admits students to programs; and terminates the educational program or the operations of an institution.

b. Develop and implement a Teach-Out Agreement. The teach-out agreement option occurs when the institution enters into a contract with another institution or organization to teach out the educational programs or program.

Both teach-out plans and teach-out agreements must include the following information:

a. Dates of termination and closure;

b. An explanation of how affected parties (students, faculty, staff) will be informed of the impending closure;

c. An explanation of how students will be helped to complete their program of study with minimal disruption or additional expense;

d. How faculty and staff will be redeployed or helped to find new employment; and

e. If closing an institution: signed copies of teach-out agreements with other institutions, if any; and arrangement for the storing of student records, disposition of final financial resources and other assets.

The teach-out plan addresses graduate students as well as prospective and currently enrolled students. The teach-out period and teach-out plan will vary by academic department and/or program and must be determined and approved in advance at all required levels, as specified under Responsibilities below.

**Definitions**

1. *Degree Program.* A degree program is an organized curriculum leading to a degree in an area of study recognized as an academic discipline by the higher education community, as demonstrated by assignment of a Classification in Instructional Programs (CIP) code by the National Center for Educational Statistics or as demonstrated by the existence of similar degree programs at other colleges and universities.

2. *Certificate Program.* A certificate program is a coherent course of study leading to the awarding of a credential. A college credit certificate is not intended as a degree, but as a supplement to a student's specific educational goals or professional career preparation. Completion of a college credit certificate generally is related to a specific field, and usually associated with a limited set of occupations.

3. *Educational Program.* A degree program or college credit certificate program.

4. *Date of program termination.* The date on which the educational program is closed permanently to admission.

5. *Date of program closure.* The date on which the last student in teach-out has completed the educational program.
6. **Notification.** A letter from an institution's chief executive officer, or his/her designated representative, to MSCHE or CEPR summarizing a proposed change, providing the intended implementation date. The policy and procedures for reporting and review of institutional substantive change are outlined in the document *Substantive Change: Institutional Closure or Institutional Status Requiring a Teach-out Plan.*

7. **Accreditation Liaison Officer (ALO).** The individual at the institution who is responsible for ensuring the timely submission of annual institutional profiles and other reports as requested by either MSCHE or CEPR in the years between accreditation. With the VP or Academic Affairs, the Accreditation Liaison Officer is responsible for the accuracy of all information submitted to either MSCHE or CEPR and for ensuring ongoing compliance with standards, policies, and procedures beyond reaffirmation. During the Reaffirmation Cycle, the Liaison serves on the Self-Study Teams and oversees all staffing aspects of the Reaffirmation process.

8. **Teach-Out Plan.** The written plan and subsequent process by which the University provides institutional and academic support services to students enrolled in an educational program that has been discontinued. The teach-out process often extends well beyond the termination date (the date on which the site or program is closed permanently to admissions) to allow time for enrolled students to complete their program in a reasonable amount of time. The plan must provide for the equitable treatment of students in an institution.

9. **Teach-Out Agreement.** A written agreement between accredited institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students if one of those institutions stops offering an educational program before all students enrolled in that program complete the program.

**Procedures**

**Responsibilities**

The Vice President of Academic Affairs, the relevant Dean (and relevant Department Chair) whose scope of authority involves an educational program being considered for termination shall inform and involved affected faculty and staff at the earliest possible stage of consideration. Once the decision to pursue closure of an educational program has been made, the relevant Dean shall forward a proposal to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The proposal should be developed with the involvement of faculty and students as possible and should outline the:

- a. Nature of the program,
- b. Reason for termination,
- c. Number of students currently enrolled,
- d. Progression statistics of students in the program,
- e. Resources used to offer the program,
- f. Financial savings, if any, realized from the termination,
- g. Explanation of how any students enrolled in the program will be helped to complete their program,
- h. Assessment of whether any faculty will be adversely affected by termination, and
i. Explanation of how affected individuals will be informed of the planned termination.

The Dean should be available to brief the Vice President of Academic Affairs, and, in the case of the institution closing, the Accreditation Liaison Officer of the pending decision. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will work with the Dean to develop and coordinate presentations on the proposal to the President and the University Board of Directors.

The Dean and Chair shall work to develop a teach-out plan (See Appendix A, “Teach-Out Academic Plan”), and implement the notification elements of the plan for students and faculty. Appendix B provides a general summary used to brief faculty and students as “Sample Student and Faculty General Communication Summary.” Both current and prospective students should be notified as soon as practicable (See Appendix C and D for sample letters). The Dean is responsible for on-going monitoring and reporting on implementation of the teach-out plan. A monitoring report should be used to provide periodic reports to the VP of Academic Affairs on the status of the teach-out. The monitoring report shall also be used to advise students of their progress in the teach-out. (See Appendix E, "Sample Program Monitoring Report.")

The Executive and Policy Committee shall review the initial proposal to terminate an educational program forwarded by a relevant Dean. The Faculty Committee will determine whether any faculty will be adversely affected by termination, and act to implement provisions in the University Faculty Guidelines. The Executive and Policy Committee shall notify the Vice President of Academic Affairs and helpfacilitate the Vice President of Academic Affairs presentation on the change to the President and the University Board of Directors.

The Vice President of Academic Affairs will insure the proposal for termination is brought forward for discussion to the President. The Vice President of Academic Affairs will develop and coordinate the presentation on the proposal to the University Board of Directors and work with the relevant Dean to insure all affected parties are notified on pending decision. The affected parties must include the faculty, students, the Council of Deans. Once the President and the University Board of Directors have approved termination of the program, the Vice President of Academic Affairs will be updated periodically by the relevant Dean on the notification and approval process, and will receive periodic updates from the relevant Dean on the implementation of the teach-out plan.

Affected Groups

a. Prospective students with active applications awaiting admission decisions to a degree program should be immediately advised to seek alternative programs by the appropriate unit, generally the academic department or program. Prospective students should be given as much time as practicable to seek alternative opportunities. The academic department or program also should immediately suspend admission of new students.

b. Prospective graduate students are those who have active applications awaiting admission decisions to an affected degree program. As soon as the decision to terminate is made, the appropriate unit, generally an academic department or program, should immediately suspend admission of new students and advise students who have already been offered admission that they must complete the degree program within a teach-out period. The graduate degree must be completed within the teach-out period. Such students must meet the minimum credit hour requirements for the degree.
c. Graduate students currently enrolled in a terminated degree program should be given an opportunity to complete their degree programs. Departments and programs should work with such students to develop a strategy for completion within the teach-out period. Programs should be as flexible as possible in facilitating and allowing currently enrolled graduate students to complete their degree program. Such students must meet the minimum credit hour requirements for the degree.

d. Graduate students previously admitted into a terminated educational or degree program who are not currently enrolled shall have their requests for readmission made on a case-by-case basis. At a minimum, the decision to readmit shall consider the ability of the department or program to offer needed courses within the teach-out period, and the student's previous performance within the terminated educational program.

e. Graduate students currently enrolled in a terminated certificate program should be given an opportunity to complete their certificate. Departments and programs should work with such students to develop a strategy for completion within the teach-out period. Students should expect to take a sufficient number of courses each semester, including summers, to enable them to complete all requirements within the teach-out period. The teach-out period will continue for no more than two academic years following the date of which notice of termination is given to students. The teach-out period will vary by certificate program and must be determined by the department and college with approval of the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The certificate must be completed within the teach-out period. Such students must meet the minimum credit hour requirements for the certificate.

Faculty should be involved in and informed of plans to terminate a degree or certificate program at the earliest possible stage of consideration. Faculty shall be informed of any potential layoff considerations covered by the University Faculty Handbook at the earliest possible stage of consideration and be kept apprised of recommendations forwarded to the University Board of Directors regarding plans to terminate a degree program or certificate program.

STUDENT CLASSIFICATION

Academic Classification

Each academic program specifies the criteria for full time, half time and less than half time classifications. Medical students are required to be enrolled full time.

