



**UNIVERSITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE**  
**FOR HEALTH SCIENCES**

**2016–2017**

## **Student Handbook**

### **San Marcos Campus**

700 Windy Point Drive  
San Marcos, CA 92069

### **St. Augustine Campus**

1 University Boulevard  
St. Augustine, FL 32086

### **Austin Campus**

5401 La Crosse Avenue  
Austin, TX 78739

### **Miami Campus**

11410 NW 20<sup>th</sup> St  
Miami, FL 33172

**800-241-1027**

**[www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu)**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

This Student Handbook is designed to be a quick reference guide that is both informative and helpful. It is not a contract. It does not replace the official Catalog. It is a collection of information and policies, both general and specific, for the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences' (USAHS; the University; the University of St. Augustine) degree programs. If any conflict appears to exist between this Handbook and statements in the Catalog, the Catalog takes precedence. The University reserves the right to make changes to the Student Handbook at any time. The Student Handbook and University Catalog can be found on the USAHS website, [www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu), under the Admissions tab.

The University complies with and follows policies associated with the Americans with Disabilities Act, including the right of reasonable accommodation. It also does not discriminate by reason of race, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnic creed.

Each student should carefully read the current issues of both the Student Handbook and the Catalog. Please complete and return the Student Handbook Acknowledgement Form to the Student Services Office.

## **UNIVERSITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE for HEALTH SCIENCES MISSION**

The mission of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is the development of professional health care practitioners through innovative, individualized, and quality classroom, clinical, and distance education.

## **EXPECTATIONS FOR STUDENTS IN PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS**

Graduate health care education prepares students for the professional practice of their discipline and develops the skills necessary to become a self-directed, lifelong learner within the ever changing field of health care. This level of education requires a higher level of participation and commitment than is typically required of students in most undergraduate degree programs. In order to successfully progress through the academic program and transition into the role of a health care professional, it is important that students are self-directed in their learning and assume responsibility for their educational and professional growth and development. They should take the initiative to reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses, assess their own learning needs, identify available resources (human and material), and select and implement appropriate learning strategies. Students should relate prior academic or life experiences to new learning while recognizing that there is usually more than one answer or approach to most questions or problems. Students should exhibit high levels of self-reflection, self-motivation, engagement, intellectual curiosity, professionalism, and ethical standards. Students are expected to devote sufficient time to their studies and to be committed to learning activities both in and out of the academic setting in order to be successful.

## **DEGREES OFFERED**

Master of Occupational Therapy (MOT)

Master of Health Science in Athletic Training (MHScAT)

Master of Science Nursing (MSN)

Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)

Transitional Doctor of Occupational Therapy (tOTD)

Transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy (tDPT)

Doctor of Education (EdD)

Doctor of Health Science (DHSc)

See Catalog for full descriptions.



**UNIVERSITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE**

**F O R H E A L T H S C I E N C E S**

### **UNIVERSITY OF ST. AUGUSTINE TEACH-OUT FOR DEGREE PROGRAMS**

If the University decides to halt enrollments in a program, the University is obligated to develop a plan to teach-out the remaining students in the program. If that occurs, the students will receive timely and complete information regarding individual course plans and a timeline for degree completion.

Dr. Wanda Nitsch, President/CAO  
University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences  
700 Windy Point Drive  
San Marcos, CA 92069

## ACADEMIC CALENDAR

### FALL 2016 TRIMESTER

August 22	Internship II Begins—First Professional DPT
August 30	Appeals Committee Meets—Time TBA Faculty Retreat—Faculty Return to Campus
August 31	New (Full-Time) Student Orientation & Tuition Due for All Students
September 1	Fall Trimester Classes Begin Session 1 Online Courses Begin
September 2	Fieldwork IIA Ends—MOT
September 9	Grades <b>Due</b> for Fieldwork IIA—MOT
September 5	Labor Day—No Classes; Administrative Offices Closed
September 12	Fieldwork IIB Begins—MOT
September 19	Session 2 Online Courses Begin
September 30	First Professional Courses End for MOT Beginning Fieldwork IIA Final Practical Exams for MOT Beginning Fieldwork IIB First Professional Graduation Applications Due for Fall
October 6	Fieldwork IIA Begins—MOT
October 10	Post-Professional Graduation Applications Due for Fall
October 14	Internship II Ends—First Professional DPT
October 21	Mid-Course Grades <b>Due</b> to Progression Committee for 15-Week Courses Classes End for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
October 24	Internship III Begins—First Professional DPT
October 24–26	Final Exams for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
October 27	Final Grades <b>Due</b> by 5:00 p.m. Local Time for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
October 31	Internship I Begins—First Professional DPT
November 1	Midterm Academic Appeals Committee Meeting
November 11	Veterans Day Observed—No Classes; Administrative Offices Closed
November 23	Thanksgiving Holiday Begins for Students at Noon;

	Administrative Offices Close at 3:00 p.m.
November 24–25	Thanksgiving Holiday Break—No Classes; Administrative Offices Closed
November 28	Classes Resume
December 2	Fieldwork IIB Ends—MOT
	Grades <b>Due</b> for ALL graduating students (First Professional and Post-Professional)
December 9	Fall Trimester Classes End
	Fall Term Commencement Exercises—St. Augustine Campus
	Fall Term Commencement Exercises—Austin Campus
	Fall Term Commencement Exercises—San Marcos Campus
December 12–14	Final Examinations
December 14	Practical Exam Retakes
	End of Term—Graduate Degrees Conferred—All Campus Locations
December 15	Grades <b>Due</b> by 5:00 p.m. Local Time for All Students
December 16	Internship I Ends—First Professional DPT
	Internship III Ends—First Professional DPT
December 22	Grades <b>Due</b> for Internship I and Internship III First Professional DPT
December 23	Administrative Offices Closed Through January 1, 2017
December 30	Fieldwork IIA Ends—MOT

### **SPRING 2017 TRIMESTER**

January 2	Internship II Begins—First Professional DPT
January 3	Administrative Offices Reopen
	Appeals Committee Meets—Time TBA
	Faculty Retreat—Faculty Return to Campus
January 4	New (Full-Time) Student Orientation & Tuition Due for All Students
	Fieldwork IIA Ends—MOT
January 5	Spring Trimester Classes Begin
	Session 1 Online Courses Begin
January 6	Grades <b>Due</b> for Fieldwork IIA—MOT

January 9	Fieldwork IIB Begins—MOT
January 16	Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday—No Classes; Administrative Offices Closed
January 23	Session 2 Online Courses Begin
January 30	First Professional Graduation Applications Due for Spring
February 3	First Professional Courses End for MOT Beginning Fieldwork IIA Final Practical Exams for MOT Beginning Fieldwork IIA
February 13	Fieldwork IIA Begins—MOT Post-Professional Graduation Applications Due for Spring
February 17	Classes End for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
Feb 20-22	Final Exams for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
February 22	Mid-Course Grades <b>Due</b> to Progression Committee—15-Week Courses
February 23	Final Grades <b>Due</b> by 5:00 p.m. Local Time for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
February 24	Internship II Ends—First Professional DPT
Feb 28	Midterm Academic Appeals Committee Meeting
March 2–3	Spring Break—No Classes
March 6	Internship I Begins—First Professional DPT Internship III Begins—First Professional DPT
March 31	Fieldwork IIB Ends—MOT
April 7	Grades <b>Due</b> for ALL Graduating Students (First Professional, Transitional, and Post-Professional)
April 14	Spring Trimester Classes End Spring Term Commencement Exercises—St. Augustine Campus Spring Term Commencement Exercises—Austin Campus
April 15	Spring Term Commencement Exercises—San Marcos Campus
April 17–19	Final Examinations
April 19	End of Term—Graduate Degrees Conferred—All Campus Locations
April 20	Practical Exam Retakes Grades <b>Due</b> by 5:00 p.m. Local Time for All Students; Last Day for Faculty
April 21	Internship I Ends—First Professional DPT
April 28	Internship III Ends—First Professional DPT

## SUMMER 2017 TRIMESTER

May 1	Internship II Begins—First Professional DPT
May 2	Appeals Committee Meets—Time TBA Faculty Retreat—Faculty Return to Campus
May 3	New (Full-time) Student Orientation & Tuition Due for all Students Practical Exit Exams—First Professional DPT (full-time) term VII
May 4	Summer Trimester Classes Begin Session 1 Online Courses Begin
May 5	Fieldwork IIA Ends—MOT
May 12	Fieldwork IIA Grades <b>Due</b>
May 15	Fieldwork IIB Begins—MOT Session 2 Online Courses Begin
May 29	Memorial Day Holiday—No Classes; Administrative Offices Closed
May 30	First Professional Graduation Applications Due for Summer
June 2	First Professional Courses End for MOT Beginning Fieldwork IIA Final Practical Examinations for MOT Beginning Fieldwork IIA
June 12	Fieldwork IIA Begins—MOT Post-Professional Graduation Applications Due for Summer
June 16	Classes End for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
June 19–21	Final Exams for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
June 21	Mid-Course Grades <b>Due</b> to Progression Committee for 15-Week Classes
June 22	Final Grades <b>Due</b> by 5:00 p.m. Local Time for First Professional DPT Beginning Internship I
June 23	Internship II Ends—First Professional DPT
June 27	Midterm Academic Appeals Committee Meeting
July 3–4	Independence Day Holiday for Students—No Classes
July 3	Internship III Begins—First Professional DPT Internship I Begins—First Professional DPT
July 4	Administrative Offices Closed

August 4	Fieldwork IIB Ends—MOT Grades <b>Due</b> for ALL Graduating Students (First Professional, Transitional, and Post-Professional)
August 11	Summer Trimester Classes End Summer Term Commencement Exercises—St. Augustine Campus Summer Term Commencement Exercises—San Marcos Campus
August 12	Summer Term Commencement Exercises—Austin Campus
August 14–16	Final Examinations
August 16	End of Term—Graduate Degrees Conferred—All Campus Locations
August 17	Practical Exam Retakes Grades <b>Due</b> by 5:00 p.m. Local Time for All Students—; Last Day for Faculty
August 18	Internship I Ends—First Professional DPT
August 25	Internship III Ends—First Professional DPT

*Dates subject to change.*

*Post-Professional students should contact the appropriate Administrative Assistant for course registration dates.*



## STUDENT SERVICES

### Mission

The Student Services offices are responsible for providing pre-admission, admission, registration, and financial services to prospective students, current students, and alumni. The offices oversee, coordinates, and administers multifaceted activities and student-centered services that include recruitment programs, pre-admission advisement, admissions and registrar functions, and alumni services. The staff value excellent customer service, timely and accurate communication, professionalism, and teamwork.

### Admissions Office

The Admissions Office helps students move from applicant status to acceptance into the University. The office ensures that applicants meet the required guidelines for admissions and helps the Admissions Committee in selecting the most qualified students. For questions or information, please email [admissions@usa.edu](mailto:admissions@usa.edu) or, to speak to someone, please call: 800-241-1027, ext. 1300.

### Bursar's Office

The Bursar's Office handles all billing and refunds.

Telephone: 800-241-1027

Susan Jones, Bursar Team Leader, Business Office, St. Augustine/Miami	ext. 1240	<a href="mailto:sjones@usa.edu">sjones@usa.edu</a>
Candice Salazar, Business Office Bursar, Austin	ext. 3108	<a href="mailto:csalazar@usa.edu">csalazar@usa.edu</a>
Kristin Hitchcock, Business Office Bursar, San Marcos	ext. 2456	<a href="mailto:khitchcock@usa.edu">khitchcock@usa.edu</a>

### Continuing Professional Education Office

The Office of Continuing Professional Education registers students for seminars and certification preparation and examination.

Telephone: 800-241-1027, ext. 1400

Lori Hankins, Director of Continuing Education	ext. 1203	<a href="mailto:lhankins@usa.edu">lhankins@usa.edu</a>
Ouida Howell, Assistant Director of Continuing Education	ext. 1266	<a href="mailto:ohowell@usa.edu">ohowell@usa.edu</a>

### Financial Aid Office

For financial aid information, see the [myUSA](#) portal Student Accounting tab. You do not need a username or password to access this tab.

Telephone: 800-241-1027

Rhonda James, Director of Financial Aid	ext. 1284	<a href="mailto:rjames@usa.edu">rjames@usa.edu</a>
Erica Kelly, Financial Aid Counselor, St. Augustine Campus	ext. 1241	<a href="mailto:ekelly@usa.edu">ekelly@usa.edu</a>
Angela Valentin, Financial Aid Counselor, St. Augustine Campus	ext. 1208	<a href="mailto:avalentin@usa.edu">avalentin@usa.edu</a>
Eloisa Augustus, Financial Aid Counselor, Austin Campus	ext. 3106	<a href="mailto:eaugustus@usa.edu">eaugustus@usa.edu</a>
Mary Grawl, Financial Aid Counselor, San Marcos Campus	ext. 2441	<a href="mailto:mgrawl@usa.edu">mgrawl@usa.edu</a>
Jazmin Garcia, Financial Aid Counselor, San Marcos Campus	ext. 2441	<a href="mailto:jgarcia@usa.edu">jgarcia@usa.edu</a>

## Information Resources/Library

For full details regarding library services and resources (including library hours) please visit the [myUSA](#) portal Library tab. Please direct all questions to [library@usa.edu](mailto:library@usa.edu).

## Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office for all degree programs is maintained at the St. Augustine campus. Any inquiries or requests for information should be sent to the Registrar, University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences, 1 University Boulevard, St. Augustine, FL 32086, or email [registrar@usa.edu](mailto:registrar@usa.edu).

The Registrar's Office is responsible for maintaining the official academic records for all students who enroll in academic degree programs. Holds may be placed on students' records, transcripts, grades, or registration because of financial or other obligations to the University. Satisfaction of the hold is required before a release can be given.

Telephone: 800-241-1027

Diane Rondinelli, Registrar	ext. 1205	<a href="mailto:drondinelli@usa.edu">drondinelli@usa.edu</a>
Laura Sanders, Associate Registrar	ext. 1295	<a href="mailto:lsanders@usa.edu">lsanders@usa.edu</a>
Cristina (Cris) Clark, Assistant Registrar	ext. 1305	<a href="mailto:cclark@usa.edu">cclark@usa.edu</a>
Lauren Ford, Assistant Registrar		<a href="mailto:lford@usa.edu">lford@usa.edu</a>

## Student Service Advisors

Together with all faculty and staff, the Student Service Advisors share in the responsibility of creating a positive student experience. They serve on the front lines of student support and are available to help with any concern, question, or challenge. Student Service Advisors work closely with Faculty Advisors and Program Directors to help students succeed.

Telephone: 800-241-1027

Eric Johnson, San Marcos Campus	ext. 2411	<a href="mailto:ejohnson@usa.edu">ejohnson@usa.edu</a>
Walter Miska, St. Augustine Campus	ext. 1338	<a href="mailto:wmiska@usa.edu">wmiska@usa.edu</a>
Tara Reyes, Austin Campus	ext. 3122	<a href="mailto:treyes@usa.edu">treyes@usa.edu</a>

## CAMPUS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Academic Integrity Policy

Academic integrity means that all academic work represents the individual work of the stated author. Input and assistance from others must always be appropriate and fully acknowledged. Any deviation from this policy will be considered Academic Dishonesty.

### Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty can occur in many forms and variations. The following is a list of some academic dishonesty offenses:

- *Cheating* - a form of misrepresentation. Cheating can include, but is not limited to,
  - using another's work as your own;
  - utilizing a paper or assignment bought or taken from a website;
  - allowing someone else to turn in your work as his or her own;
  - several people writing one paper and turning in separate copies, all represented (implicitly or explicitly) as individual work;
  - stealing an examination or a solution from the instructor;
  - looking at another student's exam;
  - using notes or other aids in an exam when they are not permitted;
  - sharing exam questions with other students; or
  - sharing case scenarios from a practical with other students.
- *Fabrication* - the forgery or invention of information or citation in an academic exercise. This might include
  - the use of false results in a research study or fabricating a resource for a reference list.
- *Facilitating dishonesty* - assisting another to perform an act of academic dishonesty. This includes
  - someone taking an exam other than the appropriate student (it may also address misuse of a proctor); or
  - falsification of a required proctor.
- *Plagiarism* using another's work without crediting that individual or receiving authorization for use. Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences defines plagiarism as "knowingly using the words, ideas or language of another author without giving credit to the work." In its severest form, plagiarism is the theft of another's intellectual work.

The University does recognize that there are many colors and shades of plagiarism and that, at times, it may even be an inadvertent mistake, such as leaving off a reference from a bibliography.

Intentional violations are a much more serious offense. An example of this might be the use of a paragraph from a journal article without citation in a report or bulletin board response. It is with this in mind that the University has defined the following "levels of misconduct."

### ***Level One Academic Dishonesty***

Level One violations typically occur as a result of students not familiarizing themselves with writing and course requirements. They may include the following:

- Lazy plagiarism—forgetting a citation or leaving a reference off of a reference list
- Failure to cite or acknowledge a source in a small or limited part of the paper

The instructor deals with Level One misconduct offenses and notifies the Program Director. Actions may include

- resubmission of the assignment,
- an additional assignment, or
- reduction of grade per course syllabus and/or the Student Handbook.

### ***Level Two Academic Dishonesty***

Level Two misconduct is more serious. These types of violations are more intentional in nature. The following are examples:

- Quoting directly or plagiarizing, to a moderate extent, without acknowledging the source
- Submitting the same work or major portions thereof to satisfy the requirements of more than one course, or the same course when repeated, without permission from the instructor
- Receiving assistance and failing to acknowledge this in a paper or research study

The instructor, in consultation with the appropriate Program Director, deals with most Level Two misconduct offenses. Actions may include

- a zero grade for an assignment,
- writing a paper on academic ethics, or
- reduction of grade, per course syllabus and/or the Student Handbook.

Records of students who commit the above type of offense will be maintained in the student's file until the student completes the program.

### ***Level Three Academic Dishonesty***

These violations are the most serious type of offense:

- Copying another's exam
- Plagiarizing a substantial amount of text in an assignment or assessment
- Enabling someone else to copy your material during an exam
- Using books, notes, or other forbidden aids during an examination
- Giving or receiving information about the content of an exam
- Stealing or distributing a copy of an examination
- Submitting the work of someone else as your own
- Using purchased or copied manuscripts

- Removing posted or reserved instructional material, or otherwise preventing access to it
- Inventing material (this includes citing artificial sources)
- Using illegal or unethical means of acquiring information
- Utilizing an instant messenger or phone while taking an online exam
- A repeat offender—one who has been caught more than once in an act of academic dishonesty

Students committing Level Three academic dishonesty offenses will be referred to the Professional Misconduct Committee. The Professional Misconduct Committee will make appropriate recommendations to the designated Program Director. Actions may include dismissal from the program.

### **Address Changes**

A student's legal home or permanent address (mailing address) is taken from the application for admission and subsequently from the student information form completed during orientation. It is the student's responsibility to change their address. Address changes should be made through the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

### **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

#### **Assistance for Students with Disabilities**

In accordance with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA), the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is dedicated to providing reasonable accommodations to any student with a disability. The University has developed a list of essential functions that a student should possess in order to successfully complete the occupational therapy and physical therapy programs. This list is provided to prospective students as part of the application packet and to newly admitted students as part of the acceptance process. Each student must endorse that he or she has reviewed and understands the list of essential functions.

To request reasonable accommodations, a student must complete the Reasonable Accommodation Request Form available through the [myUSA](#) Admissions tab and Students tab. New First Professional full-time and flex students receive this form along with instructions for making a request once they have submitted their tuition deposits. New students should submit the completed form and appropriate documentation to [disability@usa.edu](mailto:disability@usa.edu) no later than the first Friday of the trimester. Students may ask the Student Service Advisor for clarification of the process. The Director of Disability Services will review the request and inform the student in writing of the decision. The student will be asked to sign a form indicating his or her understanding of and agreement to the accommodations.

Faculty are to adhere to the approved accommodations as provided by the student and are encouraged to seek clarification from the Director of Disability Services should there be a question about the provision of an accommodation. Should a student request something different than what is approved, the faculty member, advisor, and/or Program Director should inform the student that only the approved accommodations will be provided. Should the student wish to alter the accommodation, he or she must make a request for changes in

accommodations to the Director of Disability Services via [disability@usa.edu](mailto:disability@usa.edu); the form is available through the [myUSA](#), Admissions tab and Students tab.

Students with a disability should expect to maintain the standards that apply to all University students and request only the accommodations approved by this process. Being penalized for having a disability is unacceptable as is expecting more than reasonable accommodations.

Any discrepancy encountered by the student or faculty in the written accommodation plan should be brought to the Director of Disability Services for review and action. Student progress may be reviewed as to their ability to perform safely and appropriately in a clinical situation. Students will be advised in writing of concerns regarding clinical performance.

## Disability Policy and Grievance Procedure

It is the policy of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences not to discriminate on the basis of disability. USAHS has adopted an internal grievance procedure providing for prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any action prohibited by the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794).

Any person who believes she or he has been subjected to discrimination on the basis of disability may file a grievance under this procedure. It is against the law for USAHS to retaliate against anyone who files a grievance or cooperates in the investigation of a grievance.

### **Procedure:**

1. Grievances must be submitted to the Director of Disability Services and/or the Executive Director of Student Administration within 30 days of the date the person filing the grievance becomes aware of the alleged discriminatory action.
2. A complaint must be in writing, containing the name and contact information (including address) of the person filing it. The complaint must state the problem or action alleged to be discriminatory and the remedy or relief sought.
3. The Director of Disability Services (or designee) shall conduct an investigation of the complaint. This investigation may be informal, but it must be thorough, affording all interested persons an opportunity to submit evidence relevant to the complaint. The Director of Disability Services (or designee) will maintain the files and records of USAHS relating to such grievances. If the complaint is against another USAHS student and alleges a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, the matter will be referred to the Grievance Committee as outlined in the Student Handbook.
4. The Director of Disability Services (or designee) will issue a written decision on the grievance no later than 30 days after its filing, unless more time is needed. In cases where more time is needed, a written update of progress and actions taken will be provided no later than 30 days after its filing.
5. The person filing the grievance may appeal the decision of the Director of Disability Services (or designee) by writing to the President/Chief Academic Officer within 5 days of receiving the Director of Disability Services' decision. The President/Chief Academic

Officer shall issue a written decision in response to the appeal no later than 30 days after its filing.

6. The availability and use of this grievance procedure does not prevent a person from filing a complaint of discrimination on the basis of disability with the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights.

USAHS will make appropriate arrangements to ensure that disabled persons are provided other accommodations, if needed, to participate in this grievance process. Such arrangements may include, but are not limited to, providing interpreters for the deaf, providing taped cassettes of material for the blind, or assuring a barrier-free location for the proceedings. The Director of Disability Services (or designee) will be responsible for such arrangements.

### **Building Hours**

Students may access campus buildings from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. local time, except during holidays and term breaks as defined on the Academic Calendar. Business offices are open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. local time.

Austin campus weekend hours are 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. local time.

### **Business Days**

The University offers classes 7 days per week. Students should refer to the course syllabus regarding due dates.

A business day refers to Administrative Offices that operate Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in each respective time zone.

### **Cell Phone Use on Campus**

- Ringer should be turned *off* during class or labs.
- No text messaging is allowed during class or labs.
- Cell phone/tablet camera, audio, or video recording may *not* be used during class or labs unless permission is given by the instructor.
- Cell phones are to be stored in book bags or other secure locations during exams or exam review sessions, and should be either turned off or placed on vibrate. Cell phones are not allowed to be in pockets or attached to pants or lying on tables.
- If a student *must* make an important call, or receive an important call during class or lab hours, the student should inform and get permission from the instructor. Phones should be either turned off or placed on vibrate.
- When talking on cell phones in hallways, students should be courteous and keep voices down or move to a quiet area.
- No cell phone conversations are permitted and phones should be placed on silent when in the library or quiet-study-zone areas.

## Credit Hour Policy

### Definition of Credit Hour

It is the policy of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences to establish credit hour definitions and policies for calculation. Guidelines by the Department of Education and WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC) suggest that a school measure credit hours in terms of the amount of time in which a student is engaged in academic activity. A credit hour should be defined as an *amount of work represented in intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement* that is an institutionally established equivalency and reasonably approximates the following criteria:

1. One hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction or student engagement and a minimum of two hours of out of class student work (preparation) each week for approximately 15 weeks for 1 semester or trimester of credit, or at least an equivalent amount of work over a different amount of time [Note: For example, a 2 credit hour course over a 15-week term would require at least 30 hours of direct academic engagement (2 hours/week) and 60 hours of student preparation time (4 hours/week) for the average student. If this same course was offered over 8 weeks, the same number of hours would be required for the term, but the weekly hours would change to 4 hours/week of academic engagement and 8 hours/week of out of class (preparation) work
2. Formal laboratory instruction is also direct faculty instruction and equates to 2–3 contact hours per week per credit over a 15-week term, with documentation maintained on lab experiences and supported by the course outline/syllabi.
3. When determining online and/or face-to-face academic engagement time (excluding student preparation time), the courses should fall within certain allowable contact hours over the semester according to the number of credit hours. Courses with labs will have larger contact hours than non-lab courses.
4. A credit hour may also be an equivalent amount of work (measured in contact hours) for other academic activities established by the institution, including internships, fieldwork, practice, and other academic work leading to the award of credit hours.
5. Fieldwork/Internships and Clinical Rotations are calculated at 45 hours = 1 credit hour.

Per the above, the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences further defines “other academic activities” as practice of lab techniques (usually a range of 2-3 contact hours per credit), practicum, shadowing, studying, reading, preparing for assignments, group work, service learning, or other academic activities related to a specific course.

- An institution should be able to demonstrate its measurements of time allocated for learning experiences and that the learning outcomes are accomplished.



- Review of course credit content will be performed on a regular basis by way of student course evaluations, time studies within a course and curriculum, annual reports and programmatic reviews.
- All new courses should be reviewed for the above as part of the curriculum review process.
- All courses should have a descriptive table of how contact hours are spent in both instruction and academic activities in the course syllabus (see below).

Certain types of courses cannot and will not be measured in this manner, primarily due to the subjective nature of personal study/work time of each student. These types of courses include exit exams, practicums, clinical rotation, clinical integration, independent study, directed reading, capstone courses, products demonstrating excellence, and dissertation.

## **Diversity**

Diversity at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is defined in three ways:

1. Representation of the student, faculty, and staff across all campuses
2. Allowing for diverse thought, leadership styles, and work environments
3. Encouraging diverse ways to teach, to promote student cultural awareness, and to engage in scholarly pursuits

*Representation of the student, faculty, and staff across all campuses:* The University aims to support diversity by recruiting and retaining students and employees at all levels by

- recognizing that continued success in meeting the needs of our students requires the full and active participation of talented and committed employees who represent a variety of religions, disabilities, ages, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, and genders. Diversity of employees also includes personal and work history, education, functional ability, personality, lifestyle, socioeconomic status, geographic origin, longevity with the organization, degree-program matriculation, and level of employment within the organization;
- supporting admission to students regardless of gender, race, ethnic origin, age, disability, or sexual orientation; and
- offering educational support to all students, but especially to those with identified special needs.

*Diverse thought, leadership styles, and work environment:* The University believes that diversity encompasses the way we work, the work environment, and respect for people and ideas. It also encompasses varying management styles and ways of thinking, leadership abilities, skill levels, experiences, viewpoints, expression of thoughts, and differing ways of delivering services, provided there is consistency in the values we share. By fostering an atmosphere of acceptance and support, we value and appreciate the strengths afforded by the differences, styles, ideas, and organizational contributions of each person. For it is through diversity that our institutional core values and mission can best be met.

*Encouraging diverse ways to teach, to promote student cultural awareness, and to engage in scholarly pursuits:* The University supports faculty who offer diverse clinical expertise and

approaches to patient management as a way to promote health science professional curricula that allows graduates to work with a diverse client population. Efforts are made to support cultural competence throughout the curricula and meet expected student learning outcomes in this area. Faculty are encouraged to promote diverse scholarly endeavors that involve various clinical, patient management, health promotion, and education research topics, with careful attention to the safety, confidentiality, and privacy of all research subjects.

Diversity is inclusion. It stresses equal opportunity, recognizes and respects the multitude of differences that employees and students bring to our workplace and classrooms, and acknowledges the changing face of the community we serve. The affirmation of diversity and full cooperation by all managers, supervisors, employees, and students is expected.

### **Email Account**

Each USAHS student will be provided a University email address. Students will use email to stay connected with faculty, support staff, and other students at USAHS. Students should begin monitoring the account as soon as possible but no later than the first day of classes. The University will frequently use email to send important announcements and information. Students will be expected to be able to reply and interact in a timely manner. USAHS departments will only communicate with students using the USAHS email address.

Students may wish to use the organizational features of the email software (folders, contacts, etc.) to facilitate email management. Plan on checking email frequently and set up an electronic filing system for messages. Delete messages that have already been dealt with, and save attachments to a designated area on a hard drive.

Remember to frequently check the spam or junk mailboxes. Sometimes University emails (.edu addresses) are identified as spam and important information is missed because the email message is not in the usual inbox.

### **Emergency Leave**

A student may be granted up to 2 weeks of emergency leave by the Program Director. After this time the student may return to classes but is responsible for the material covered in all classes during this leave time. If the emergency leave extends beyond 2 weeks, the student will be required to take a leave of absence.

### **Enrollment Certifications**

The National Student Clearinghouse is the University's authorized agent for providing enrollment verifications through its Student Self-Service program. Students can print enrollment verification certificates free of charge by logging onto the [myUSA](#) portal and opening the Students tab. There is a link to Clearinghouse Self-Service. Questions regarding loan deferments should be directed to the Financial Aid Coordinator.

### **Faculty/Staff – Student Relations**

The University is concerned that faculty and staff–student consensual romantic/sexual relations may be perceived to negatively affect the integrity of the institution. Those who supervise or

evaluate the work of students must be perceived to be making their decisions fairly and without favoritism.

Faculty and staff are cautioned that consensual romantic/sexual relationships with students can prove to be unwise and problematic and must be avoided. When consensual relationships occur any of the following may arise:

- Such relationships may undermine the real or perceived integrity of the supervision provided and the particular trust inherent in the student–faculty and staff relationship.
- Relationships in which one party is in a position to review work or influence the academic career of the other may provide grounds for a complaint when that relationship appears to give undue access or advantage, restricts opportunities, or creates a hostile or unacceptable environment for others.
- Such relationships may, moreover, be less consensual than the individual whose position confers power believes. The relationship is likely to be perceived in different ways by each of the parties in it, especially in retrospect. While some relationships may begin and remain harmonious, they are susceptible to being characterized as unprofessional and disrespectful to others.

Additionally, any of the situations above have the potential to create charges of harassment, which could lead to legal problems for a faculty and/or staff member and the University. Therefore, faculty and staff must not engage in consensual romantic or sexual relationships with current students and will be subject to disciplinary action if found to be in contravention of this policy.

If a faculty or staff member has a preexisting consensual romantic/sexual relationship with a student, the faculty and staff member must immediately notify his or her supervisor and remove him or herself from the academic decisions concerning the student in direct collaboration with their Program Director or supervisor.

Faculty and staff must be cognizant that the professional relationship with students extends to off-campus interactions, including conference or seminar attendance and other social gatherings.

## **Grade Reports**

Grades and unofficial transcripts may be obtained online through the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

## **Graduation**

All degree requirements must be completed before approval to graduate is given by the respective Program Director. Formal commencement ceremonies take place three times per year at the conclusion of each trimester on each campus.

Confirmation of a degree is posted to the official academic record following commencement exercises. Degrees will not be conferred until all academic and financial obligations have been successfully met. The graduation fee is paid at the time the student submits the Application to Graduate Form as noted on the Academic Calendar.

Honors designation is given to First Professional, Transitional, and Post-Professional students who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.50–3.64. High Honors designation is given to students who have earned a cumulative GPA of 3.65–4.0. The cumulative GPA is calculated through the final trimester of coursework and is not rounded.

## **ID Badges**

### **First Professional Students**

Students will receive a student identification badge that includes the student's photograph, name, and year of enrollment. Photographs may be taken on interview day or during new student orientation. Identification badges must be worn while on University property or while engaged in any University related event. The University charges a fee for all replacement badges. All badges will remain active for 30 days after degrees are conferred to enable students to utilize the library and the Wellness Center.

### **Transitional and Post-Professional Students**

Students on campus for a seminar/residency will receive a temporary name badge on the first day of the seminar/residency that will provide access to the campus for those days only. Transitional and Post-Professional students may request a student identification badge that includes the student's photograph and name. To request a badge, please email the program Administrative Assistant along with a passport-type photo. Please note: badges for Transitional and Post-Professional students will only enable students to access the University's library. When the badge is complete and ready for pick up, the program Administrative Assistant will contact the student by email. Once complete, the badge will be available in the Wellness Center during business hours. The student must provide a photo ID for verification. Identification badges must be worn while on University property or while engaged in any University-related event. There is a fee for a replacement badge. The badge will remain active for 30 days after degrees are conferred to enable students to utilize the library and the Wellness Center. Students (Transitional OTD, Transitional DPT, MHScAT, EdD, and DHSc) visiting a campus that are not attending a seminar/residency or do not have a student identification badge will need to stop at the lobby and sign in as a visitor.

## **Internet Acceptable Use**

The University is required to have a policy that explains fair use of the network (Internet/computers/phone) and to hold it harmless should a virus or other event occur as a result of using the network. This is normal and customary and protects the University, employees, and the student against frivolous litigation and claims. Computer viruses and other events are unfortunately all too common.

The University of St. Augustine reserves the right to modify its Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) at any time, effective upon either the posting of the modified AUP to [www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu) or notification of the modified AUP via the Student Handbook or written notice. By using the services, and thereby accepting the terms and conditions of the AUP, you agree to abide by the AUP as modified from time to time. Any violation of the AUP may result in the suspension or termination of your account.

The user (defined as anyone using computers, hardware, phones, wireless access, or Internet services) is responsible for any breaches of security affecting servers, routers, workstations, or other systems under user control. If a user's system is involved in an attack on another network or system, it will be shut down and an immediate investigation will be launched to determine the cause/source of the attack. In such event, the user is responsible for the cost to rectify any damage done to their computer and any other requirement affected by the security breach.

If the user is accessing the wireless Internet via a personally owned computer, it is the user's responsibility to maintain current virus definitions, operating system updates, and a firewall on his or her computer. The university takes no responsibility in any type of damage that may occur to a user's computer, while accessing university services (wireless or other).

All users of the Internet at the University of St. Augustine are expected to use this resource in a responsible and courteous manner, consistent with the purposes for which it is provided, and to follow all Internet-related rules, regulations, and procedures established for its use.

The University provides users with access to the Internet. The Internet offers access to many valuable local, national, and international sources of information. However, not all sources provide accurate, complete, or current information.

The University makes no warranty, expressed or implied, for the timeliness, accuracy, or usefulness for a particular purpose of information accessed via the Internet. The University cannot regulate the nature or content of the information accessed nor the availability of any given Internet site. The University network/services may only be used for lawful purposes. Transmission, distribution, or storage of any information, data, or material in violation of United States or state regulation or law, or by the common law, is prohibited. This includes, but is not limited to, material protected by copyright, trademark, trade secret, or other intellectual property rights.

Storage of personal items (items that are not work-related) such as music, videos, pictures, emails, and documents on the University server or individual computers is not acceptable use of University resources.

Responsible use of the Internet at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences includes:

- Using the University's Internet resources for educational and informational purposes only.
- Respecting intellectual property rights by making only authorized copies of copyrighted or licensed software or data residing on the Internet.
- Refraining from attempts to codify or gain access to files, passwords, or data belonging to others, and by not seeking disallowed access to any computer system via the Internet.
- Refraining from illegal or unethical use of the Internet.
- Refraining from damaging or altering the configuration of the equipment used to access the Internet at the University.
- Refraining from altering or damaging software or data residing on the Internet.
- Refraining from the deliberate propagation of computer worms and viruses.

## Guidelines for Internet Use

The University provides individual Internet email accounts for all degree seeking students. All University communication will be through the University email address.

Failure to use the Internet appropriately, legally and responsibly will result in

- suspension or termination of a student's University account,
- a hearing before the Professional Misconduct Committee or Human Resources for harassment, or
- referral to the respective Program Director for further disciplinary action.

## Use of File Transfer Between Home and Work Computers

The Internet has become more dangerous than ever. Virus applications and malware are now easily hidden on commonly used web pages. Internet criminals have devised methods for infecting computers when users visit a URL they may have found to be safe previously. For this reason, it has become necessary to require those who transfer files from home to work (via email, USB drive, CD, etc.) to have a good antivirus/antimalware application installed on their home computers. That software must be kept up-to-date.

The IT department also strongly recommends students allow Windows updates to occur on a regular basis, turn on their firewall, and check frequently to insure all antivirus updates are occurring on a regular basis.

## Wireless Internet Access Policy

Wireless access is available in certain areas of the campus, though coverage and up-time is not guaranteed. If students have a laptop computer, tablet, or smart phone with a mobile-ready processor, they will be able to access the Internet while on campus. The university wireless network operates in the same fashion as any commercial wireless access point; it is not secure.

It is a user's responsibility to keep his or her operating system up to date with all security patches and service packs. Firewall software is also recommended. Prevention is better than cure, and by following these simple guidelines, the wireless network can remain safe for fellow users.

When users sign on to the wireless network, they are accepting the rules and regulations of the University AUP. Additionally, they are accepting responsibility for all security breaches or virus damage that may occur to their computer while accessing the University wireless network. The technical help desk and personnel at the University are not available to evaluate or fix student computers.

## Social Networking—Acceptable Use

Social networking online tools and services, as defined below, make it very easy to create accounts for these services, upload content, and then tag the content. The tagging makes the networking possibilities very powerful, which may draw many viewers.

Many students, educators, employees, and administrators are aware of the great potential these social networking services may provide; however, they also recognize the potential dangers of such services. The following are guidelines for use of social networking tools.

Students should limit use of social networking to their personal computers as most sites are known to have malicious software associated with at least part of the website.

**NOTE:** Please be sure to review Privacy Settings for Facebook accounts to make sure that personal and private information is not shared with the general public. To get to privacy settings, click the account menu at the top right of the Facebook page, and choose Privacy Settings. This page contains a group of general controls for the Facebook account, such as who can send friend requests and messages. For everything else that is shared on Facebook, the audience can be chosen when posting. Use this link for more information: <http://www.facebook.com/help/privacy>

### **Definition**

For the purpose of this policy, social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums, blogs and microblogs, online profiles, wikis, podcasts, pictures and videos, email, instant messaging, music-sharing, and voice over IP, to name just a few. Examples of social media applications are LinkedIn, Facebook, Myspace, Wikipedia, YouTube, Twitter, Yelp, Flickr, Second Life, Yahoo groups, WordPress, ZoomInfo—the list is endlessly growing.

### **Policy on Peer-to-Peer (P2P) File Sharing**

The University of St. Augustine is committed to avoiding misuse of its computer network, including use of the computer network to violate the Copyright Law of the United States. All students, faculty, and staff should have a basic understanding of the Copyright Law. Please refer to employee, faculty, and student handbooks for more information on the University copyright policy.

Campus computer networks have been popular sources of reproduction and distribution of illegal music, movies, television shows, pictures, and software through the use of peer-to-peer (P2) networks. When the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences receives a formal complaint from a copyright holder, the University notifies the individual involved and passes along any information received from the copyright holder to that individual. The University does not supply any information to the copyright holder about the individual involved unless a valid subpoena is presented.

Active efforts are in place to prohibit the use of illegal file sharing and the University of St. Augustine employs Open DNS filtering, which blocks access to all known file distributions sites.

### **Leave of Absence**

To request a leave of absence, a student must complete a Leave of Absence (LOA) Request Form, located on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab, and forward the completed form to the Student Service Advisor for approval.

- An approved LOA is restricted to a cumulative total time of 3 trimesters.
- Leave may be taken for 1 trimester at a time or for an entire calendar year but not more than a total of 1 calendar year. Leave taken at any time during a trimester is considered

as an entire trimester of leave and students must retake the entire trimester of course work. A year-long leave begins from the date of the beginning of the trimester of the leave of absence. A student must notify the Registrar in writing of his or her intention to return to the program at least 30 days before the start of the term.

- Scholarship students who are granted an approved LOA for academic reasons forfeit any scholarship funds upon their return. For scholarship students who are granted an approved LOA for medical reasons, the scholarship will be suspended and resumes upon their return from the LOA.
- Currently enrolled students who are granted an approved LOA will be refunded any tuition due based on the University refund policy.
- If a student is approved for a leave of absence within 2 months of the beginning of a term, a credit in the amount of tuition paid for that trimester less any refunds will be applied to their account and available for use up to 1 year from the date of the LOA. This credit is forfeited after 1 year.
- Students should be aware that any leave from the University may have a financial aid impact and should consult with the Financial Aid Office. In compliance with federal regulations, for federal financial aid purposes, an LOA is treated the same as a withdrawal. If a student is considering taking an LOA, he or she must be aware of the following:
  - In accordance with financial aid regulations, an LOA cannot exceed 180 days. If the LOA exceeds 180 days, the loan will go into repayment status.
  - Students must make a written request to be granted an LOA. The Leave of Absence Request Form is available on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.
  - Students will be required to complete exit counseling prior to beginning an approved LOA.
  - It will be necessary to reapply for loans upon return to school.
  - A student must notify the Financial Aid Office upon his or her return to school so that the lender, guaranty agency, and National Student Loan Data System, (NSLDS) can be notified.
- The University reserves the right to reassess the “Essential Functions for Occupational Therapy, Physical Therapy, and Orthopaedic Assistant” of any student returning from any LOA and to decline or conditionally approve his or her resumption of classes if he or she is unable to meet the essential functions with reasonable accommodations.
- Upon returning from an LOA, a student who has been receiving reasonable accommodations must reapply to the Director of Disability Services to have accommodations reinstated.
- If an LOA is greater than 1 year, a student is no longer considered enrolled and must reapply as a prospective student to the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences.

### **myUSA Portal**

[myUSA](#) is a web portal for the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences community. It is accessible through the home page of the University website, [www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu). Click on [myUSA](#) in



the upper right hand corner of the home page. Certain tabs (sections) of the portal are accessible to all, while some require a username (student ID #) and password.

Students will use the [myUSA](#) portal to access grades and forms, update personal information, view schedules and financial account information, utilize library resources, register for distance education courses, order transcripts, and much more.

If a student has *forgotten his or her password* (he or she will need to know the username) he or she must follow the instructions below:

1. Click on [myUSA](#) (upper right hand corner of [www.usa.edu](#)).
2. Enter the username and click the “I forgot my password” link.
3. Click on “Send new password.”
  - a. A new password will be sent to the email address the University has on file. If the student does not receive the password, he or she will need to verify the email address with the Registrar’s Office.
4. After receiving the new password, log on to the [myUSA](#) portal and click on “Personal Info.” Click on the Password tab and then reset the password to something secure that is easily remembered.
5. Log in one more time to verify that the new password is working.

### Passwords (EdD, DHSc, Transitional OTD, Transitional DPT, and MHScAT)

Once the student has signed and returned the Enrollment Agreement Form that was received with the acceptance letter, the Administrative Assistant from the program of study will send an orientation packet containing information regarding the specific program, including password information.

Please note that students should have two sets of usernames and passwords:

1. Student information [myUSA](#) (portal) username and password allow students to access their online courses, printable financial information for tax purposes, grade reports, unofficial transcripts, etc.
2. University of St. Augustine online library catalog username and password enables access to the library catalog only, not the online resources like full text journal articles, eBooks, and databases. Please see the information about these resources on the [myUSA](#) portal Library tab for details on how to access them.

If a student has misplaced his or her library catalog username and password that was issued by the library, please email [library@usa.edu](mailto:library@usa.edu) for assistance.

### Name Change

Requests for a change in the name as it appears on the student’s academic record must be made in writing and accompanied by a copy of one of the following: social security card, drivers’ license, passport, military ID, divorce decree, or professional license. The name change form may be found on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

## **Nondiscrimination/Anti-Harassment Policy**

It is the policy of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences that each member of the University community be permitted to work or attend class in an environment free from any form of discrimination, including race, creed, color, age, disability, gender, marital status, national origin, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, and sexual harassment, as prohibited by state and federal statutes. This policy applies to students, faculty, employees, and applicants for admission or employment.

For sexual discrimination concerns, refer to the Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Violence Prevention Policy in this handbook.

For disability discrimination concerns, refer to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) policy in this handbook.

For all other concerns under this policy, refer to the Complaint policy in this handbook.

## **Parking**

The University is an independent organization, and as such, the property and parking lots are private property. The operation and/or parking of any vehicle on University of St. Augustine property is a privilege, not a right. The University has the right to regulate the use of motor vehicles on its property for the good and safety of everyone. Carpooling is strongly encouraged whenever possible.

All students complete a parking registration form at registration and must keep this information up-to-date with the University. All cars must have a University parking sticker, and it must be displayed at all times.

The University is not liable for break-ins or other damage to any vehicle, including student vehicles. Every effort will be made by University staff and personnel to ensure student safety whenever possible. Reports of damage to vehicles should be filed with local authorities, with a copy to the University Student Services Office.

Vehicles parked in violation of University regulations are subject to being booted or towed without notice by the University. The student is required to pay the boot fee or to contact the towing company to make arrangements for retrieving his or her vehicle and paying the towing fee.

## **St. Augustine Campus**

Students are not permitted to park in the north, west, and south patient/visitor/staff/faculty parking lots from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. EST. Students who are parked in these lots will be issued a parking citation of \$25.00. The parking citation money will go to the students' professional organization. (Note: After 5:00 p.m. students may park in the west and south visitor/staff/faculty parking lots). Students may park in front of the main entrance for a maximum of 15 minutes to deliver items to faculty/staff or pick up items. This policy is subject to change.

When resident classes are not in session but the University is otherwise open, students are required to use only the student parking lot so as not to interfere with regular business operations of the University.

Additional provisions of the University parking policy are as follows:

- No parking is permitted along the curbs of the student parking lot.
- No parking is permitted adjacent to University property—that is, access and side roads and other business' parking lots.
- No parking is permitted on the extreme northern facing parking spots “carved” into the Orthopaedic Associates space.
- No double-parking is permitted.
- Excessive speed in the student parking lot or in accessing University roadways is prohibited.
- All automobiles must be locked while on University property.
- All stop signs and stop bars are to be observed.
- Parking in the gravel lot is permitted but may be limited due to other University functions.
- Students are not permitted to park in the parking spots on the driveway entering and exiting the University.
- Access to the student parking lot is via San Bartolo Avenue. Access through the Flagler Hospital Emergency Room entrance road is prohibited.