Student Status (full-time or half-time)

A student with 6 or more credits per semester will be considered a full-time student. A student with 3 to 5 credits per semester will be considered a half-time student.

Student Classification for Tuition Purposes

Resident Students of P.R. - Must have legal residence in P.R. two years prior to entering PHSU. Students must show evidence of income tax filing to the Commonwealth of PR for two consecutive years. In the case of dependent individuals, parents or tutor evidence of income tax filing could be acceptable.
Non Resident Students - Students with United States citizenship who are not legal residents of PR.

Foreign Students – Students without United States Citizenship who come to USA for purpose of studying. Foreign students must pay non-resident tuition rates.

**Special Classification for Medical Students**

Students on special academic activities (SSAA)- Students who are authorized by PHSU to engage in academic activities outside the School, such as special research projects.

Students on independent studies (SIS)- Students who are authorized to spend up to one semester taking special courses to prepare themselves for the next level of studies.

**ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, ILLICIT DRUG AND VIOLENCE**

Ponce Health Sciences University prohibits the abuse of alcohol within the academic community. The possession, distribution or use of illegal drugs is ground for immediate sanction, including dismissal. Smoking is prohibited on school grounds. Violence will not be tolerated within academic community or on the school or affiliated facilities.

The danger of alcohol, drugs and controlled substances in the study place is of great concern to us. Each individual at PHSU receives a manual that explains in detail the institutional policies and the resources available to deal with these problems. The following policy is established by PHSU:

1. It is unlawful for any student in PHSU to engage in any activity that involves illicit use, possession, manufacture or distribution of alcohol, drug, tobacco or controlled substances on the school campus, any location used for academic activities or at any of its organizations or affiliates. Proscribed activities include but are not limited to: use, manufacture, sale, transportation, dispensation, distribution, disbursement, or possession of such substances. This does not apply to medically prescribed drugs, or to the manufacture, handling and distribution of drugs used for IRB approved research.

2. Any student of PHSU found to be engaged in any of the above, activities or in the case of vandalism is subject to dismissal. The student shall have the right to appeal as outlined in the “student promotion, academic probation and dismissal” section of this manual.

3. Whenever a student of PHSU is found to be illicitly using, possessing, manufacturing, or distributing alcohol, drugs or controlled substances on the school or campus or on the grounds of affiliated institutions, or if the student has participated in Institutional activities while under the influence of alcohol, drugs or any controlled substance, the following will occur:

   a. Should the offender voluntarily recognize that suffer from drug or alcohol addiction and request help, counseling and rehabilitative services might be offered; including referral to public or private psychiatric services as an outpatient or inpatient, at the student’s own expense. If within 6 months, a certificate of complete rehabilitation is not presented, the student will be recommended for dismissal.
   b. The first offense for any drug related activity other than abuse of a substance: the student might be referred for counseling by the corresponding authority and to any other pertinent professional assistance. Sanction including dismissal after due notice and hearing.
c. Second offense: the student will be recommended for dismissal from PHSU after due notice and hearing.

d. The school procedures do not preclude action by law enforcement authorities for violation of any state or federal laws.

4. In the event of a conviction by a court of law for any violation or related incident, whether the infraction is committed within or outside the school or affiliates grounds, the PHSU student will sanctioned from the school. It is the duty of the student involved to notify the Vice President of Student Affairs of PHSU of any such conviction in writing within 10 days. Failure to do so will lead to immediate sanction, including dismissal.

5. Specific rules have been established to regulate PHSU sponsored activities where alcohol is served, based on applicable laws and regulations.

For details please refer to the Institutional Public Policy on Establishing an Academic Community Free from Alcohol, Tobacco, use of Illicit Drugs and Violence.

**Prevention Policy & Program**

Ponce Health Sciences University is one of the leading educational institutions in Medicine and Health Sciences in Puerto Rico. This represents a genuine commitment to establish an institutional public policy for the academic community free of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and violence. PHSU recognizes that prevention strategies are the first steps to fight against drugs, alcohol and violence. PHSU promotes a prevention program aimed to provide services to students and employees.

**Statement**

It is PHSU commitment to ensure for everyone an environment free of drugs, alcohol, tobacco and violence through prevention, education and rehabilitation.

**Title**

Alcohol, Drugs Abuse and Violence Prevention Program of PHSU.

The following Prevention Program, is designed to meet various state and federal regulations, including: "Drug Free Workplace Act" (34 CFR 85), the "Drug Free Schools and Campuses Regulations (34 CFR 86) and the Law 40, 1993 the Government of Puerto Rico, known as Law to Regulate the Practice of Smoking in Certain Public and Private Places in PR.

**Policy**

Possession and/or use of illicit drugs and unauthorized controlled substances are contrary to University policy and in violation of federal and Puerto Rico laws. PHSU prohibits the possession, use, manufacture, distribution and/or sale of illegal drugs and illegal drug paraphernalia. Students at the University using or otherwise involved with drugs in violation of the Student Conduct Code and are subject to University disciplinary action in addition to any action taken by local or federal law enforcement authorities. Questions regarding the Drug Policy should be directed to the Office of the Students Affairs.

**Applicable Laws**
This program is based on the following Federal and PR Commonweal Laws and/or Regulations:

2. Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, as emended (Public Law 101-226) adopted on December 12, 1989.
3. Law of Controlled Substances in Puerto Rico, also known as Law No. 4 of June 23, 1971, as amended.
5. Regulations Adopted by the United States Department of Education to implement such laws, 34 CFR 85; 34 CFR 86; HEOA section 488 and HEA section 485.

**Drug Free Schools and Communities ACT, Amendment of 1989**

The Law PL 100-297 signed in 1986, by the President of the United States, established the policy of a "Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act". This policy was amended in 1989 and is still valid in the United States and its territories.

This law establishes that any institution that receives funds from the Department of Education of United States of America, shall comply with the rules of the "Drug Free Act". The Department of Education of the United States has the capacity to monitor, and corroborate the existence of a biennial review of the public policy of "Drug Free Act" and its implementation at the institutional level. Failure to comply with this revision, could result in the loss of funding from the Federal Government and /or claim for repayment of funds previously granted to the Institution.

This Law required that Institutions must disseminate their policies annually to students and employees, along with information on health risks, disciplinary sanctions, and campus-based treatment options. Every two years, Institutions are supposed to evaluate their programs to ensure they're effective and consistent.

**Health Risk**

The government has classified controlled substances from I to V according to their potential for abuse. In qualifying, the "I" substances appear more potential for abuse and little or no medical value. They are decreasing the risk to the "V" where substances less potential for abuse and accepted medical use with some appearing. Drugs are by definition any chemical substance that alters in any way the functioning of the body, mind and nervous system, behavior and feelings of people. The use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs can cause dependence, a physical or psychological need to use it. Adding and alcoholism are developing a physical and psychological dependence in which the person loses self-control with the use of the substance.

The Alcohol is a depressant drug that affects the central nervous system and brain function progressively inhibited. In Puerto Rico use by persons 18 years of age is legal. The main component of alcoholic beverages is ethanol or ethyl alcohol, which has a different focus depending on your process. The use of alcohol and / or drugs affects motor coordination, reasoning, vision and the ability to follow an object with his eyes; and this is why it becomes RISKY AND CRIMINAL the act of driving motor vehicles under its state (either use or under intoxication). Is considered legally intoxicated by alcohol to a person whose alcohol concentration in the blood is 0.08. However, I could be mentally and physically prevented from driving motor vehicles at a lower level.

Intoxication is a function of the amount of substance ingested, the time consumed, the alcohol content of the drink, weight and sex of the person (the woman is more sensitive), the mood and the amount of food in
the stomach of the individual at the time of consumption.

**Intervention Protocol to Rehabilitate Students and Employees**

PHSU believe that rehabilitation could be possible, when a proper case management is available. The Office for Students Affairs and its Counseling Services are responsible for handling cases of students or staff, identified or are suspected of having problems related to drugs and alcohol.

Non-confirmed cases could be managed by institutional help services; professional counseling, discipline committee, bulletin board and, e-mails with information related to alcohol and drugs prevention. Confirmed cases, should be address to professional help from private and public agencies.

**Treatment Centers**

1. ASSMCA – Ponce Detox Center 787-840-6935
2. Medicina Conductual – Hospital Damas 787-842-0045
3. Programa de Alcoholismo de Ponce 787-844-4130
4. Línea a Auxilio y Prevención 1-800-981-0023
5. Hogares CREA – Ponce 787-843-9013

**Prevention Strategies**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Admissions Office</strong></th>
<th>Information related to the Policy is given to the student during admission process. Every student admitted to PHSU, sign the Policy of Alcohol and Drugs Abuse.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Financial Aid Office</strong></td>
<td>During the FAFSA application, if the students respond yes to the question number 23 (related to drug offence); the Federal Government could cancel any grant to the student. The financial Officer should give the proper orientation related to the student eligibility to receive grants in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Catalog and School Policies</strong></td>
<td>The Student Catalog and School Policies include a copy of the PHSU Policy of Alcohol and Drugs Abuse. This Student Catalog is also available at the PHSU Web Page.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Counseling Services</strong></td>
<td>Professional counseling services are available to students and staff. Professional Counselor could refer identified cases to external agencies.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Extracurricular Activities</strong></td>
<td>PHSU promotes extracurricular activities that involve drugs, alcohol, and tobacco use prevention message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Walking Together</strong></td>
<td>“Walking Together” is the institutional program of primary education and information about alcohol, tobacco, drugs, violence and sexual harassment, address to the employee. This Program is managed by the Professional Counseling Office.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Standard of Conduct**

1. PHSU total and hereby categorically prohibited the possession, use, manufacture and / or distribution of drugs and alcohol by students, employees and visitors to this Institution.
2. In case of medications use (drugs), it should be prescribed by a doctor for the treatment of a properly documented health condition.
3. Law 40 of August 3, 1993 prohibits smoking in public and private academic institutions at all levels of education. So PHSU not allow smoking in their classrooms or laboratories, halls, game rooms, libraries, hallways, restrooms, elevators, offices, research laboratories (these could even have areas with liquids, vapors or flammable materials), lunch rooms, meeting rooms, parking area or within the premises of the animal house or institution.
4. Nor allow smoking in PHSU sponsored activities.
5. Advertising of alcohol and tobacco products, are prohibited sponsor academic activities.
6. All student organizations recognized by our institution are subject to the above provisions in their official activities, both on and off campus.
7. The visitors, guests or tenants of the PHSU facilities are required to comply with the legislation which it establishes public policy

**Sanctions**

Student Alert! As set out in section 5310 of the Federal Law on the Use and Abuse of Drugs, 1988, if you are convicted for possession, manufacture or distribution of drugs, your eligibility for financial aid could be (1) suspended temporarily or (2) finished forever. If the student was convicted of drug offense within (not later than) ten (10) days after the conviction, he shall report in writing with your full name and Social Security number to:

Director, Grants and Contract Services  
US Department of Education  
Washington DC 20202-4571

Student Organizations are required to report within five (5) calendar days of any incident involving the use of alcohol and / or drugs that occurs in any official activity of the organization. Failure to comply with these provisions of public policy may result in sanctions as outlined in the Student Handbook.

Faculty and Administrative Employees under this public policy and in compliance with the law are bound to:
1. Comply with all rules of conduct outlined above.
2. Notify the employer in writing of any criminal conviction under the statutes of controlled substances or alcohol events in the workplace no later than five (5) calendar days after sentencing.
3. PHSU must also take one of the following actions within thirty (30) calendar days after receiving notice of any criminal conviction of an employee.
4. Require the employee to participate satisfactorily in voluntary assistance or rehabilitation program approved for such purposes by a state or federal health agency, the Department of Justice and other appropriate.
5. Proceed with a relevant institutional action, including termination of job.
6. In addition to the aforementioned, every employee is subject to the rules applicable to their classification.
7. In some cases, if the offense is not a significant one, an employee could be referred to counseling services or a rehabilitation program. A letter on the personnel file is applicable in all cases.

AUDIT STUDENTS POLICY

Application for admission as an auditing student at Ponce Health Sciences University must be received by the Office of Admissions prior to the beginning of the term of enrollment for which the applicant is requesting admission. The non-refundable application processing fee of $80.00 must accompany the application, which is valid for one academic year. Should the student not enroll within one year of admission, the fee is forfeited.

In order to process an application, the following minimum documents are required: application and resume. Students with incomplete records will be administratively withdrawn. Authorization from the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs is required to register. No more than a total of three audited courses are allowed.

Audit Students will pay 100 percent of tuition per course for personal and professional growth; no fees will apply. IPad will not be provided to auditing students. Auditing students are not required to take examinations. They will receive no credit, and no grade will be given. Auditing students are not eligible for financial aid.

This policy applies to Ponce Health Sciences University students or other students and it is effective immediately.

All inquiries and application for admission should be addressed to the Admissions Office, Ponce Health Sciences University, PO Box 7004, Ponce, Puerto Rico 00732, Phone: (787) 840-2575.

BLOOD BORNE PATHOGEN EXPOSURE POLICY

**Purpose**

To establish a uniform system to report and manage persons sustaining exposure to blood or other body fluids via needle stick, or percutaneous injury, mucous membrane or contact with non-intact skin while involved in a scheduled clinical clerkship, research activity or during any curricular or extracurricular activities sponsored by Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU)

**Policy**

Student(s) sustaining exposures should immediately flush the exposed area with water.

If at an Affiliated Hospital, immediate evaluation must be requested through the corresponding Emergency Room (ER). If at a community clinic or extra-curricular activity sponsored by PHSU, the student must request immediate evaluation at Ponce Health Sciences University Outpatient Clinics during regular hours or an Affiliated Hospital ER during after hours, indicating his/her status as a medical student. Immediate prophylaxis (within two hours of exposure) is absolutely necessary at the time of occurrence, following the CDC guidelines.
The student must report the incident to the immediate supervisor as soon as possible. In case of an Affiliated Hospital, the student will notify the Clerkship Coordinator or Attending Physician. Attending Physicians must be notified in case of exposure during a community clinic rotation or extra-curricular activity sponsored by PHSU. The Clerkship Coordinator and/or the Attending Physician are responsible for notifying the Office of Student Affairs so that the student is provided appropriate care and follow-up. The notification must be immediate or within the next 24 hours after the incident.

Students who have been exposed to a potentially infectious body fluid during extracurricular activities are responsible for obtaining demographic data of the source such as a complete name, physical address, phone number and related illnesses, and submitting an incident report with the patient’s information to the Office of Student Affairs. The Office of Student Affairs will handle this information confidentially.

In case of exposure in an affiliated hospital, the student will fill out the appropriate incident report as required by the hospital. This will be done after the student has received emergency care. The name and medical record number of the patient involved in the exposure must be documented in the incident report. A copy of the incident report must be filed at the Student Affairs Office by the next working day.

The Office of Student Affairs will coordinate the follow up on the incident through the PHSU Outpatient Clinic or Medical Facility/affiliated Hospital to assure that the student receives the appropriate evaluation, treatment and follow up services and for identification of other possible needs such as counseling and health insurance coordination.

The student and/or his/her medical insurance are responsible for all payments and co-payments related to the medical care of the incident.

All HIV testing and information processing will adhere to applicable Federal law regarding Confidentiality of HIV-related Information.

The student will continue regular clinical activities unless excused from patient contact by the health care provider. The student will be responsible to complete the time lost by coordinating with the Chair of the Department where the exposure occurred.