### San Marcos Campus

Students are not permitted to park in any of the parking spots on the perimeter of the two buildings excluding designated visitor, handicapped, or car pool spots unless the appropriate parking permit is displayed.

Currently there is no charge for parking, but the University reserves the right to begin charging for parking in the future if it is deemed necessary.

Students are responsible for any parking tickets received from the city for improperly parking on the street.

Any students who are parked in unapproved spots in the parking lot will be issued a parking citation of \$50.00 by the University. The parking citation money will go to the respective student professional association.

Additional provisions of the University parking policy include the following:

- No parking is permitted along the curbs of Windy Point Drive, Borden Road, or streets within defined neighborhoods.
- No parking is permitted at the red curbs or in handicapped or visitor spots (unless you have the necessary designation).
- No double-parking is permitted.
- Excessive speed in the parking lot is prohibited.
- All automobiles must be locked while on University property.

- All stop signs are to be observed.
- No overnight parking is allowed.

Because of city ordinances and traffic plans, alternative transportation is encouraged. These options include the following:

- *Carpooling:* Carpooling is strongly encouraged whenever possible. To encourage this activity, premium parking spots between the two buildings are reserved for registered carpoolers. Registration for carpooling will be announced, and a special sticker must be displayed on all vehicles used on campus. Car pool groups must reregister at the beginning of each term with the University receptionist.
- *Bike to school:* Bike racks are available for individuals biking to school. Always secure your bike with an appropriately applied chain and lock.
- *Public transportation:* North County Transit offers a public transportation system called the Sprinter. The closest station to the campus is San Marcos Civic Center Station (#12). It is about three quarters of a mile from this station to the campus. There are currently no public bus options to the campus. Students can ride the Sprinter and bike/walk to the campus. For more information about light rail visit [http://www.gonctd.com/sprinter\\_stations.htm](http://www.gonctd.com/sprinter_stations.htm).

## Austin Campus

Students are not permitted to park in any of the parking spots on the perimeter of the two buildings, excluding designated visitor, handicapped, or car pool spots unless the appropriate parking permit is displayed. All University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences students are responsible for any parking tickets received for improperly parking on the street. Any students who are parked in unapproved spots in the parking lot will be issued a parking citation of \$25.00 by the University. The parking citation money will go to the respective student professional association.

Additional provisions of the University parking policy are as follows:

- No parking is permitted at any time along the curbs of the student parking lot.
- No parking is permitted in handicapped or visitor spots without the appropriate designation.
- Students should not park on the streets surrounding the campus. It is important to be considerate and avoid causing problems for surrounding neighborhoods and businesses.
- No parking is permitted behind construction areas.
- No double-parking is permitted.
- Excessive speed in the student parking lot or in accessing University roadways is prohibited.
- All automobiles must be locked while on University property.
- All stop signs are to be observed.

## Miami Campus

Ample parking is available.

Parking policies may differ by program. For more information, students should refer to their program section of the Handbook.

## Photocopying/Printers

All campuses of the University of St. Augustine Library offer photocopiers, scanners, and printers for student use at a cost of \$0.10 per black and white page and \$0.35 per color page. Scanning is free. For the specific rules and procedures at your campus, please ask in the library or see the Campus Resources page on the [myUSA](#) portal Library tab.

## Registration

All full time and flex students will be “block” registered by the Registrar’s Office prior to each term for the regularly scheduled courses. Any student not following the planned curriculum should work with his or her advisor and submit an advisor approved schedule to the Registrar’s Office as early as possible for next term registration. Delay in submission of the alternate schedule may delay Financial Aid packaging.

Transitional and Post-Professional students register for coursework online. Log into the [myUSA](#) portal, select the Students tab, and then select Registration for doctoral education (DE) Programs. From there students will be able to register for coursework and step-by-step instructions are provided. To register for Continuing Education seminars, please go to the Continuing Education tab of the University’s website at [www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu). If assistance is required regarding registration, consult the program’s Administrative Assistant.

## Release of Student Information

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences complies with the provisions of Public Law 93-380, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974, in reference to student records.

Students must consent to the release of any student information other than directory information to any person or agency. This consent must be in writing, signed, and dated. The consent must specify the information to be released, the reason for release, and the names of the individual or agency to whom the information is to be released. The Registrar’s Office is responsible for fulfilling requests for student information.

## Replacement Diploma

Replacement diplomas may be obtained by contacting the Registrar’s Office. The fee is \$25.00 plus \$5.00 for shipping.

## **Security Policy**

### **Reporting Emergency Situations and Security Concerns**

Emergency situations involving a threat to life or property should be reported to the police (911) and communicated immediately thereafter to the University by calling 800-241-1027. The University of St. Augustine encourages all students, faculty, and staff to be involved in campus crime prevention.

For instances of rape/sexual misconduct, please see the Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Violence Prevention Policy in this Handbook.

If other types of improprieties occur, these should be reported immediately to the University by calling 800-241-1027. At that time, a report of the incident will be written and statements taken.

### **Emergency and Safety Procedures**

Emergency and safety procedures are contained in the University Emergency Action Plan Manual. A copy of this Manual is available to students on the main website, <http://www.usa.edu/>, About USA tab.

#### ***Medical Emergency***

Call 911 immediately and render first aid as able. Stay with the individual until emergency services arrive. When a student is injured, he or she should complete a Student Incident Report Form found on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab, and file this form, together with any other forms required, with his or her health insurance provider. A copy of the report form should also be provided to the University via fax, 904-826-0085.

#### ***Structural Emergency***

Upon hearing an alarm, students will follow the posted evacuation procedures, following exit signs that are displayed. Stay a safe distance from the building until emergency services arrive.

#### ***Weather Emergency***

In the event of a weather emergency—such as a hurricane or tornado—students, faculty, and staff will be alerted of any campus cancellations or delays via email, text message, and phone calls to their cell phones. “All Clear” messages will alert the community when it is safe to return to campus.

#### ***Natural Disaster Emergency***

In the event of a natural disaster—such as a wildfire or earthquake evacuation—students (and family members) are asked to monitor the University website for any cancellation or restart dates and times. Further information will be given by faculty

and/or staff at the time of the emergency. Information about reopening will also be given via the University voice mail system by calling the main number: 800-241-1027.

## Safety on Campus

Certain safeguards are in place to ensure as safe of an environment as possible. These safety features include the following:

- In case of an emergency, all students will be notified via School Messenger.
- Exterior building doors are locked and access is available only to those with appropriate card access.
- Talk-A-Phones are located throughout the parking lots and University grounds with emergency phones.
- A security guard is available on campus after 5:00 p.m. and designated weekends when the campus is open for student access.
- All faculty, staff, and students are expected to wear name tags at all times.
- All visitors must report to the administration building (or the security guard desk after hours) for permission to enter the campus, to receive a visitor's badge, and to be escorted as appropriate by a campus employee/security guard.
- Emergency contacts and evacuation plans are posted in all classrooms and student/employee meeting areas. Telephones are available in all classrooms.
- To ensure your safety on campus, be personally responsible by
  - being alert to unsafe situations and reporting them immediately to University employees;
  - keeping the exterior doors closed and/or locked (do not prop open);
  - not allowing non-University individuals to enter the building with you;
  - reporting lost/stolen card access name badges immediately to the University receptionist;
  - not walking to your car alone in the dark. Use the "buddy system," especially when you feel your personal safety may be threatened. Do not enter any situation or location where you feel threatened or unsafe; and
  - not leaving valuables in plain sight in your car. Lock these items in your trunk or remove them.

### ***Unlawful and Controlled Substances Policy***

It is unlawful for any person to sell, manufacture, deliver, or possess with intent to sell, manufacture, or deliver a controlled substance. Any person violating the provisions of respective state, county, or federal law may be guilty of a felony, or, in some cases, a misdemeanor of the first degree, and may be subject to punishment as provided in the municipal codes. This punishment can include imprisonment, fines, forfeiture of property, and, in some cases, loss of business licenses. It should be noted that under state sentencing guidelines, punishment may become successively more severe for second and third violations.

USAHS will impose sanctions on students and/or employees for violation of the standards of conduct consistent with local, state, and federal laws. Sanctions may include disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment, expulsion, and referral for prosecution.

### ***Alcohol Policy***

USAHS complies with appropriate state statutes and city ordinances dealing with the consumption of alcoholic beverages on USAHS premises and at any function in which USAHS's name is involved. Students and their guests who consume any alcoholic beverage on campus or at an event sponsored by USAHS or any entity of USAHS must be at least 21 years of age and must be able to furnish proof of age at the event. USAHS and its agents reserve the right to refuse to serve alcoholic beverages to anyone who is visibly intoxicated or whose behavior, at the sole discretion of USAHS and its agents, warrants the refusal of service. Any individual who arrives at a USAHS function either on or off campus in a visibly intoxicated state may, at the sole discretion of USAHS or its agents, be denied entrance to the event.

### ***Drug and Alcohol Counseling***

Students who desire drug and alcohol abuse counseling should contact the Dean or Program Director so that a referral to the appropriate agency may be made. Students may also refer to the Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy located on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

### ***Tobacco Policy***

USAHS is a smoke- and tobacco-free environment. Smoking is not permitted on any University campus. Smokeless tobacco and e-cigarettes are not permitted in any University building.

## **Prohibited Weapons Policy**

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences desires to maintain a safe environment for all of its students, faculty members, staff members, contractors, and visitors. This policy seeks to reduce the risk of injury or death associated with the intentional or accidental use of weapons.

The possession, transfer, sale, or use of weapons, dangerous instruments, or paraphernalia associated with a weapon is prohibited on University premises. This includes those licensed to carry a weapon, except as provided by the law of the state in which the USAHS campus is located (please refer to local state law as these vary from state to state). This restriction includes, but is not limited to, University grounds, offices, classrooms, University-sponsored events, and vehicles being used to conduct University business. Possession of weapons is prohibited at all times while conducting University business. This policy applies to all students, faculty, and staff of the University, and violation may result in discipline up to and including termination of employment or expulsion. Where appropriate, University officials will report the



transfer, sale, or use of weapons or dangerous instruments to local law enforcement authorities.

### Definitions

- The University prohibits any weapon, including:
- firearms (including concealed handguns and BB guns, whether loaded or unloaded);
- knives (including switchblades, stilettos, swords, etc.);
- police batons or nightsticks;
- all martial arts weapons;
- electronic defense weapons, except as provided by law; and
- any other dangerous instrument.

A "dangerous instrument" is defined as any instrument, article, or substance that, under immediate circumstances, is capable of causing death or physical injury. Any member of the campus community who has a question as to whether an instrument, article, or substance is considered a weapon in violation of this policy should ask for clarification from appropriate University officials (supervisors, academic department heads, etc.) prior to bringing the instrument, article, or substance on to University premises. Exceptions to the prohibited weapons policy must be approved beforehand by a representative of the President's Office. Any weapon on University premises may be confiscated. There is no reasonable expectation of privacy with respect to weapons on campus, and desks, workstations, offices, lockers, bags, briefcases, files, etc. may be subject to reasonable security searches.

If you observe suspicious behavior, report this immediately to your supervisor, program director, or campus security.

### **Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Grievance Reporting Policy and Procedures**

The United States Department of Education (DOE) mandates that institutions comply with specific requirements under Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. Title IX is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. University of St. Augustine is committed to providing a safe educational and working environment for its students, faculty, staff, and other members of the university community.

University of St. Augustine believes that all members of the University community should be free from all acts of sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, sexual harassment and discrimination, sexual exploitation, relationship violence, and stalking. All members of the University community and all visitors, regardless of sex, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression are advised that any sexual misconduct by any student, employee, or third party is prohibited. Any attempt to commit sexual misconduct, or to assist or willfully encourage any such act, is a violation of this Policy. Sexual misconduct is contrary to the basic values of University of St. Augustine, which include promoting a sense of community, fostering learning, instilling integrity, and achieving excellence. University of St. Augustine is committed to providing for the prompt and equitable resolution of all complaints of sexual misconduct.

This Policy applies to all complaints of sexual misconduct in University of St. Augustine's education programs and activities. It prohibits conduct that: occurs on campus or other University property; occurs in connection with University educational programs or activities, whether on or off-campus; or otherwise affects the University community. This Policy prohibits sexual misconduct by all third parties (including but not limited to visitors, guests, volunteers and contractors) on University of St. Augustine campuses and during university activities. It also applies to applicants for admission to, or employment with, the University of St. Augustine.

Violations of this policy may result in disciplinary action up to and including removal from the University for students and termination of employment for faculty and staff. When used in this Policy the term "complainant" refers to a person claiming that a violation of this Policy occurred, and the term "respondent" refers to a person accused of violating this Policy.

### 1. Definitions

**Consent:** Consent is defined at University St. Augustine as a clear and unambiguous agreement expressed in mutually understandable words or actions to voluntarily engage in specific sexual or intimate activity or conduct. Conduct will be considered "without consent" if no clear affirmative consent, verbal or otherwise, is given. Consent is not present (1) if obtained through the use of force, threat, coercion, or intimidation; or (2) when an individual is incapacitated, such as by consumption of drugs or alcohol or being unconscious or asleep; or (3) if given by someone who is not able to effectively communicate or to understand the nature of the conduct being engaged in. Silence or an absence of resistance on the part of the individual does not imply or constitute consent. Past consent does not imply future consent. Consent can be withdrawn at any time. Consent to engage in sexual activity with one person does not imply consent to engage in sexual activity with another.

**Relationship violence:** Relationship violence means a violent act committed by a person who is or has been in a social relationship of a romantic nature or intimate nature with the complainant, as determined by the length of the relationship, the type of relationship, and the frequency of interaction between the persons involved in the relationship. Relationship violence includes dating violence and domestic violence.

**Retaliation:** Retaliation means intimidating, threatening, coercing, or in any way discriminating against an individual because the individual made a report of a claim of sexual misconduct or participated in any way in the investigation or resolution of such a report or complaint, or exercised any right or responsibility under this Policy.

**Sexual Discrimination:** Sexual discrimination for the purpose of this policy is defined as including, but not limited to, treating individuals differently because of their gender or sexual orientation, in connection with the terms and conditions of employment or educational opportunities. Discrimination does not occur, however, when an individual is treated differently than another individual for legitimate reasons.

**Sexual Assault:** Sexual assault is non-consensual physical contact of a sexual nature. Sexual assault includes rape and any other acts using force, threat, intimidation, or coercion, or taking advantage of a victim's inability to make reasoned decisions about sexual activity. This includes:

- a. *Non-Consensual Sexual Intercourse:* Non-consensual sexual intercourse is any sexual intercourse, however slight, with any object, by one person upon another, which is without consent and/or by force. It includes vaginal penetration by a penis, object, tongue or finger, anal penetration by a penis, object, tongue, or finger, and oral copulation (mouth to genital contact or genital to mouth contact), no matter how slight the penetration or contact.
- b. *Non-Consensual Sexual Contact:* Non-consensual sexual contact is any intentional sexual touching, however slight, with any object by a person upon another person that is without consent and/or by force, threat or intimidation. It includes intentional contact with the genitals, breasts, thighs, buttocks, anus, or groin, touching another with any of these body parts, or making another touch you or themselves with or on any of these body parts, any intentional bodily contact in a sexual manner, though not involving contact with/of/by genitals, breasts, thighs, buttock, anus, groin, mouth or other orifice. It also includes attempted non-consensual intercourse.
- c. *Statutory rape:* Sexual intercourse with a person who is under the statutory age of consent in the applicable jurisdiction.