PHSU is committed to offer students ample information and education regarding methods of prevention of infections.
Exposed Student

Flush exposed area in accordance with Medical Procedure

Immediate evaluation must be requested through the corresponding ER/Medical Facility
Start Prophylaxis within 2 hours of exposure

Notify immediate supervisor

Get information about the patient and write incident report

ER or PHSU Outpatient Clinic (nearest location)

Provide copy of incident report to the Student Affairs Office within 24 hours
Contact the Office of Student Affairs for guidelines

Pathogen Testing will be followed in accordance with the current Medical Procedures

Procedures in Case of Needle stick Injury
DANGEROUS WEAPONS AND FIREARMS POLICY

A dangerous weapon is defined as any firearm, whether loaded or unloaded; any device designed as a weapon and capable of causing great bodily harm; any electrical weapon; or any other instrumentality or device which, in the manner it is used or intended to be used, is calculated or likely to produce death or bodily harm. A firearm is described as any instrument that ejects any type of projectile. Possession of firearms and other dangerous weapons on School property is cause for disciplinary action up to and including dismissal for professional misconduct.

PDV 918/919 Professional development

This course is designed to enhance the educational experiences of medical students during the first clinical year. It reinforces professionalism, cultural competence, and civic development. It helps the student to develop the skills necessary to compete successfully for positions in medical residency programs, participate in research projects, and be exposed to the health system requirements for the eventual development of a successful medical practice.

DRESS CODE

Students are representatives of the School and should always present a professional image in both appearance and behavior. A dress code has been developed by the student body as follows:

1. MEN: Hair should be groomed; beards, sideburns and mustaches should be neatly trimmed. At the hospital or in the classroom, tank tops, cutoff jeans, athletic shorts and sandals cannot be worn. Shirts should be appropriately buttoned. Earrings are not considered appropriate.
   a. Basic Sciences and classrooms: Jeans, shoes (including athletic shoes) and a clean shirt (including T-shirts) are permissible. Bermuda or other shorts must be no shorter than 5 cm above the knee.
   b. Clinical Sciences and practicum sites: Ties, trousers, dress shirts (long or short sleeve), socks and shoes are standard apparel. Medical students will wear a clean white short coat with the School badge sewn on the left breast pocket, identification cards are required to be worn at all times. Jeans, T-Shirts and athletic shoes are not acceptable attire.

2. WOMEN: Tanks tops, cutoff jeans and athletic shorts cannot be worn at classrooms, hospitals or clinics.
   a. Basic Sciences and classrooms: T-Shirts, jeans, shorts (5cm or less above knee), and sandals are permissible. Miniskirts are not proper attire.
   b. Clinical Sciences and practicum sites: Dresses are preferred. Shoes are considered standard apparel. T-Shirts, jeans, mini-skirts and bermudas cannot be worn. Medical students will wear a clean, white short coat with the School badge sewn on the left breast pocket. Identification cards are required to be worn at all times.

Laboratory wear should include a clean white laboratory coat and appropriate personal protective apparel.

EXCUSE STUDENTS TO RECEIVE HEALTH SERVICES AND/OR EMERGENCY SITUATIONS POLICY

Attendance to lectures, small group discussions, clinical activities, and laboratory exercises, is mandatory unless excused. The formal process for excusing a student due to illness or an emergency situation is managed and approved by the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs. After approval, corresponding departments are notified immediately. Some activities such as those delivered during the orientation period,
as well as other official activities organized by the institution might be considered didactical activity and thus, this attendance policy is applicable. Excuses will not be accepted after five working days from the date of absence.

Incomplete work due to illness or other serious circumstances during the course will be handled according to departmental policies, which must be provided to the students in writing at the beginning of each term. Faculty are not obligated to repeat lecture/laboratory topics that were presented at scheduled times and dates. This policy applies to students registered in any of Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) academic programs.

**PARTICIPATION OF STUDENTS IN EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITIES**

**General policy**

Ponce Health Sciences University supports students’ participation in activities outside their educational programs that contribute to their professional development. These include attendance to conventions or specialty meetings, continuing education activities, professional organizations meetings, community activities, voluntary service activities and others. However, participation in these activities must not unduly affect their academic responsibilities, and require authorization from the Office of Vice President for Academic Affairs and from the corresponding Program/Department Director.

**Procedures to be followed**

Any student that wishes to participate in an extracurricular activity during a time period that the student has assigned academic activities must request written authorization to the Program Director or Department Chair. The request must include information about the nature of the activity and the benefits for the student that attends this activity (see attached form). The authorization must be requested at least two weeks ahead of the date that the extracurricular activity will be initiated. It will be the responsibility of the Program Director/Department Chair to evaluate the request and make the recommendation to the VP for Academic Affairs, who will make the final authorization. The student must abide to the Program Director of Department Chair determination and accepts the responsibility for the material covered and learning activities missed during the absence period.

Authorization from the VP for Academic Affairs for a student to attend extracurricular activities does not obligate a program or department to make special arrangements or to organize additional activities in order to substitute for the missed period by excused students. Authorized absences to participate in extracurricular activities will be counted as “excused absences” for the purpose of the Ponce Health Science University attendance policy.

**PATIENT AND STUDENT SAFETY AT CLINICAL TEACHING SITES**

The Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine and its affiliated sites are committed with the well-being of medical students and welfare and safety of the patients.

To ensure that medical students are appropriately supervised during required clinical clerkships and other required clinical experiences and to safeguard student and patient safety:
1. All patient care will be supervised by qualified faculty members.
2. The level of responsibility delegated to the student must be appropriate to his or her level of training according to each clerkship or elective educational objectives.
3. The activities supervised must be within the scope of practice of the supervising health professional.
4. Students must be oriented of the expectations for their participation at each clerkship or elective. Faculty and residents must be informed of these expectations.
5. The clinical departments will monitor that appropriate supervision of medical students are in place at all times.
6. Students will be provided with rapid, reliable systems for communicating with the supervising faculty.
7. Faculty and student's schedules will be structured to provide students with continuous supervision and easy access for faculty consultation.
8. All students must comply with the academic, health and legal requirements and regulations set by Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine and the clinical sites they are assigned.
9. Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine policy related to the management of a student who has blood and/or body fluids exposure must be followed at all clinical sites and affiliated hospitals. Immediate evaluation at the affiliated hospital Emergency Room must be provided in cases of hazardous exposure.
10. Before authorizing students’ elective rotations, the chairs of the clinical departments must review the credentials of the health professionals who will supervise the student and review with the student the potential risks to the health and safety of patients and themselves.
11. Students must participate in each of the required educational activities of the Introduction to Clinical Practice course (Patient Safety conference, CPR certification, Universal Precautions-Risk Management during accidents (OSHA) training, Wound Healing Workshop, etc.), before they are allowed to be enrolled in the required clerkships and clinical electives.
12. To minimize the possibility of medical errors students must follow all the policies of the affiliated clinical sites related to patient safety.
13. To regulate students working hours and avoid fatigue that can result in medical errors, department chairs and/or clerkship coordinators must ensure compliance with the Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine On Duty Hours Policy.

This policy must be distributed to the students in the course syllabus and in the School Policies Manual. It must also be distributed to supervising faculty. Department chairs and/or clerkship coordinators must oversee the compliance with this policy. Students must inform department chairs and/or clerkship coordinators any concern about the adequacy and availability of supervision. If no action is taken, the concern should be informed to the Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs for the corresponding investigation and appropriate action.

PROCEDURE TO REQUEST AN ALTERNATE CLINICAL SITE ASSIGNMENT

Policy

The Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine allows medical students with an appropriate rationale to request an alternative clinical assignment when circumstances allow for it.

Purpose

This procedure was developed to provide the guidelines about how students must proceed to formally request an alternate educational site or clinical assignment.
**Procedure**

The procedure for students to formally request an alternate educational site or assignment during the clinical years is as follows:

1. Students who believe that they have circumstances that would warrant a particular clerkship sequence of the ten available for the first clinical year (third year), or the nine in the last clinical year (fourth year), can make a request directly to the Vice-President of Student Affairs or the Clinical Coordinator, in advance of the student group assignments, or fourth year student academic schedule.