**Sexual Exploitation:** Sexual exploitation occurs when an individual takes non-consensual or abusive sexual advantage of another for his/her own advantage or benefit, or to benefit or advantage anyone other than the one being exploited. Examples include but are not limited to: invasion of sexual privacy, prostituting another student, non-consensual video or audio-taping or photography of sexual activity, distributing sexual or intimate information, images or recordings of another without that individual's consent, going beyond the boundaries of consent (such as allowing friends to hide in the closet watching consensual sex), voyeurism, knowingly transmitting an STD or HIV to another student, exposing one's genitals in non-consensual circumstances or inducing another to expose his/her genitals, and sexually-based bullying, including, but not limited to, through social media.

**Sexual Harassment:** Sexual harassment can include, but is not limited to, unwelcome sexual advances; requests for sexual favors; unwelcome physical contact of a sexual nature; e-mails containing inappropriate sexual content; obscene or harassing phone calls or jokes of a sexual nature; suggestive gestures, sounds, stares, or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

1. Submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of a student's academic progress;
2. Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for decisions affecting assessment of academic progress; or
3. Such conduct, by instructors, staff, or students, including between students, has the purpose or effect of interfering with academic performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment.

**Sexual Misconduct:** Sexual misconduct includes, but is not limited to, sexual discrimination, sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking. While the University of St. Augustine School may use different standards and definitions than state criminal codes, sexual misconduct often overlaps with crimes under applicable criminal codes.

**Stalking:** Stalking is engaging in a course of conduct that would cause a reasonable person to suffer substantial emotional distress or to fear for his or her safety or the safety of others. A course of conduct means two or more acts in which a person follows, monitors, observes, surveils, communicates with another person, threatens, intimidates or communicates with or about another person, or vandalizes another person's property.

## 2. Reporting Violations of This Policy

Students, faculty, or staff members who believe that they are a victim of sexual misconduct should contact the Title IX Coordinator. The Title IX Coordinator is responsible for receiving and processing, in a timely manner, reports from students, faculty, staff, and administrators regarding rights and responsibilities concerning sexual misconduct in violation of Title IX.

Any questions or complaints regarding Title IX may be referred to the University of St. Augustine's Title IX Coordinator and Title IX Deputy Coordinators or to the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights – Regional Division Offices listed below.

**Filing a Criminal Complaint:** Students, faculty, and staff members have the right to file both a criminal complaint and a Title IX complaint simultaneously.

To file a criminal complaint please contact the local police department for your campus listed below.

### University of St. Augustine's Florida Campuses

Title IX Coordinator

U.S. Department of Education - Regional Office IV

Jeremy Wells  
Office: 904-826-0084  
Email: [jwells@usa.edu](mailto:jwells@usa.edu)

61 Forsyth St. SW, Suite 19T40  
Atlanta, GA 30303  
Telephone: (404) 974-9450  
Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

Local Police, St. Augustine Campus:  
St. Augustine Police Department  
151 King St.  
St Augustine, FL 32084  
Phone: (904) 825-1074

Local Police, Miami Campus:  
Miami Police Department  
400 NW 2nd Avenue  
Miami, Florida 33128  
Phone: (305) 603-6640

#### University of St. Augustine California Campus

Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
Jeremy Wells, *Interim*  
Office: 904-770-3630  
Email: [jwells@usa.edu](mailto:jwells@usa.edu)

U.S. Department of Education - Regional Office IX  
50 Beale Street, Room 9700  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
Telephone: (415) 486-5700 Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

Local Police:  
San Marcos Police Department  
182 Santar Pl, San Marcos, CA 92069  
Phone: (760) 510-5200

#### University of St. Augustine Texas Campus

Deputy Title IX Coordinator  
Rebecca Estes  
Office: 512-394-9766  
Email: [restes@usa.edu](mailto:restes@usa.edu)

U.S. Department of Education - Regional Office VI  
1999 Bryan Street, Suite 1620  
Dallas, Texas 75201-6810  
Telephone: (404) 974-9450 Email: [OCR@ed.gov](mailto:OCR@ed.gov)

Local Police: Austin Police Department  
Telephone: 512-974-5037

Students, faculty, and staff members must report an incident of alleged discrimination to a "Responsible Employee." For the purposes of this policy, the "Responsible Employees" are the Title IX Coordinator, Deputy Title IX Coordinator, the Executive Director of Student Affairs, and the Program Director. For complaints where both the complainant and respondent are employees, "Responsible Employees" is the Human Resources Campus Manager.

University of St. Augustine takes all reports of sexual misconduct seriously and, upon receiving notice of any alleged violation of this Policy, shall take immediate steps to conduct a thorough, prompt, and appropriate investigation of the complaint.

A complainant who contacts the Title IX Coordinator or Responsible Employee with an allegation of Sexual Misconduct will be notified of his or her right to confidentiality and his or her right to remain anonymous and how that may affect the University's ability to conduct an

investigation. Please note that there are certain situations where the University may not be able to guarantee confidentiality or anonymity. If the complainant wishes to move forward with the process, he or she will be asked a series of questions to provide information. If the complainant prefers, he or she may complete the information from the form and submit it to the Title IX Coordinator. The *Sexual Misconduct or Discrimination Complaint Incident Report* is available from the Title IX Coordinator or by downloading here: [Sexual Misconduct or Discrimination Complaint Incident Report](#). In certain circumstances, it may be necessary for the complaint to go forward even if the complainant does not consent to that course of action.

University of St. Augustine strongly supports the complainant's right to confidentiality in cases involving sexual misconduct. Complainants have the right to ask that their names not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrators. However, there are limited situations in which the university must override a complainant's request for confidentiality in order to meet the institution's legal obligations under Title IX. In these situations, the information will only be shared with individuals who are responsible for handling the University's response to incidents of sexual violence. Given the sensitive nature of reports of sexual violence, the University shall ensure that the information is maintained in a secure manner. If the complainant requests that his or her name not be revealed to the alleged perpetrator or if complainant asks the university not to investigate or seek action against the alleged perpetrator, the University of St. Augustine will be limited in its ability to respond fully to the incident, including taking disciplinary action against the alleged perpetrator. If the complainant still requests that his or her name not be disclosed to the alleged perpetrator, or that the university not investigate or seek action against the alleged perpetrator, the Title IX Coordinator will need to determine whether or not the institution can honor such a request while providing a safe and nondiscriminatory environment for all students, faculty, and staff.

### 3. Determination of interim measures

Upon notification of an incident of sexual misconduct, University of St. Augustine shall take steps to ensure equal access to its education programs and activities and protect the complainant as necessary, including taking interim measures before the final outcome of an investigation. These measures are designed to protect the Complainant and provide the Complainant with options to avoid contact with the alleged perpetrator. These measures may include a change in academic activities, living, transportation, dining, and working situation as appropriate. After the initial report of alleged sexual misconduct, possible immediate interim suspension can be invoked on the accused ("Respondent") if there is a reasonable cause to believe the Respondent's behavior is of such a nature as to pose a threat of harm or injury to the Complainant or any other member of the campus community. The Title IX Coordinator shall work with the Complainant to determine what, if any, interim measures shall be implemented.

### 4. Student Amnesty Policy and Bystander Intervention.

University of St. Augustine encourages the reporting of sexual misconduct. Sometimes, students may be reluctant to come forward and report an incident of sexual misconduct, or serve as a witness, because they are concerned that they may be charged with violating other campus policies, such as University of St. Augustine's alcohol or drug policy. In order to

encourage reporting of sexual misconduct, students who report an incident of sexual misconduct, or who serve as witnesses to an incident of sexual misconduct, will not face disciplinary sanctions for their own personal consumption of drugs or alcohol related to the incident as long as any such violations did not place the health or safety of any other person at risk.

#### 5. Advisors.

For complaints of sexual misconduct where the complainant or respondent is a student, the complainant and the respondent may be accompanied throughout the investigation and appeal process by an advisor of their choice. Advisors should be from the University community, unless otherwise approved, and must agree to keep the matter confidential. However, the advisor may not be a witness or possible witness in the case, a person involved in the University's disciplinary process, or a complainant or a respondent in the case. The purpose of the advisor is to provide advice to the student in a manner that is not disruptive to the proceedings. The advisor may accompany the party to any meeting or hearing held pursuant to this Policy. The advisor may not provide verbal, written, or other input during the investigation or appeal process other than to the student being advised; the advisor may not speak on the party's behalf or otherwise participate or address or question the investigator, Resolution Officer, or other parties or witnesses.

#### 6. Informal Resolution

If the complainant and respondent agree, certain cases may be resolved informally, including through mediation in appropriate cases. Cases involving allegations of sexual assault are not suitable for mediation. The Title IX Coordinator may also determine that informal resolution is not appropriate based on the facts and circumstances of the particular case. All informal resolutions will be conducted or overseen by the Title IX Coordinator or designee. Under no circumstances will a complainant be required to resolve a matter directly with the respondent.

If both parties are satisfied with a proposed informal resolution, and the Title IX Coordinator considers the resolution to satisfy University of St. Augustine's obligations to provide a safe and non-discriminatory environment, the resolution will be implemented and the informal resolution process will be concluded. If informal resolution does not resolve the matter, the resolution process will proceed to formal investigation. At any point in the process, either the complainant or the respondent may elect to end the informal process in favor of proceeding with a formal investigation.

#### 7. Investigations

If informal resolution is inappropriate, unsuccessful, or not desired by the complainant and the respondent, a formal investigation will be conducted. The investigation of a report of sexual misconduct will begin promptly. Notice will be provided simultaneously to the complainant and the respondent in writing that a complaint has been received by University of St. Augustine and

will be investigated under this Policy. The notice shall specify any interim measures that have been implemented.

University of St. Augustine shall determine, given the circumstances surrounding the complaint, the proper party to conduct the investigation. The proper party may or may not be the Title IX Coordinator, and shall be the person best able to conduct an impartial and fair review of the complaint. The investigation will normally include interviewing the complainant(s), respondent(s), witnesses, and other relevant parties and will include a review of any relevant documents and other information. It may include reviewing law enforcement investigation documents (if applicable) and reviewing student and personnel files. Both the complainant and the respondent may provide the investigator(s) with the names of witnesses, documents, and other information. The investigator(s) will exercise their discretion in deciding which individuals identified as witnesses during the investigation should be interviewed and which documents or other information should be reviewed. The interviews, meetings, and other proceedings are not recorded by University of St. Augustine and may not be recorded by others. The complainant and the respondent are afforded equal procedural rights during the investigation. No expert witnesses shall be permitted.

The complainant's prior sexual relationships or conduct are neither relevant nor admissible during the investigation and will not be considered, other than the prior sexual relationship or conduct with the respondent if the respondent alleges consent. The fact that a complainant may currently have or had in the past a dating or sexual relationship with the respondent that was consensual is not sufficient by itself to constitute consent and does not preclude a determination that sexual misconduct occurred.

At any time prior to or during an investigation, the respondent may accept responsibility for some or all of the alleged violations. The matter will then proceed to the sanctioning phase and any appeal of the sanctioning decision.

#### 8. Preparation of Investigation Report.

Upon completion of the investigation, the investigator(s) will prepare a report summarizing the interviews conducted and the evidence reviewed. The report will include the investigator's finding of fact, an assessment of the credibility of the parties and witnesses when appropriate, and a recommended determination as to whether a violation of this Policy has occurred. In reaching this conclusion, the investigator shall use the preponderance of evidence standard.

#### 9. Resolution Procedures.

##### ***1. Cases involving allegations of employee violations***

If the Respondent is a non-student employee, the Title IX Coordinator or designee will report his or her findings to University Human Resources and Leadership. If Leadership determines, based on the contents of the report, that no violation of University Policy has occurred, the incident will be closed.



If Leadership determines, based on the contents of the report that a violation of University Policy has or may have occurred, University Leadership will determine an appropriate resolution including remedial and/or disciplinary action up to and including termination of the employee. University Leadership will determine if a hearing is appropriate prior to the determination of the sanctions based on the particular facts presented, including but not limited to the identity of the complainant (student or employee), the nature and/or severity of the offense, and the evidence presented by the investigative report. Resolution, sanctions and appeals will be governed by the procedures in University's personnel policies or Faculty Handbook, if applicable, in accordance with the requirements of Title IX.

## ***II. Cases involving allegations of student violations***

Sexual misconduct complaints involving student respondents will be governed by the following process. Upon the completion of the investigation, the Title IX Coordinator shall present the investigative report to University leadership which may include, as appropriate, the Executive Director of Student Services, the Chief Academic Officer, or the Student Life Manager. The individual or individuals charged with making a determination as to the resolution of the complaint, and sanction, and any remedies for the complainant shall be referred to herein as the "Resolution Officer," although more than one individual may be charged with resolving the complaint. The Resolution Officer shall then determine the appropriate resolution to the complaint, considering factors including but not limited to the identity of the complainant (student or employee), the nature and/or severity of the offense, and the evidence presented by the investigative report. The Resolution Officer shall determine whether any hearing is appropriate prior to imposition of any sanction. Generally, a hearing will be provided if the probable sanction to be imposed is suspension or expulsion if the respondent is a student, or termination of employment if the respondent is an employee.

The Resolution Officer shall provide written notice to both the complainant and the respondent of the process to be used to resolve the complaint. If no hearing is to be held, both complainant and respondent may make a written submission to the Resolution Officer if they choose. If a hearing is held, the proceedings shall be closed. The complainant and respondent and their respective advisors may be present for all or any portion of the hearing. Either the complainant or respondent may request, or be asked, to hear or view the proceedings via audio or video transmission from a separate room. Any witnesses may only be present in the hearing room when being questioned by the Resolution Officer.

Neither party shall be permitted to ask questions at the hearing, although either party may submit to the Resolution Officer requested questions for the other party or witnesses. It shall be in the discretion of the Resolution Officer whether or not to ask the submitted questions, in whole or in part.

The Resolution Officer shall provide both parties with written notice of its findings and the reasons for such findings. The Resolution Officer shall use the preponderance of evidence standard in making his or her findings. If a violation of this Policy is found, the notice shall provide the sanctions to the respondent and to the complainant, as appropriate under Title IX.

The notice shall set forth either party's right to appeal, the identity of the Appeal Officer, and the process and time limit for such an appeal.

In addition to discipline against the respondent, resolutions may include remedies for the complainant, which may include steps such as reassignment of a course section or residency, counseling services, medical services, academic support services, or changes to the school's overall services or policies, including altering withdrawal penalties within courses. Any remedies offered would be separate from, and in addition to, any interim measure that may have been provided prior to the conclusion of any investigation. Resolutions may also include remedies for the broader University population, such as training or changes to policies or services.

#### 10. Appeals.

Appeals for sexual misconduct complaints involving non-student employee respondents will be governed by the procedures in University personnel policies or Faculty Handbook, as applicable. If any right of appeal is granted through those policies, both the complainant and the respondent shall have equal rights of appeal.

In cases involving student respondents, both parties have the right to appeal the Resolution Officer's finding of responsibility and/or imposition of sanctions. Any appeal must be filed in writing within five (5) days from the notice of resolution. The University will determine the appropriate individual in University leadership to hear any appeal ("Appeal Officer"), depending on the circumstances of the case, including the identity of the respondent. There is a presumption that the decision, and any sanction or discipline, was made properly, and the Appeal Officer may not substitute his or her judgment for that of the Resolution Officer. The sole grounds for appeal are: (1) a procedural error that substantially impacted the determination or sanction; (2) new information that was not available at the time of the investigation or hearing and that could reasonably have had a substantial impact on the determination or sanction; and (3) excessiveness or insufficiency of the sanction. The sanction may be increased only if the complainant appeals on the ground that the sanction was insufficient, and may only be decreased if the respondent appeals on the ground that the sanction was excessive.

The Appeal Officer shall give both parties timely notice of the receipt of an appeal. Both parties shall be provided the opportunity to make a written submission to the Appeal Officer. The Appeal Officer shall be limited to the record below, including any information that was part of the investigation or the resolution hearing. The Appeal Officer shall not conduct another hearing but may conduct interviews with the complainant, respondent, or witnesses in his or her discretion. The party appealing shall have the burden of proof in any appeal. The Appeal Officer shall use the preponderance of evidence standard in the determination of any appeal.

The Appeal Officer shall give written notice to both parties of the outcome of the appeal and the reasons for his or her decision. The decision of the Appeal Officer is final.

**Retaliation:** Title IX includes protections against retaliation. The University of St. Augustine will take immediate and appropriate steps to investigate or otherwise determine if retaliation due to the reporting of sexual misconduct or discrimination occurs.

**Training:** All individuals with responsibilities under this Policy shall have appropriate training in this Policy and in the requirements of Title IX and related laws. Training shall include training relating to sexual misconduct, including sexual assault, relationship violence, and stalking as defined in this Policy.

**Time Frames for Process:** While each situation is different and there can be no way to determine how long an investigation will take, the Title IX Coordinator shall use her best efforts to reach resolution within 60 days from the time the complaint is reported to notice of resolution, exclusive of any appeals.

**Sources of Counseling, Advocacy, and Support:** Victims of Sexual Misconduct can receive assistance immediately by calling the local police department (911, if emergency) and local counseling resources listed by campus below. University of St. Augustine employees may contact the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) by contacting Business Health Services (BHS) at 800-765-3277 or online: at [www.bhsonline.com](http://www.bhsonline.com) (user name: Laureate). EAP is free, "Confidential Resources" at University of St. Augustine which means that all conversations will remain confidential and will not initiate any type of investigation into the incident. Sexual assault reports must be made by contacting the University's Title IX Coordinator or Deputy Coordinators, who are the appropriate University Officials for receiving reports of sexual assault. University of St. Augustine students can contact the following off-campus resources for counseling services: The National Domestic Violence Hotline, 1-800-799-SAFE (7233), or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY). For students at the University of St. Augustine Florida Campuses: The Betty Griffin House 24-hour crisis hotlines, Telephone: (904) 824-1555. For students at the University St. Augustine California Campus: North County Family Violence Center Prevention Services, 330 Rancheros Dr. San Marcos, CA, Telephone: (760) 798-2835. For students at the University of St. Augustine Texas Campus: Victim Services Resources: 24-hour crisis hotlines, Telephone: 512-472-4357.

### **Status Change—Withdrawal or Leave of Absence (LOA)**

Students who find it necessary to withdraw from the program or take an LOA must notify the Student Service Advisor or Faculty Advisor in writing and complete the required documentation. Withdrawal or Leave of Absence forms are available on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

### **Student Loans**

The University is concerned about the financial well-being of its students. The cost of attendance varies per program and possible accumulation of student loan debt could exceed \$150,000 to complete the program. Program cost details and financial counseling is available through the Financial Aid department and [myUSA](#) portal links. The university strongly recommends student counseling prior to applying for loans. The purpose of this counseling is to speak about financial management principles and how best to utilize loan options for students.

## **Termination of Enrollment (Texas)**

The school shall terminate the enrollment of a student who accumulates the lesser of the following amounts of absences:

- More than 10 consecutive school days
- More than 20% of the total course-time hours in a program with course time of more than 200 hours
- More than 25% of the total course-time hours in a program or individual class with course time of 41 to 200 hours
- More than 25% of the total course-time hours for seminars, individual classes, or programs with course time of 40 hours or less
- Any number of days if the student fails to return as scheduled from an approved leave of absence

## **Textbooks**

Textbooks are the responsibility of the learner. Not all courses require textbooks (refer to the course syllabus). To access book lists, students should sign into [myUSA](#), click on the Campus tab, then on the appropriate campus. Student Services provides a booklist to incoming, first-term First Professional students prior to the start of classes.

## **Transcripts**

To ensure confidentiality of student records, the University issues official transcripts of academic information only by written or electronic signature by the student or graduate using Transcripts on Demand. Students will pay a \$3.00 convenience fee for each request submitted and an additional \$2.00 fee for each paper transcript requested. For electronic transcript delivery only, the \$3.00 convenience fee is charged. Transcripts as well as grade reports will not be issued for any student with an outstanding obligation to the University. For more information on ordering transcripts please visit the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

## **Transferability of Course Credit**

The transferability of credits students earn at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is at the complete discretion of an institution to which the student may seek to transfer. Acceptance of the degree earned at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is also at the complete discretion of the institution to which the student may seek to transfer. If the degree earned at this institution is not accepted at the institution to which the student seeks to transfer, the student may be required to repeat some or all of his or her coursework at that institution. For this reason, the student should make certain that his or her attendance at this institution will meet his or her educational goals. This may include contacting an institution to which the student may seek transfer after attending the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences to determine if the degree will transfer. The University actively pursues a policy of requesting other graduate programs to accept our credits for transfer. However, the University has not entered into an articulation or transfer agreement with any other college or university.

## Tuition

Students may pay tuition and fees for each trimester either by personal check, cash, or major credit card (VISA and/or MasterCard). Checks can either be mailed to the attention of the student's campus Bursar or brought in to the Bursar's Office in person. For credit card payments, students should always attempt online payment first before contacting the Bursar. Log into the student portal at [myUSA](#). Go to "more," select Student Accounting, then "My Account Balances," then "Make a Payment." Only if the online payment attempt does not work should the student contact the Business Office Bursar. Questions regarding the student's account, where to remit payment, Higher One cards, etc., should be directed to the student's campus Business Office Bursar.

University of St. Augustine/San Marco **CA Campus**: Check can be made payable to University of St. Augustine and sent to 700 Windy Point Dr, San Marcos CA 92069, Attn: Kristin Hitchcock, Business Office Bursar. The San Marcos CA bursar can be reached at 760-591-3012, ext. 2456, or [khitchcock@usa.edu](mailto:khitchcock@usa.edu).

University of St. Augustine/Saint Augustine **FL Campus**: Checks can be made payable to University of St. Augustine and sent to 1 University Blvd, St. Augustine FL 32086, Attn: Susan Jones, Business Office Bursar. The St. Augustine FL bursar can be reached at 904-826-0084, ext. 1240, or [sjones@usa.edu](mailto:sjones@usa.edu).

University of St. Augustine/Miami **FL Campus**: Checks can be made payable to University of St. Augustine and sent to 1 University Blvd, St. Augustine FL 32086, Attn: Susan Jones, Business Office Bursar. The Miami FL bursar can be reached at 904-826-0084, ext. 1240, or [sjones@usa.edu](mailto:sjones@usa.edu).

University of St. Augustine/Austin **TX Campus**: Check can be made payable to University of St. Augustine and sent to 5401 La Crosse Ave, Austin TX 78739, Attn: Candice Salazar, Business Office Bursar. The Austin TX bursar can be reached at 512-394-9766, ext. 3108, or [csalazar@usa.edu](mailto:csalazar@usa.edu).

Loan disbursements for existing loan programs are also accepted. The use of credit cards to pay for tuition while receiving loans will only be accepted when a current loan disbursement does not pay the account in full. All tuition is payable in full on the registration date established for the applicable trimester. If the student has a loan coming that won't pay what is owed to the school in full, then subtract the amount of the loan from the total balance, and pay that self-pay portion by the registration date established for the applicable trimester. If the student has loan(s) pending that will pay the balance in full, then students do not have to pay anything themselves.

Late accounts can be assessed a 10% late fee. When the account becomes past due the student will be "blocked." If the account is blocked, students are unable to register for the next term, unable to request transcripts, and unable to graduate. Removal from classes can also occur. Reminder: if there are loans pending that will pay the tuition in full, the account won't be considered past due or receive a block. If students have a loan pending that will partially pay

the account, the student is responsible for paying the self-pay portion by the registration date established for the applicable trimester or risk receiving a late fee and/or block.

One more important item for new students—if the student hasn't already, he or she should be receiving by U.S. mail enrollment information for Higher One. Higher One processes USAHS's student refunds. It will arrive in a bright green envelope. As soon as the information is received students should enroll and choose the method for future refunds. Students may use a Higher One account or receive direct deposit to his or her own bank. Even if the student does not anticipate a refund, he or she should enroll to direct a refund from a dropped course.

All personal checks accepted in payment of tuition may be processed twice, once upon receipt, and, if not cleared, once more. If such check is not approved for payment by the bank because of insufficient funds or other circumstances that do not allow clearance, it will be returned to the issuer along with a \$30.00 service charge imposed by the University to cover handling and service fees. This service charge will be imposed each time the check is not approved for payment by the bank. *There are no exceptions to this policy.* Any subsequent tuition payments made by the student for the trimester/term in question must be made in the form of a certified check or bank money order before acceptance by the University.

### Special Tuition Payment for Students Performing Clinical Internships

A special tuition payment policy applies for those students who will be performing clinical internships for the immediately upcoming trimester. These students are required to remit tuition and fee payments no later than a period of 2 weeks prior to the beginning date of their clinical internship. In the case of those students receiving loans, a letter from the servicing agency indicating actual disbursement date is required on or before a period of 3 weeks prior to the beginning date of their clinical internship. (Note: The tuition payment date for those students who will be pursuing clinical internships in any given trimester will be provided in a separate memorandum to students as well as listed on the Academic Calendar). Students may direct questions regarding payment of tuition to the Bursar's Office.

### DHSc/EdD/tOTD/tDPT/MSN Student

Students may pay tuition for each trimester/term either by personal check or major credit card. All tuition is payable in full by the registration date established for the applicable trimester/term. Students will not be allowed to begin a course without paying for it in full, even though a loan might be disbursing at some future point. Any loan disbursements received will then be refunded to the student.

### **Tuition Refund Policy for First Professional Programs**

#### **Cancellation and Tuition Refund Policy**

University of Saint Augustine for Health Sciences institutional refund policy has been established in accordance with current state and federal regulations and applicable accrediting standards. A refund to the student or fund source may result from the application of the University's institutional refund policy.

## Notice of Cancellation

Students must notify the University in writing of cancellation. All monies paid by an applicant other than books, supplies, materials, and kits that are not returnable from use are refunded if cancellation occurs within 1 week (7 days) after signing the University's Enrollment Agreement and making an initial payment. If cancellation occurs after 1 week (7 days) from the signing of the University's Enrollment Agreement, all application and registration fees in excess of \$100 are refunded to the student.

## Tuition Refund Policy

The University of Saint Augustine for Health Sciences has an established add/drop period that is the first week (7 days) of each semester. All tuition and fees, excluding the application fee, will be refunded to students who withdraw within the add/drop period.

For students who withdraw (including transfers and leaves of absence) from ALL classes on or before 60% of the term has elapsed, USAHS will calculate, according to federal regulations, any amounts received by USAHS that must be returned to the payee (lender or student).

Step 1: Determine the percentage of the enrollment period the student attended before withdrawing using the last day of determined attendance (days attended divided by total days in the period).

Step 2: Determine the amount of tuition earned by school by multiplying the total tuition/fee charged by the percentage of time enrolled.

Step 3: Compare the amount of tuition earned by school to the amount received by the school. If more funds were received by the school than tuition earned by school, determine the amount of funds that must be returned by subtracting the tuition earned by school amount from the amount received by the school.

Step 4: Distribute the unearned tuition received by the school back to the appropriate lender program or payee.

Students will be billed for any amount due to USAHS as a result of tuition not being paid at time of withdraw and that would have been used to cover USAHS charges.

If a student obtains a loan to pay for an educational program, the student will have the responsibility to repay the full amount of the loan plus interest less the amount of any refund. If the student has received federal student financial aid funds, the student is entitled to a refund of the monies not paid from federal student financial aid program funds.

All refunds will be made within 30 days of the date the University determines that the student has withdrawn.

## **Tuition Refund Policy for Transitional and Post-Professional Programs**

### **Student's Right to Cancel**

Students may withdraw from a degree program at any time. Contact the director of the degree program at 1 University Boulevard, St Augustine, FL 32086 to request withdrawal from the

program. To withdraw from an individual seminar, contact the Registration Office by phone at 904-826-0084, ext. 1266.

### Continuing Education Seminar Fee Refund Policy

A \$100.00 nonrefundable deposit must accompany the registration form. The balance of the fee is due 30 days prior to the starting date of the seminar; unpaid balances may be subject to forfeited registration. The balance may be transferred or refunded with a 2-week notice prior to the start date of the seminar. Cancellation up to 3 working days prior to the start of the seminar will result in 50% of the balance being refunded. With 3 working days' notice, no portion of the seminar fee will be refunded; however, the fee may be transferred to another seminar of the student's choosing or placed in a "funds on hold" account. Transfer of funds is limited to two seminars. After the seminar begins, no refunds are issued or transfer of funds permitted. If a student misses any portion of a seminar, a certificate of completion will not be issued until such portion is made up. A student can attend a subsequently scheduled seminar at no cost to make up the time and then receive his or her certificate upon successful completion.

In the event of employer paid registrations, the employer has the right to cancel the registration under the above policy. The therapist will be contacted and may be given the option to remain registered for the seminar and become the responsible party for the fee.

### Cancellation and Tuition Refund Policy

University of Saint Augustine for Health Sciences institutional refund policy has been established in accordance with current state and federal regulations and applicable accrediting standards. A refund to the student or fund source may result from the application of the University's institutional refund policy.

### Notice of Cancellation

Students must notify the University in writing of cancellation. All monies paid by an applicant other than books, supplies, materials, and kits that are not returnable from use are refunded if cancellation occurs within 1 week (7 days) after signing the University's Enrollment Agreement and making an initial payment. If cancellation occurs after 1 week (7 days) from the signing of the University's Enrollment Agreement, all application and registration fees in excess of \$100.00 are refunded to the student.

### Tuition Refund Policy

The University of Saint Augustine for Health Sciences has an established add/drop period that is the first week (7 days) of each semester. All tuition, excluding the application fee, will be refunded to students who withdraw within the add/drop period.

The technology fee is refundable before the term has begun and nonrefundable once the term has begun.



For students who withdraw (including transfers and leaves of absence) from ALL classes on or before 60% of the term has elapsed, USAHS will calculate, according to federal regulations, any amounts received by USAHS that must be returned to the payee (lender or student).

Step 1: Determine the percentage of the enrollment period the student attended before withdrawing using the last day of determined attendance (days attended divided by total days in the period).

Step 2: Determine the amount of tuition earned by school by multiplying the total tuition/fee charged by the percentage of time enrolled.

Step 3: Compare the amount of tuition earned by school to the amount received by the school. If more funds were received by the school than tuition earned by school, determine the amount of funds that must be returned by subtracting the tuition earned by school amount from the amount received by the school.

Step 4: Distribute the unearned tuition received by the school back to the appropriate lender program or payee.

The student will be billed for any amount due to USAHS as a result of tuition not being paid at time of withdraw and that would have been used to cover USAHS charges.

If a student obtains a loan to pay for an educational program, the student will have the responsibility to repay the full amount of the loan plus interest less the amount of any refund. If the student has received federal student financial aid funds, the student is entitled to a refund of the monies not paid from federal student financial aid program funds.

All refunds will be made within 30 days of the date the University determines that the student has withdrawn.

## **Wellness Centers (St. Augustine, San Marcos, Austin)**

### **Mission Statement**

The mission of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences Wellness Center is to provide an environment that promotes and facilitates a healthy and productive lifestyle in our students, faculty, staff, and ultimately our clients and local community. This will be achieved by (a) development of programs that will allow the University philosophy on health and wellness to become a reality and (b) providing a state of the art wellness facility that will include wellness-related testing/screening and quality instruction in the various domains of wellness.