2. Once assigned to a clinical clerkship site (e.g. a hospital), for a justified reason, the student can request an alternate site assignment to the chair of the department. Changes may only be made to sites students are routinely assigned in this clerkship. Students are requested to inform about any potential conflict as soon as they are informed of the faculty and site assigned.

3. For students with extenuating circumstances that justifies the request for a particular clerkship sequence or particular clerkship site assignment, the request must be provided in writing to the Office of Clinical Affairs with the specific details and explanations for the request.

4. All requests are reviewed by the Vice President of Students Affairs and the Clinical Coordinator who make a recommendation to the Associate Dean for Faculty and Clinical Affairs (ADFCA) as a collective, with the final determination being made by the ADFCA.

5. Requests are accepted and schedule assignments given based upon:
   a. whether the reason for the request is deemed valid; and
   b. whether there will be adequate comparable sites to support the students' request.
   c. Reported conflict of interest in the student-teacher relationship is a mayor reason to accept a change.

6. Notification of this procedure is provided to the students via:
   a. e-mail distribution messages to the entire class
   b. orientation conducted by the Vice President of Student Affairs or the Clinical Coordinator.
   c. This policy will also be available at the Outlook Public Folders and in the Student Policies Handbook.

Notification of this procedure is provided to the faculty via e-mail distribution by the clinical department chairs.

**MEDICAL PROGRAM ELECTIVES POLICY**

The medical program curriculum of Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine required fourth year medical students to complete five electives courses or clerkships, and one selective, of four weeks' duration each. The electives give the student the opportunity to gain exposure to careers of their interest and widen the students’ career options.

- At the third year mid-clerkship feedback session in each clerkship, career counseling must be offered to help students be aware of the diversity of career options and the electives offer under each clinical department.
- The PHSU-SOM Electives Manual must contain a description of all elective clerkships and courses offer under the auspices of PHSU-SOM departments at the affiliated clinical sites or develop by the
Basic Sciences Department. The Manual must be available to the student when selecting his/her electives.

- Other elective preceptorships may be authorized by directors of the departments, if the student provides clear objectives for the elective and the CV and specialty board certification of the elective supervising physician, for evaluation. Students are not allowed to do any required or elective rotation with a family member. (See Conflict of Interest in Student-Faculty Relationship Policy)
- Students must be oriented about the resources available to apply for electives at other LCME-accredited institutions (AAMC Visiting Student Application Service (VSAS) website).
- Students are not allowed to do more than one elective rotation under the supervision of the same physician, unless the student presents a rationale such an ongoing research participation.
- Students are encouraged to use the five elective periods in the 4th year to gain experience in more than one specialty which allow them to diversify their options and explore other fields in addition to their chosen specialty.
- Credit for a past experience (research, clinics participation, etc.) is not allowed.

Students must complete a 4-week selective in one of the following primary care specialties: Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics or Ob-Gyn.

**NATIONAL BOARD OF MEDICAL EXAMINERS CLINICAL SUBJECT EXAMINATIONS**

As recommended by the Clinical Curriculum Subcommittee on October 30, 2014 and approved by the Medicine Program Curriculum Committee on its ordinary meeting on December 15, 2014, the student performance on the **NBME Clinical Subject Examinations will be 30% of the final grade for the clerkships of the first clinical year and a passing score will not be required** in this examination.

The NBME Subject Examination Score will continue to be converted to a SHELF grade by multiplying the NBME score by a conversion factor*.

The conversion factors for each discipline will be revised before the beginning of each academic year according the norms published by NBME on their Score Interpretation Guide. Conversion tables will be provided for each discipline.

This norm will be **effective for the academic year 2015-2016** and the following academic years and invalidate the related academic norms (#11, #19 and #20).

**USMLE REQUIREMENTS**

**United States Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE) Policy**

This policy states the requirements and timeline established for Ponce Health Sciences University medical students for the USMLE examinations. The Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy for the MD Program establishes the maximum time frame to complete the entire academic program that is currently six years.

**Comprehensive Basic Sciences Examination**

1. All medical students must take the Comprehensive Basic Science Examination (CBSE) developed by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME), as a USMLE Step 1 performance indicator.
2. The Office of Medical Education coordinates the administration of the test that is offered several times during the second semester of the last pre-clinical year.
3. The test score along with the students’ academic performance during the first years of medical studies will be used to assess the readiness of the student to take and pass the USMLE Step 1.
4. The required scores to be authorized to take the USMLE Step 1 are revised annually and are based on PHSU-SOM student’s outcomes in the past academic years.
5. Students who pass all preclinical courses and have not interrupted the regular medical curriculum program of studies will be allowed to enroll in the clerkships the first semester of the first clinical year, for which taking or passing USMLE Step 1 will not be required.

**USMLE Step 1**

It is the student responsibility to apply to take the USMLE Step 1 through the Licensing Examination Services at the USMLE website and select the eligibility period.

1. For students authorized to take the USMLE Step 1, it is strongly recommended to take it before the beginning of the course: Introduction to Clinical Practice, offered at the end of July.
2. Students will not be excused from scheduled academic activities to study or take the examination after the beginning of courses and clerkships. USMLE Step 1 is offered Saturdays, Sundays and holidays.
3. To register in the clerkships for the second semester of the first clinical year (January to May), the students are required to have a passing score in the USMLE Step 1 examination.
4. The registration for the second semester is in December. The official registration dates are published by the Registrar Office.
5. Those students who don’t take or fail the USMLE Step 1 or the score is not available by the commencement of the second semester of the first clinical year cannot register in the clinical clerkships for the second semester. Students must contact the Registrar Office for the options for review courses.
6. For those students who have interrupted the regular medical curriculum program of studies, it will be required to have a passing score in the USMLE Step 1 examination to enroll in the clerkships for the first semester of the first clinical year (August to December).
7. The registration for the fall semester is in July and the official registration dates are published by the Registrar Office.
8. Students have a maximum of three opportunities to pass the USMLE Step 1.
9. Students are not allowed to be more than one year out of the regular medical curriculum program of studies unless for an approved medical LOA.
10. Students who fail the USMLE Step 1 for the third time and/or have been one year or more out of the regular medical curriculum program of studies will be referred to Students Promotion Committee for consideration of dismissal from the Medicine Program.

**USMLE - Step 2**

The USMLE Step 2 has two components: Clinical Knowledge (CK) and Clinical Skills (CS).

1. All medical students must take and pass the USMLE Step 2-CK component as a requirement for graduation.
2. It is strongly recommended that the students take the USMLE Step 2-CK no later than August 30, of the year they will start applying to residency programs, in a way the score is available when the Electronic Residency Application System (ERAS) opens and the interviews for residency programs begin.

3. The last opportunity to take and pass the USMLE 2-CK examination to complete this graduation requirement with the May graduating class will be the last week of April of the corresponding graduation year.

4. All MD students must take the USMLE Step 2-CS component as a requirement for graduation.

5. It is strongly recommended the students take USMLE Step 2-CS no later than November 30, of the fourth/last academic year.

6. All MD graduating students must take USMLE Step 2-CS to graduate; however, a passing grade will not be required.

Clinical Practice Examination

1. All medical students are required to take and pass a Clinical Practice Examination (CPX) to be given at the end of their Third Academic Year.

2. Written feedback concerning individual performance will be provided to each student.

3. Students not meeting the acceptable level of performance will receive guided learning to overcome areas of low performance during one or more of the fourth year required clinical rotations. A modified version of the exam will be given after completion of the guided learning experience.