Students must complete a liability waiver prior to utilizing the Wellness Center and must complete a mandatory orientation prior to utilizing the Obstacle Course on the St. Augustine Campus.

For more information, including access and policies, go to [myUSA](#), Wellness Center tab.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **Academic Freedom**

Academic freedom is a cherished principle in higher education. At the University, academic freedom is the right of faculty members to express their professional opinions regarding the content of the courses they are teaching, as long as they are measured against the intellectual standards of relevant professional disciplines. It should be remembered that the content of courses often builds upon itself and this course content is coordinated to achieve the desired goal of meeting professional accreditation and national licensure subject matter. Faculty have the freedom in the classroom to discuss academic subjects, selecting instructional materials, and determining grades. Likewise, students should have the opportunity to study a wide spectrum of ideas so they may acquire critical thinking skills. We must never lose sight that our students are seeking guidance, not confusion. While they wish to know what to do in every single circumstance, we know they are better prepared if we teach them the skills and give them the content that will enable them to personally find answers. In the development of knowledge and creative activities, the faculty and student body are free to cultivate a spirit of inquiry and scholarly criticism and to examine ideas in an atmosphere of freedom and confidence.

However, there are limits to academic freedom. The courts have decided that free speech does not extend to shouting “fire” in a crowded theatre. Likewise, academic freedom, the right to express one’s personal views, has its limits and carries with it a measure of responsibility. By all means, faculty may express a different viewpoint about a professional topic, but it should be clearly expressed as a personal viewpoint. Faculty may not subject students to personal views and opinions concerning matters not related to the course of instruction itself. It is necessary that faculty conduct themselves accordingly, with due respect to the welfare of this University and the professions we represent. It is also necessary to ensure consistency within an integrated curriculum and when teaching various sections of the same course/seminar. The philosophy, programs, faculty, and administration of the University are not perfect, and helpful suggestions and constructive criticism can assist all; but public displeasure of University philosophies or practices has no place in our organization.

If a faculty member, staff, or student perceives an infringement on his or her academic freedom, the individual should follow the complaint policy and refer the issue to the appropriate Program Director, supervisor, and/or Dean. If the issue is not resolved in a satisfactory manner, the individual may submit a written grievance to the University’s Grievance Committee at 1 University Blvd., St. Augustine, FL 32086, where the issue will be handled according to established timelines and processes.

### **Attendance**

#### **Class Attendance**

Students are expected to be (1) in the classroom or lab on time, (2) prepared to begin class/lab, and (3) wearing the appropriate attire by the designated starting time for that instructional period.

Students who are going to be late or absent from class/lab due to an unexpected situation should call their course instructor; see course syllabus for contact information.

Occasionally, students may be required as part of a course to attend an evening lecture by a distinguished person in the field. Such an event will be considered mandatory as if it were a regularly scheduled class.

## Absences

In the event of a planned absence, the student must speak to each faculty member whose course will be missed and request that the absence be excused.

- *Excused Absences*

Excused absences include (but may not be limited to) the following:

- Illness (after 3 days must be supported by physician's note)
- Attendance at a professional conference approved by the Program Director
- Attendance at special services for a member of the immediate family (spouse, parent, child, sibling; spouse's parent, child, or sibling; child's spouse, grandparents, or grandchildren).

- *Unexcused Absences*

Unexcused absences are considered to be unprofessional behavior. With any unexcused absence, students forfeit the right to review with the instructor all or any part of the material, including test reviews, covered during that class or lab session. A first offense will result in a warning letter issued to the student with a copy of that letter placed in the student's file. A second offense and each subsequent offense will result in a 5% reduction per offense from a final course grade. This represents the University's minimal standard; individual faculty may outline additional consequences in their course syllabi.

- *Tardiness*

Tardiness is considered to be unprofessional behavior. It is expected that if a student is tardy for any class, the student will apologize to the instructor immediately after that class. If a student is tardy twice (two times), the student will receive a warning letter with a copy of that letter placed in his or her file. After the second time, each subsequent event will result in a 5% reduction per tardiness from a final course grade. This represents the University's minimal standard; individual faculty may outline additional consequences in their course syllabi.

- Clinical fieldwork/internship students should refer to the Clinical Education Handbook.

## Online Education Attendance

If enrolled in a course that is purely online (no face-to-face lab associated with it) then a student may be moving through his or her coursework with a cohort group. This means the student will have weekly attendance and assignments due along with fellow classmates. Check the syllabus for a schedule of due dates or refer to the course map within the course platform for specific information on each assignment.

In the online environment, attendance equates to signing into the course and interacting in some meaningful way, either via an assignment, bulletin board discussion, or test. No other student/course facilitator contact (e.g., telephone calls, faxes, email) satisfies the attendance requirement.

Course faculty are required to report student absences (lack of online course interaction) in an online course. However, it is the prerogative of the faculty member to determine if work submitted after the day of deadline will or will not receive any points or credit. Be advised that course facilitators are discouraged from awarding points for late student work that is designed to contribute to the overall class community (e.g., bulletin board threads, group work).

### Flex Program Additional Information

- *Laboratory Attendance*
  - Because of the amount of material covered in each lab session, absences from even 2 hours of any lab session can be very detrimental to the understanding and application of the course material and the course grade. Students are strongly encouraged not to miss any portion of any lab. If a student misses more than 20% of the total lab hours in a course, the student must repeat the course. If the accumulated absence occurs before the time to withdraw, the student may withdraw from the course.
- *Excused Absences*
  - *Planned absences must be approved in advance by the Program Administrator.*
  - In the event of an occurrence or emergency that necessitates missing any part of a Flex weekend lab, the procedure is as follows:
    - First contact should be the Program Director, coordinator, or manager. If the director, coordinator, or manager gives approval to proceed, the student next contacts the course online instructor to seek permission for an excused absence. If the course online instructor approves, the student must then contact the lab instructor to request approval for the absence. If all three (program coordinator/manager, online instructor, and lab instructor) agree, the student will be granted an excused absence. Failure to follow this sequence will result in an unexcused absence, which results in forfeiture of the right to review with the instructor all or any part of the material. This also includes taking written or practical exams. Unexcused absences are considered to be unprofessional behavior which could result in the final course grade being reduced by 5% to 10% and/or a referral to the Professional Misconduct Committee.
- *Unexcused Absences*
  - Students are expected to make travel arrangements that permit them to attend the full lab sessions on each scheduled lab weekend. Arriving late or leaving early for travel is considered an unexcused absence except in cases of unavoidable conflicts or when approved in advance by the program coordinator.

## **Audit of a Course**

Auditing of a class is permitted, with approval of the Program Director. Auditing of a class requires payment of full tuition for that course. The student who is auditing may not take practical exams and may not sit for written exams or quizzes.

## **Clinical Education**

Please refer to the Clinical Education Handbook for policies and procedures.

## **Complaints**

The University of St. Augustine is committed to providing a learning and working environment in which complaints are addressed fairly and resolved promptly. All complaints are taken seriously. The procedure for handling complaints encourages informal conciliation, facilitates early resolution, and maintains individual privacy and confidentiality.

This policy covers general types of complaints.

This policy *does not* cover complaints about incidents related to harassment. Complaints of this nature should be directed to the Director of Human Resources. Students with complaints regarding Sexual Misconduct should refer to the Title IX and Sexual Misconduct Grievance Reporting Policy and Procedures in this handbook.

### **Student Complaints**

- **Types of Student Complaints**  
Students should utilize the following procedure for complaints about service, support, or assistance provided by academic, administrative, or support departments of the University. Student complaints include academic issues such as instruction methodology, grading, testing, assignments, or nonacademic matters such as IT support, University services, facilities, policies, financial matters, etc. The following procedure is not for complaints regarding academic or nonacademic appeals policies and procedures. Please refer to the Academic Evaluation and Right of Appeal section of this Handbook for information on the appeals processes.
- **Confidentiality**  
All information submitted as part of a student complaint will be treated as confidential and will only be available to the appropriate/involved parties. The student should also respect the need for confidentiality throughout the complaint process. A student who submits a complaint should be aware that complete confidentiality cannot always be guaranteed if effective action is to be taken. Where a complaint is in reference to a specific individual, the complaint cannot be investigated if the student does not wish the allegation to be made known to that individual. Anonymous complaints will not be considered.
- **Student Complaints Procedures**  
A student should discuss his or her concerns with the person(s) who is directly

responsible (course instructor, staff member, etc.) in order to resolve the issue. Depending on the severity of the issue, a written record may or may not be drafted and placed in the student's permanent record.

1. If the complaint cannot be resolved to the satisfaction of the student, the student should discuss the issue with his or her Program Director. The Program Director will consider the complaint and attempt to bring the issue to a satisfactory resolution.
  - a. In certain situations, the Program Director may refer the complaint to an appropriate University committee. The respective committee will consider the complaint and provide a written recommendation to the Program Director.
  - b. The Program Director will consider the committee recommendation and notify the student in writing of the decision.
  - c. Written documentation regarding the resolution will be placed in the student's file and maintained for 6 years past the student's last date of attendance.
2. After following the steps above, the student may submit a formal written complaint to the Grievance Committee.
  - a. The complaint will be investigated by the Grievance Committee and a written response will be provided to the student.
  - b. The original written complaint, a copy of the response, and a description of any actions taken as a result of the complaint will be maintained on file for 6 years past the student's last date of attendance.

## Unresolved Complaints

If a complaint cannot be resolved after following the procedures above, the following agencies can be contacted directly. This information will be posted and kept current on the University website.

- WASC Senior College and University Commission (WSCUC)
  - Complaints may be filed with the University's institutional accrediting body by contacting the WSCUC at <http://www.wascsenior.org/comments> by reviewing the Policy on Complaints and Third-Party Comments to ascertain the appropriate means to communicate comments and complaints.
- Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
  - Complaints about the Physical Therapy program can be submitted to CAPTE by requesting the Procedures for Handling Complaints about an Accredited or Developing Physical Therapy Program.
    - This document can be obtained by writing to CAPTE at 1111 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, by telephone 703-706-3245, or visit <http://www.capteonline.org/Complaints/>.

- American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)
  - Complaints about the Occupational Therapy program are handled as part of the Code of Conduct and Ethics Guidelines for AOTA.
    - For more information on this process please visit <http://www.aota.org/About-Occupational-Therapy/Ethics.aspx>.
- In California
  - A student or any member of the public may file a complaint about this institution with the Bureau for Private Postsecondary Education by calling 888-370-7589 or by completing a complaint form at <http://www.bppe.ca.gov/enforcement/complaint.shtml>.
- In Florida
  - For information on the Commission for Independent Education's complaint process go to <http://www.fldoe.org/cie/complaint.asp>.
- In Texas
  - For more information on making a complaint to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board go to <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=051F93F5-03D4-9CCE-40FA9F46F2CD3C9D>
- Additional States
  - The University of St. Augustine has taken the necessary steps to apply and/or receive authorization to deliver education, to market, and to affiliate with clinical education sites in all fifty (50) states. For information on a specific state, or to file a complaint go to: <http://www.usa.edu/p54-226-Complaints.aspx>

## **Course Withdrawal**

### First Professional

Students wishing to withdraw from a course should submit the Course Withdrawal Form available on [myUSA](#), Students tab, under Forms. The withdrawal period is 1 week after classes begin until 3 weeks before the last day of class. A student may not have more than one W in any course. After two program Ws the student will be notified by the Registrar. A third program W must be approved by the instructor and the Faculty Advisor. A student requesting a fourth W will only be approved under extenuating circumstances by the Academic Progression and Retention Committee (APRC) and the Program Director. Students need to be in contact with the Financial Aid Office when withdrawing from a course. All appeals throughout the course withdrawal process will be heard by the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC).

### Transitional and Post-Professional

Students wishing to withdraw from a course should submit the Course Withdrawal Form available on [myUSA](#), Students tab, under Forms. A student may drop a course up until the first

complete week. The withdrawal date is 1 week after the course has started. A student cannot have more than one W in any course, after three program W's a student will be referred to the Academic Progression and Retention Committee.

### **Degree Completion\***

Acceptance into the University and payment of tuition (on a trimester-by-trimester or course-by-course basis) is not a contract assuring that the student will graduate with the degree. Graduation will depend on a satisfactory grade point average, professional conduct, and the satisfactory completion of the degree requirements. This Handbook and the course syllabi detail what is considered "satisfactory." See the University appeals process for dismissals and professional behavior issues.

\*For additional information see individual programs

### **Distance/Online Education**

#### **Purpose of Distance/Online Education**

It is the intention of this University to offer online coursework that will parallel the mission and philosophies of the University's programs. USAHS aims to provide a program that is unique to the health care education of physical and occupational therapists and orthopaedic assistants while at the same time maintaining uniformity in content and presentation.

#### **Philosophy of Distance/Online Education**

The University intends to provide a delivery method of education that not only excels in quality, but is unique in performance. USAHS aims to provide an education that facilitates rich learning environments and that includes opportunities for acquiring basic and advanced skills, knowledge, conceptual understanding, and relevance to the health and clinical sciences. The education provided should not function as an isolated dimension of intellectual activity but as a contribution to learners' development of strong identities as individual learners and participants in meaningful social and educational practice.

#### **Methods for Delivery of Online Education Courses**

The University will offer a variety of formats in educational delivery. Below is a summary of such offerings:

- *Pure Online Course* - This course format offers content that is delivered purely online. Most often the student will have scheduled interaction with an experienced faculty member as well as other classmates. Occasionally a pure online course may offer the opportunity to work self-paced and interact only with the assigned faculty member.
- *Combination Laboratory/Online Course* - This course format offers lecture-type materials in an online format with weekend laboratory sessions in a face-to-face (traditional) format. In many cases the online course materials will be reviewed prior to attending the weekend laboratory sessions.
- *Traditional Lecture/Laboratory* - A course may be delivered in an exclusively live format (not online).



- *Seminar/Online* - The student will need to first attend a seminar. The most up-to-date seminar calendar is available under Continuing Education on the University's website, [www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu). Students will be able to see when and where seminars are being provided. After attending the seminar, students will need to complete the online course that corresponds with the seminar attended. These courses are 10 weeks long.
- *Residency* - These courses require the student to be on site.
- *Blended Learning* - This format offers materials in both online and face to face (traditional) format.

## Examinations

Each course syllabus describes the types of exams given, exam dates, and how exams are used to calculate the final course grade. Each course will have a final examination unless otherwise announced by the instructor.

*For First Professional students:* Special early examinations given to individual students or groups of students as substitutes for final examinations are prohibited. Final examinations are to be given on the day and time scheduled during the final exam period, unless there is prior approval from the Program Director. When a final examination is given, each student is required to take the examination.

## Policy and Procedures for Examinations

- Conduct of Written/Online Proctored Examinations
  - Most written examinations will be proctored.
  - Examinations will begin and end promptly as scheduled.
  - After the start of the examination, any student who wishes to leave the examination room will turn in his or her examination and will not be permitted to reenter unless there are extenuating circumstances.
  - If the faculty member permits work paper to be used, it will be distributed during the examination period by the faculty member. All work paper will be returned to the proctor with the examination.
  - Books, other study material, book bags, and purses must be placed at the perimeter of the examination room or left outside of the examination room except in the case of an open book exam.
  - No electronic devices are allowed. Students are to place cell phones, Apple watches, Google glasses, etc. in their book bags. Remember to turn any ringers or alerts off.
  - Some written/online exams will be taken off campus (may apply to Distance Education students only) in the student's local area. Each student will be required to identify an appropriate person who will be physically present with the student to serve as the proctor while he or she is completing the examination.
    - Guidelines for selecting a proctor are as follows:
      - A proctor *must* be available during the evenings and on weekends.