Satisfactory completion of this additional guided learning fulfills the requirement to pass this examination

NON-DEGREE EXTENDED EDUCATION POLICY

PSHU Admissions Office supports Non-Degree Students (NDS) who are not enrolled in a degree or certificate program through PHSU but would like to take a class. This includes:

- Alumni
- Visiting students and professionals
- Internship, thesis/dissertation, field work, or practicums are not included.
- Application for extended education admission must be received by the Admissions Office prior to the beginning of the term of enrollment for which the applicant is requesting to take a course.
- A non-refundable fee of $75.00 must accompany the application.

In order to process an application, the following minimum documents are required:

- Application, Curriculum Vitae (resume), official transcript from previous institutions, Certificate of No Penal Record, and letter of recommendation from the Director of faculty of his/her former program.
- Approval from Admission’s Office and authorization from Vice President of Academic Affairs is required to register.
- Clinical courses must require authorization from the Program Director or department Chair.

A non-degree student will not earn a certificate or degree from PHSU, but can take courses for a grade, earn credits and receive an official academic record.
NDS students may enroll in graduate-level courses. It is advisable that the applicant contact the department(s) offering courses of interest to ensure that their courses are available to non-degree students.

Extended Education Application will pay the corresponding cost per credit for personal and professional growth. In addition, a library fee must be paid. The institution reserves the right to increase the tuition or other fees as deemed necessary. Tuition and fees must be payable on or before registration. All fees and charges are payables in US currency.

All inquiries and application for admission should be addressed to the: Admission Office, Ponce Health Sciences University, PO Box 7004, Ponce, PR 00732, Phone: (787) 840-2575.

The ND students will not be eligible for financial aid. They must comply with the institutional norms and regulations. Each Program will provide a list of courses available for the ND extended education candidates.

**STUDENTS DUTY HOURS POLICY FOR CLINICAL ROTATIONS**

The Ponce Health Sciences University School of Medicine PHSU-SOM abides by the recommendations of the ACGME, AMA and the Puerto Rico Legislature related to Residents Duty Hours and is committed to regulate and monitor students' working hours. This will result in less fatigue, more effective healthcare delivery, an enhancement of patient safety, minimizing the possibility of medical errors, and providing adequate time for self-study and relaxation.

**Duty Hours**

**Definition:**
Duty hours are defined as all clinical and academic activities related to the clinical clerkship or clinical rotation, i.e., patient care (both inpatient and outpatient), administrative duties related to patient care, the provision for transfer of patient care, time spent in-house during call activities, and scheduled academic activities such as conferences, small group sessions, seminars, ward rounds, quizzes and other assessment and evaluation exercises.

Duty hours do not include time spent reading, studying and preparing presentations away from the duty site.

**General policies that apply to all medical students:**
1. Duty hours are limited to 80 hours per week, averaged over a four-week period, inclusive of all in-house call activities.
2. All students will be provided with at least one 24 hrs. period per calendar week, free from all educational and clinical responsibilities, averaged over a 4-week period.
3. Adequate time for rest and personal activities will be provided. This will consist of a minimum period of eight (8) consecutive hours daily.

**Duty Hours for Third Year Medical Students:**
1. Students in the Third Year Clinical Clerkships are expected to abide to the working hours as specified in the Clerkship Syllabus and the Policies of the teaching site to which they are assigned.
2. These working hours are usually from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.
3. Students may be “on-call” no later than 12:00 Midnight. Exceptions to allow continuity of care are acceptable if they fall within the following regulations:
   • Students will be “on call” no more than two (2) times per week and no more often than every third (3) night.

**On-Call Activities-Fourth Year Medical Student**

On-call activities are scheduled to provide fourth year students with continuity of patient care experiences throughout a 16-hour period. In-house call is defined as those duty hours beyond the normal workday when students, with adequate supervision (-residents or faculty) are required to be immediately available in the assigned institution.

1. In-house call must occur no more frequently than every third night, averaged over a four-week period.
2. Continuous on-site duty, including in-house call, must not exceed 16 consecutive hours. At-home call (pager call) is defined as call taken from outside the assigned institution.
3. The frequency of at-home call is not subject to every third night limitation. At-home call must not be so frequent as to preclude rest and reasonable personal time for each student.
4. Oversight
   • Each clinical department will have procedures to ensure consistent compliance with this Policy.
   • This policy must be distributed to the students in the course syllabus. It must also be distributed to supervising faculty.
   • The Associate Dean for Medical Education will monitor duty hours through student clerkship evaluation to ensure an appropriate balance between education and service.

Back-up support systems must be provided when patient care responsibilities are unusually difficult or prolonged, or if unexpected circumstances create student fatigue sufficient to jeopardize patient care.

**UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR POLICY**

When problems arise in the student’s professional behavior, it is hoped that the problem can be solved between the student and his/her supervisor. If this is not possible, the Department Chair of the service should be notified using the referral forms. The Department Chair will attempt a resolution of the problem if he/she feels that it is appropriate. If he/she feels that this is not possible or inappropriate, further action must be referred to the Vice President for Student Affairs with the corresponding referral form.

The Vice President for Students Affairs will interview the student and discuss the situation. A plan of action will be formulated immediately and notified in writing to the student and the Department Chair. The plan should be implemented immediately. If no resolution is obtained the Vice President for Student Affairs will refer the student to the Student Promotions Committee.

The student will be notified in advance that his/her unprofessional behavior will be formally discussed by the Students Promotion Committee. The notification should make clear the reasons for this action. The Students Promotion Committee will consider the referral and make recommendations to the Vice President for Academic Affairs.
If a situation arises when there is an immediate concern for a student or patient’s welfare, the Department Chair and/or the Vice President for Student Affairs will proceed with an emergency recommendation referral to the President. The Vice President for Student Affairs will notify the President of all cases under consideration.

**STUDENT PROMOTIONS**

The mechanism accepted by the Ponce Health Sciences University for the promotion, suspension or dismissal of a student is described below. For practical purposes the process will be divided according to the level of decision: Academic Department, Promotions Committee, corresponding Dean, Vice-President for Academic Affairs, and President.

**Departmental Level**

Every department will establish a mechanism of student evaluation following the institutional policies. It is the responsibility of the Director to assess the academic, behavioral (attitudinal) and ethical performance of students. All information, evaluations, and observations about students must be documented.

Department directors must take immediate action upon a marginal or failing performance by notifying the student. The student should be allowed to provide an explanation as to the reasons for poor performance. Students in need of special help must be referred immediately to the Office of Students Affairs, who will try to identify the prevailing problem, provide help or refer the student to whomever is needed for help.

Efforts will be made by each program or department to report regular examination grades within four (4) working days after the examinations. This is extremely important in order for the Promotion Committee to do its work on time.

**Promotions Committee Level**

A standing committee will evaluate student performance as they progress through each academic year, and is empowered to take action in case of poor academic progress or unacceptable behavior or attitudes.

The committee will analyze the information received from the programs or departments, and at its discretion will obtain the students version of the situation.

After each evaluation the members of the Committee will determine the action they understand is the most suitable for each specific case. To do so they will follow the “Guidelines for Student Promotion” and the Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP) policy of each academic program.

**Program Level**

The chair of the Promotions Committee will refer its decision to the corresponding dean or his delegate. In the School of Medicine is the Associate Dean for Education. The corresponding dean or delegate will notify the student about the action of the committee and remind him/her about the right to appeal.

Students notified that they are to repeat the whole year or to be dismissed, have the right to appeal the case the corresponding Dean within seven working days after receiving the notification.
The appeal or Due Process for Dismissal approved by the Academic Senate presented below must be followed.

**Due Process**

The Corresponding Dean will evaluate the appeal and the student’s academic record. Rejection of the appeal by the Dean is final. If the case does not merit dismissal, the Corresponding Dean can overturn the decision. If the Dean has a reasonable doubt, about the student’s capacity or academic record he/she can appoint a three members Ad Hoc committee to re-evaluate all evidence.

The Ad Hoc committee will notify the student in writing of the date and time when the case will be heard. Following the student presentation, the committee has forty-eight (48) hours to submit to the Dean their report.

The Dean will consider the ad hoc committee recommendations, and make the final decision within forty-eight (48) hours.

All decisions, favorable or unfavorable, will be reported to the student in writing. All decisions by the Dean are final.

**Guidelines for Students Promotion**

The faculty of Ponce Health Sciences University has the responsibility to assure that students perform in a manner consistent with the appropriate standards of scholarship and professional behavior. Students who do not meet these standards will dismiss from PHSU, but they will be evaluated fairly and consistently. Decisions affecting student status is delegated by the President to the Student Promotions Committee (SPC).

The SPC meets quarterly to evaluate students with problems and holds annual meetings at the end of the school year, to recommend promotion to the next succeeding year, and to recommend students for graduation and honors.

Students not performing satisfactorily will:

1. Be notified in writing by the appropriate course director of their substandard performance and will be asked to schedule a meeting to develop means of dealing with the problem.
2. Receive communications from the Promotions Committee in the form of:
   a. **Letter of Academic Concern** - Sources of help for the student will be indicated.
   b. **Letter of Academic Warning** - This will result from interim "F" in two or more courses. This letter will indicate that continued performance at that level could lead to the student being placed on Academic Probation and will urge the student to seek extra help and counseling.
   c. **Letter of Academic Probation** - This will be based upon a final grade of "F" in one or more courses. A student receiving a final grade of "F" in a single course must be re-examined in that course before promotion. The letter will indicate that promotion to the next academic year can only occur after remediation of the deficiency. Remediation will be through a mechanism acceptable to the department chairperson, and will be given only once, prior to the start of the next academic year. This shall take precedence over any other summer plans a student will have made. A student receiving two or more final "F's" will be considered for either repetition of the entire year or dismissal.
The Promotions Committee shall also consider reports relating to attitude, integrity and ethical conduct. On the basis of such reports, the committee will issue a letter of concern or a letter of warning; determine that the student be placed on non-academic probation; or recommend to the corresponding dean or the dean’s designee that the case be investigated and considered for possible disciplinary action, which will include dismissal.

The same process will be followed in accordance with Due Process in cases of unacceptable attitudes or behavior. Departmental faculty will document the facts and the Department Director will refer them to the Promotions Committee. If the decision is to dismiss the student, the student has the right for the appeal process.

**STUDENT COMPLAINT LOG POLICY**

**LAST REVISED:** MARCH OF 2016

**REFER QUESTIONS TO:** VP of Student Affairs

**SCOPE:** This policy applies to administration, faculty or resident in all programs of Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU).

Related Policy: Grievance Policy referenced in the Student Catalog and Student Policies Manuals

**Purpose of Policy**

This policy governs the procedures by which the administration and faculty log any student related complaint and how the Student Complaint Log is maintained.

It is *not* intended to override the published grievance policy for students to formally report a complaint.

**Definitions**

A **Complaint** is defined as any grievance regarding any department, service or person that arises during a student’s time at PHSU. Examples include, but are not limited to the following:

- A student complaint against another student, faculty, resident, department, or service
- A complaint from PHSU administration, faculty or resident against any student

An **Informal Complaint** is a complaint expressed either verbally or in writing to a relevant administrator or faculty, which is not dealt with through a formal process of the University. It may involve a discussion with relevant parties in order to receive information and explore options on resolving the matter. It does not involve a formal investigation or the determination of evidence.

A **Formal Complaint** is defined as a concern which has not been resolved informally, and which is then set out in writing, and forwarded to the VP of Student Affairs per the University’s Grievance Policy.
Policy and Process

All administration, faculty and residents are required to log any informal or formal complaints via email to studentcomplaints@psm.edu and copy to the appropriate Dean within 5 business days of receiving the complaint.

Informal complaints should be recorded within the body of the email and contain the following information:

1. Name of Student
2. Date the complaint was expressed
3. Nature of the complaint (e.g., person, department or service that the complaint is about and the circumstances and/or situation surrounding the complaint)
4. Steps taken to resolve the complaint, the person that responded, and all documentation associated with those steps
5. Date and final resolution, action or explanation regarding the complaint, including referral to the appropriate Dean if the complaint was not resolved and/or recommendation to the student to formally submit a written complaint following the University’s documented Grievance Policy.

All formal written complaints should be recorded in the Student Complaint Log by the VP of Student Affairs and contain the following information:

1. Name of Student
2. Date the complaint was expressed
3. Nature of the complaint (e.g., person, department or service that the complaint is about and the circumstances and/or situation surrounding the complaint)
4. Steps taken to resolve the complaint, the person that responded, and all documentation associated with those steps
5. Date and final resolution, action or explanation regarding the complaint.

The VP of Student Affairs is responsible for:

- Maintaining a log of all formal and informal student complaints in the Office of Student Affairs
- Ensures that the complaints are resolved by the appropriate Dean within 10-business days of receipt of informal complaints. Formal complaints follow the established guidelines of the Grievance Policy
- That the resolution is reported back to the VP of Student Affairs
- The VP of Student Affairs Office ensures that the resolution is recorded in the Student Complaint Log.

PHSU provides published policies on Grade Appeals and Grade Appeals are NOT considered as complaints that are to be included in the Student Complaints Log.
ACCEPTABLE USE OF RESOURCES POLICY

Computer/Network Resources

Purpose

The purpose of the Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) is to identify situations where unacceptable use of systems or networks affects the teaching, learning, research, services or administrative missions of Ponce Health Sciences University or compromises the security of the systems or data.

This policy applies to the use of any Ponce Health Sciences University (PHSU) computing and networking facility hereinafter referred to as the “System” by all users, account holders, hereinafter referred to as “Users”. By using the System, all Users agree to comply with this policy. The use of the System is in support of teaching, research, learning, administrative and other intellectual pursuits consistent with the Ponce Health Sciences University aims and objectives.

Student Agreement

All students will receive a copy of this policy and a signed copy of the agreement will be filed in the IT Department. However, use of the PHSU Computers, Network and Internet Resources, implied that the student understands and agree to abide by this policy.

User access to information and technology resources is contingent upon prudent and responsible use. Imprudent use of the “System” can lead to consequences affecting many other users, not just you. Prudent and responsible use begins with common sense and includes respect for the rights and privacy of other users. Users should consider Ponce Health Sciences University and community standards when trying to determine if an activity is appropriate.

Specific statements

PHSU requires people who use its information technology resources, must do so in a responsible manner and in comply with federal and state laws, PHSU rules, policies and procedures. Examples of applicable laws, rules and policies include; the laws of libel, privacy, copyright, trademark, obscenity and child pornography; the Electronic Communications Privacy Act and the Computer Fraud and Abuse Act, which prohibit “hacking”, “cracking” and similar activities; the PHSU's Student Code of Conduct; Faculty Manual, Employee Manual.

All users shall review and refer to IT policies and procedures for more information, available online.

Guidelines

In making acceptable use of resources, you must:

- Use resources only for authorized purposes.
- Don’t let anyone know your password(s). Protect your user ID and system from unauthorized use. You are responsible for all activities on your user ID or that originate from your system (laptop, PDA, etc.)
• Access only information that is your own, that is publicly available, or to which you have been given authorized access.
• Use only legal versions of copyrighted software in compliance with vendor license requirements.
• Be considerate in your use of shared resources. Refrain from monopolizing systems, overloading networks with excessive data, degrading services, or wasting computer time, connect time, disk space, printer paper, manuals, or other resources.

The following activities and behaviors are prohibited:

• Use another person’s system, user ID, password, files, or data.
• Use of faculty and administrative computers; except in special and authorized occasions (e.g. Match Activities). Permission must be requested to the IT Department prior to use.
• Connect personal computers or network equipment (including, but not limited to, bridges, routers, switches, access points, etc.) to the Network. A student who needs to connect laptops or any network equipment to any network drop in the campus must request approval to the IT Department.
• Attempt to alter any PHSU computing, networking or telecommunications infrastructure. Attempt to circumvent or bypass system security measures. Make use of programs to scan networks for security vulnerabilities.
• Engage in any activity that alter the integrity or might be purposefully harmful to systems or to any information stored thereon. For example; creating or propagating viruses, disrupting services, or damaging files or making unauthorized modifications to PHSU data, attempting to capture or decode passwords, attempting to get additional access, or alter data that belong to other users.
• Use the “System” for commercial, personal gain, or for partisan political purposes, such as using email to advertise products or political candidates, or by selling access to your user ID, or by performing work for profit with PHSU resources in a manner not authorized by the PHSU.
• Make or use illegal copies of copyrighted materials or software, store such copies on PHSU systems, or transmit them over PHSU networks.
• Use of Peer-to-Peer (P2P) or other technology for illegal uploading, downloading or sharing of copyrighted material, such as music and software.
• Use e-mail or messaging services to harass or intimidate another person, for example, by broadcasting unsolicited messages (Spam emails), by repeatedly sending unwanted mail, or by using someone else's name or user ID.
• Waste computing resources or network resources, for example, by intentionally placing a program in an endless loop, printing excessive amounts of paper, or by sending chain letters or unsolicited mass mailings.
• Failure to comply with requests from appropriate PHSU officials to discontinue activities that threaten the operation or integrity of computers, systems or networks, or otherwise violate this policy.
• Any activity that violates any other Ponce Health Sciences University policy or code, or violates federal, state, or municipal laws or regulations.

**Educational Technology Resources**

Ponce Health Sciences University uses an educational web-based platform where educational materials including evaluations, rotation schedules, grades and other student’s confidential information are posted.
The platform also allows for web-based examinations. The student is advised that this information is accessed with their user ID and password. PHSU is not responsible for disclosure of such information when it is accessed by a third party through the use of the student’s user ID and password.

Network Folders and Files
Every student has an assigned space in the server to save documents, files and educative material. The software manager or a designee by the IT Director will conduct periodical audits and any non-educative material archive in the server will be removed, that may include (i.e. music (mp3), non-educative photos or executable programs, or any other non-educative material.)

**Printing Quota**

An established amount of copies is assigned to every student, every academic period (semester or trimester), as applicable. Unused copies balance will be rolled over to the next academic period. If the student has no balance left, or wants to be able to increase the number of copies available, he/she can purchase additional printing quota. Any unused balance will not be refunded at any time.

**Software Code of Ethics and Software Policy**

**Purpose**

This code of ethics states Ponce Health Sciences University policy concerning installation and acceptable use of software. Any unauthorized duplication of copyrighted computer software violates the law and is contrary to PHSU standards of conduct. PHSU does not excuse the illegal duplication of software and will not tolerate it.

**Guidelines**

- Use software in accordance with their license agreements. Must be aware that ALL computer software is protected by copyright unless it is explicitly labeled as PUBLIC DOMAIN.
- Must not download or upload unauthorized software over the Internet.
- Must not give software or accept unlicensed software from any third party.
- Must not make unauthorized copies of software under any circumstances. Shareware or Free-totry software is copyrighted software that is distributed freely through Internet and online systems. It is the policy of PHSU to pay shareware authors the fee they request for use of their products. Registration of shareware products should be handled the same way as commercial software products.
- Must not install software on any institutional computer; all software shall be installed by the IT Staff. Generally, institution owned software cannot be installed on a student’s personal computer.
- Must notify IT Department immediately, in case there is may be a misuse of software within the organization.

**Penalties**

Any person illegally reproducing software can be subject to civil and criminal penalties including fines and imprisonment.
All medical students are required to have a **personal laptop computer** as part of their educational resources.

**Electronic devices** will be used only under the faculty authorization or request. Electronic communication devices such as personal digital assistant (PDA), cell phones, pagers, recording or filming devices, radios, or any other unauthorized supply are prohibited during didactical activities.

A personal **identification card** with the student’s photograph is issued at the beginning of the first academic year by the Audiovisual Service, must be exhibited at all times, and will be required for all library loans and when will be required.

**E-mail** is considered an official means of communication at Ponce Health Sciences University. Students are expected to read their email at least twice a week while is an active student in PHSU. This policy includes student enrolled and those in leave of absence. It is the student Responsibility to respond immediately, if necessary. Students will be considered responsible for all information posted through the email system while on or off site.

The student must have an updated **permission to park** the automobile into the School’s premises. This permission could be obtained at the Human Resources Office. Parking will be conditioned to available slots.

**APPENDIX A: SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY FOR STUDENTS**

**Purpose**

The Internet provides considerable benefit to medical and healthcare students by providing new opportunities for education and communication. However, the use of the Internet and social communication sites on the Internet can present issues in ethical behavior and professionalism. The purpose of this policy is to provide students of PSMHS with guidelines for the appropriate use of social media and to emphasize the responsibilities that students have in maintaining an appropriate ethical and professional behavior in the management of patients assigned to them while participating in their care under the supervision of the attending physician or healthcare professional.

**Definitions**

Social media consists of any form of electronic communication, including but not limited to, blogs, wikis, virtual worlds, social networks, or other tools hosted outside of the Ponce School of Medicine and Health Sciences. These include such sites as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, YOU Tube, Flikr, Google+, MySpace and any similar site developed in the future.

**Policy**

1. Students are not allowed to release, disclose post, display or communicate the following information:
   a. Identifiable, confidential protected health information (PHI) regarding any patient associated with PSMHS, its affiliated hospitals and clinics, or other external affiliated health
care organization. This includes, but is not limited to, any information, such as initials, personal activities, record numbers, pictures, or other information that might enable external parties to identify patients. Disclosure of PHI may constitute a serious HIPAA violation and may have personal and/or institutional liability consequences.

b. Confidential information regarding policies and operations, including financial information, regarding the PSMHS, its affiliated hospitals and clinics, or other external affiliated health care organization.

2. Students must also adhere to the following:

a. Students are personally responsible for the content they post on PSMHS-sponsored social media properties - from blogs, to social networks, list serves, wikis, websites, forums, and other social media platforms.

b. Students should have no expectation of privacy when using the Internet at work and are reminded that any time spent posting and viewing social media sites or other Internet sites must not interfere with the performance of their duties.

c. Students should maintain appropriate professional boundaries and should separate personal and professional content online.

d. Students must not “friend” active patients or their families on any social media site.

e. Students must not offer medical, psychological or scientific advice on any social media site.

f. Students should routinely monitor their own Internet presence to ensure that the personal and professional information on their own sites, and the content posted about them by others, is accurate and appropriate.

g. Students must not post information on any site that might be considered offensive and reflect negatively on the student, peers, supervisors, other patients, or the PSMHS, its affiliated hospitals and clinics, or other external affiliated health care organization.

h. Students should always be aware of their association with the PSMHS when posting to a PSMHS-sponsored site or any other social networking site. Personal profiles and content should always be consistent with the professional manner in which students are expected to present themselves to peers, supervisors, patients and others in all settings.

i. Students must recognize that their actions online may negatively affect their reputations with patients, peers and others, may have long-term consequences for their medical careers.

j. Students should consider that everything they post online contributes to a lifetime record that is readily accessible to others. Potential employers may use social media to access this record to evaluate applicants. Posting distasteful, immature, or offensive content may eliminate job or other professional opportunities. Students must convey a professional and ethical presence to all who might view their online information.

Violations of this policy will be considered a professionalism competency violation, will jeopardize the student's standing in his/her academic program, and may result in a written warning, probation, or dismissal from the program. Lapses in professionalism may also jeopardize the student's ability to obtain satisfactory clinical rotations for post-graduate training.

Students should realize that there may be serious consequences for posting or promoting content that substantially disrupts or materially interferes with PSMHS activities, or that might lead PSMHS authorities to reasonably foresee substantial disruptions or material interference with institutional activities. This may result in disciplinary action up to and including termination.