- A proctor *can* be a staff member, educator, administrator in an educational institution, military education center, independent testing center or public library, or a clergy person at their place of worship.
  - A proctor *cannot* be a relative, personal friend, employee, coworker, student, spouse, or significant other.
  - A proctor can be an approved proctoring company for online exams only.
    - Complete the Proctor Request Form and submit it to the University. The University reserves the right to deny or terminate a proctor at any time, for any reason.
    - The date and time of the examination will be determined by the course instructor. It is the student's responsibility to assure the approved proctor is available for the stated time and day of the exam.
    - The student is responsible to communicate with the approved proctor at least 2 business days prior to the scheduled exam to verify the proctor has the necessary information, including online password, mailed paper exam, exam instructions, etc.
    - A picture ID must be presented to the proctor prior to testing.
    - All other examinations rules stated in this section apply.
- Written Proctored Exams
  - Examinations will be sent directly to the approved proctor on file and will be returned to the University by the proctor.
- Online Proctored Examinations
  - Examinations will only be available to students who have a current, approved proctor form on file.
  - Once the student has completed the exams, the proctor will sign the Proctor Completion Form and return it to the University.
  - If using a proctoring company, a completion form is not necessary because the company provides a post-exam report including any incidents that may have occurred.
- Online Examinations (non-proctored)

The purpose of the online examination is for students to determine their overall comprehension and application of the course content. Working together on an examination is considered cheating (see Academic Integrity Policy in this Handbook). Instructors have been trained to detect cheating and the platform can also provide information to faculty and staff in regards to cheating. Please use the online examination as a method for improving the learning process.

Most examinations are timed. Students will not have time to check answers in textbooks. The student should enter the test knowing that he or she is prepared to take this exam just as he or she would in a classroom, proctored setting. Be sure to have

adequate time to complete the test and a quiet, distraction-free environment for test-taking.

Once the test is begun, a student will not be able to leave it until the entire test is completed. A student cannot start the test, take a break, and then finish it later. If a student exits the exam without completing all test questions, the student will receive no points for the questions left unanswered. The exam is scored automatically by the computer and students may go to the grade book for the score. The instructor may choose to show test results and feedback to students, such that students will be able to reenter the exam to review correct and incorrect answers.

In some instances, a retake test may be allowed or issued. If a student performs poorly on an examination or if the student had a computer glitch while taking the examination, the student should contact the online instructor about the possibility of a retake.

### ***For First Professional Students***

- Policy for Changing an Exam Date

Every attempt should be made to adhere to the exam dates as listed in the syllabus, course schedule, or stated as a class announcement. In the event that a faculty member needs to change an exam date, he or she should give an explanation to the students and provide at least two options for rescheduling the exam. The class votes on the best option and majority rules. If the students request an exam change and the course instructor approves the request, then the proposed change is voted on anonymously by the class and 100% of the class must agree before a change is allowed.

- Review of Examinations During the Trimester

A review is to advance learning and is not a mechanism to obtain a higher grade. All written examinations will be reviewed at the earliest possible opportunity with the review mechanism at the discretion of the course instructor.

- Final Examination Review

An opportunity to review a final examination is up to the course instructor. The course syllabus should state whether the final exam can be reviewed. The mechanism used to review final exams will be determined by the course instructor. The review of final exams must be completed prior to the second Friday of the following new trimester. Review of final exams is to advance learning. It is not a mechanism to obtain a higher grade.

- Practical Examination Policy for University Courses

A minimum of 80% proficiency is required on all clinically related practical examinations. Safety requirements must be met at a 100% competency level. The practical examinations require the student to meet both safety and technical skill performance competencies. If a student does not perform in a safe manner, the student will receive an F grade for the practical examination; if the student earns less than 80% on the

technical skill performance, the student will likewise receive an F grade for the practical examination. In either case, the student must retake the practical examination. The student must meet both safety (100%) and technical skill performance competencies (80%) to pass the practical retake.

#### *First Retake Practical Examination Process*

1. It is the student's responsibility to contact the faculty instructor within 1 to 2 business days of failing the exam to receive instructions on how to write a plan of remediation.
2. The student is required to submit a written plan of remediation to the faculty instructor that will effectively prepare the student for their first retake practical examination.
3. The faculty instructor will review and approve (via email or written signature) the student's remediation plan and administer the first retake practical examination.
4. The highest grade awarded for passing the first retake practical examination will be 75%. The faculty instructor will notify the student's advisor regarding his or her current status and academic remediation plan.
5. A student who receives an F on the first retake practical examination is required to follow the second retake practical examination process below.

#### *Second Retake Practical Examination*

1. The student will contact the faculty instructor within 1 to 2 business days of failing the first retake practical exam to determine a revised remediation plan.
2. The student is required to submit to the faculty instructor a written revised remediation plan that will effectively prepare the student for their second retake practical examination.
3. If the student remediation plan is not approved by the faculty instructor and the student's progress could affect the Clinical Education Office, the faculty instructor will notify the Clinical Education Office.
4. The faculty instructor will review and approve (via email or written signature) the student's revised remediation plan.
5. The student will then submit the approved remediation plans (both the original remediation plan and the new revised remediation plan) to the Academic Progression and Retention Committee (APRC). (*FL campus students submit to Sue Nordlund, Administrative Assistant, [snordlund@usa.edu](mailto:snordlund@usa.edu); CA and TX campuses students should submit their material to the chair of the APRC.*)
6. The APRC will gather appropriate past academic data that could help provide insight for the approval process.
7. The APRC will review and approve that the student's remediation process (following steps 1, 2, 3, and 4 above for both retakes) has been met.
8. The APRC will review and approve that the faculty's remediation process (following steps 1, 2, 3, and 4, above for both retakes) has been met.

9. If the APRC approves the remediation process, the APRC chairperson will send an approved email to the student, faculty instructor, and Faculty Advisor for progressing forward with the second practical exam retake.
10. When the remediation plan and process have been approved, the practical retake exam is required to be taken before the next scheduled exam of the course or before the last day of final exams (unless otherwise permitted by the faculty instructor).
11. If the APRC does not approve the remediation process, the APRC chairperson will send a rejection email to the student, faculty instructor, Faculty Advisor, and Program Director. This rejection email will include the APRC criteria for disapproval, and the APRC requirements for remediation process approval. The student should resubmit his or her remediation plan to the APRC recorder, respective Program Director, Faculty Advisor, and faculty instructor after the remediation process has been met.
12. The second retake exam will not be allowed until the remediation plan is approved by the faculty and the remediation process is approved by the APRC.
13. If the student takes the second retake practical examination and receives an F on this second retake, the student will receive a D or F for that course.
14. If the student passes the second retake practical exam (100% safety, 80% technical skill performance), the highest grade awarded on the second retake practical examination is 70%. All practical exams must be completed by the date grades are due as published on the First Professional Programs Academic Calendar.
15. If the student has any concerns about the remediation process or plan, he or she can contact the chairperson of the Academic Progression and Retention Committee for counsel.

This policy does not apply to DPT and MOA Exit Exam Courses. Please see individual syllabi regarding retake policies for the Exit Exams.

- Make-Up Examination Policy
  - Absences from an examination as a result of a medical condition and supported by a physician's letter will be adjudicated by the faculty member(s) responsible for the course. Faculty may either schedule a make-up examination or excuse the student from the examination without penalty.
  - Absences from an examination due to non-medical circumstances will also be adjudicated by the faculty member(s) responsible for the course. Faculty may allow a make-up examination, excuse the student from the exam without penalty, or give the student a zero grade for the examination. This zero will be averaged with the grades obtained for all other examinations for this course.

### **Extra Credit**

As a graduate-level institution preparing health care professionals, the University is opposed to faculty offering extra credit or bonus points in courses. Student grades should accurately reflect

their performance on the criteria determined by faculty as demonstrating student achievement of the course learning outcomes. Awarding extra credit / bonus points may imply that points/grades are more important than learning and can create inequities between students and courses across campuses and delivery methods.

## **Grading System**

Academic degree programs use a 4.0 scale to calculate grade point averages (GPAs).

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Grading Scale</b>	<b>Quality Points</b>
<b>A</b>	<b>90–100</b>	<b>4.0</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>85–89</b>	<b>3.5</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>80–84</b>	<b>3.0</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>75–79</b>	<b>2.5</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>70–74</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>65–69</b>	<b>1.5</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>60–64</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>&lt; 60</b>	<b>0.0</b>

The First Professional curriculum is divided into Foundational Sciences Courses (anatomy, physiology, pathology, biomechanics, neuroscience, and pharmacology), and Professional Courses (all other courses).

The written portion of all courses (both Foundational and Professional) in the First Professional programs use the same scale for grading.

The laboratory portions of the First Professional courses are graded on the same scale from a minimum of 80% to a maximum of 100%.

A First Professional student must earn at least an 80% on the laboratory practical and 100% on all safety issues to pass the practical examination in professional courses. Refer to each course syllabus for additional information on grading criteria.

The actual weighting of the percent of the final course grade based upon the written and practical portions is at the discretion of the instructor in the First Professional programs. The weighting of the written and practical portions will be printed in the course syllabus.

Some courses in the First Professional programs (for example, internships, practicum, and seminars) are given Pass/Fail designations as determined by the instructor.

The quality of work done by students is indicated on the transcript by the letter of the alphabet as follows:

AU	Audit	NG	No Grade Reported
F	Fail	P	Pass
I	Incomplete	W	Withdraw

The grade of I (Incomplete) is used if, for reasons acceptable to the instructor(s), a student has not completed required work within a course by the end of a term. The length of time granted for the completion of the requirements of the course is one additional trimester (15 weeks) after which the I grade will be changed to an F if the coursework has not been completed. Upon successful completion of the requirements, the student will be assigned a letter grade by the instructor. If the I is assigned a grade of D or F the appropriate action will be taken per present written policy on academic standing.

The grade of W (Withdraw) is used only to denote that a student withdrew (or was withdrawn) from a course. Refer to the Repetition of a Course Policy in this handbook for more information.

The grade of NG (No Grade) is used only in the case of internship/fieldwork/rotation not completed. If a student is removed from internship/fieldwork/rotation after the final withdraw date, the grade of NG may be applied at the discretion of the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) / Academic Fieldwork Coordinator (AFWC), in place of a grade of F.

### *Rounding of Grades*

No grades are to be rounded until the final grade.

If the final percentage is less than a whole number, the following rules are applied to determine the score by a whole number:

- When a number is .50 or greater, the score is rounded to the next highest whole number (e.g., 79.50 = 80%)
- When the number is .49 or less, the score is rounded to the next lowest whole number (e.g., 84.49 = 84%)

### **Grade Changes**

A student has the right to appeal a final grade received for a course within the first week of the subsequent term. The request must be made in writing to the course instructor. If the course instructor approves a grade correction, a Grade Change Form must be completed by the instructor and submitted to the respective Program Director. Upon the Program Director's approval, the Registrar will record the corrected grade in the student's academic record and a revised copy can be viewed by the student on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

If a grade change is initiated due to an administrative error in posting of the grade, a Grade Change Form must be completed with documentation as to the nature of the error and submitted to the respective Program Director. Upon the Program Director's approval, the Registrar will record the corrected grade in the student's academic record and a revised copy can be viewed by the student on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

If the instructor denies an appeal for a grade change, the student may make an appeal to the Program Director (see Academic Evaluation and Right of Appeal).

## **Grade Posting**

### **Campus**

The public posting of grades by the student's institutional identification number without the student's written permission is a violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Accordingly, each student must have on file with the Registrar's Office a signed consent form permitting posting of his or her grades. This form will be provided to each new student as part of the orientation process. Students who withhold consent to grade posting will need to make arrangements with each of their course instructors to receive their grades. It is at the instructor's discretion to ask the student to await receipt of any grade until they have received official notification by the University. *Grades cannot be given out via email or telephone.*

The student is free at any time to withhold consent to posting of his or her grades or revoke a prior consent given by written notification to the Student Services Office.

Final exam grades will be posted after students are through with all final exams. Final course grades are not posted. Final grades can be viewed on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

### **Online Courses**

All grades for the online course assignments will appear in the online grade book located in the course platform. At the time of course completion, the final grade will be transferred to the University record system and become a permanent part of the student's transcript. *Grades cannot be given out via email or telephone.* This posting of grades follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students are responsible for monitoring their final grades through the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

### **Accessing Grades**

Through the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab, students may access grades, print unofficial transcripts of grades, access/change personal student information, and keep track of all of their current course information. It is very important that students keep this information safe and secure and personal information up to date.

### **Coursework Due Dates**

All coursework should be submitted based on the dates provided in the course syllabus.

## **Institutional Review Board**

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) is a University committee that reviews all research proposals involving the use of human subjects. The purpose of the IRB is to protect the human rights of those subjects and keep them from harmful procedures. All students participating in research projects that involve human subjects (including Case Reports) are required to submit the appropriate IRB documentation. The IRB committee meets once each month. Dates are posted on the USAHS website for each campus. For IRB policies, procedures, and forms see the Students tab on [myUSA](#).



## **Privacy Policy**

The University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences is committed to respecting students' privacy. The Privacy Policy located at <http://www.usa.edu/privacy.aspx> describes what information we collect from students and how USAHS uses this information. The University reserves the right to change this privacy policy at any time and without notice by posting such changes to the university website. Any such change will be effective immediately upon posting.

Questions regarding this policy, or comments concerning the website, should be directed to the University by sending an email to [info@usa.edu](mailto:info@usa.edu).

## **Professional Conference Attendance**

All First Professional program students are required to attend a minimum of 2 full days of one professional conference or 1 full day of two professional conferences during their program enrollment. The value of this required attendance is greater if full-time students wait until they are in the third trimester or later, and if Flex students wait until they are in the fifth trimester or later. Dual-degree seeking students are required to attend one physical therapy (PT) and one occupational therapy (OT) professional conference during their curriculum: an OT conference while in the MOT program and a PT conference while in the DPT program. Full-time DPT students should complete the conference requirement before the seventh trimester due to the nature of weekend seminars taught in that trimester. Flex students should attend conferences that do not conflict with weekend lab schedules. Program Directors may modify the conference attendance requirements as necessary.

Students will notify their Program Director or an assigned Faculty Advisor of their intent to attend a particular conference. The student will then be granted an excused absence for the date(s) missed. This will not exceed 2 days (usually a Friday or a Thursday and Friday excused absence). It is at the discretion of each faculty member on how to disseminate the information from the missed class session(s). The student is responsible for all missed class material and assignments. Students are also responsible for conference costs, including registration, hotel, and transportation expenses. Upon their return, students are required to provide proof of attendance at the conference to the Program Director or the assigned Faculty Advisor.

Students attending a conference located more than 400 miles one way from campus may speak with their Program Director to request an excused absence for travel time. Program Directors will make the decision about additional excused time for conference attendance on a case-by-case basis and inform faculty of the decision. The student is responsible for all missed class material and assignments.

Professional conferences may include state or national meetings or others as approved by the Program Director.

## **Professional Misconduct**

### **Disciplinary Action**

A student, faculty member, or any other member of the community of interest may initiate complaints against a student possibly warranting disciplinary action for professional

misconduct. Referrals for student misconduct are sent to the Professional Misconduct Committee (PMC). The PMC is comprised of faculty appointed by the Program Directors to handle complaints where students may be dismissed or their academic progression affected.

Professional behavior is expected at all times. At the faculty's discretion an incidence of professional misconduct may result in a final grade course reduction of 10%. Repeated or egregious incidences of professional misconduct should be referred to the Professional Misconduct Committee (PMC).

Although not inclusive, the following list of misconduct behaviors provides examples of acts that may be subject to disciplinary action:

- Cheating, plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations or parts of examinations, intimidation, and any other actions that may affect the evaluation of a student's academic performance or achievement. This includes attempting to engage in such acts, assisting others in any such acts, and failure to report such acts.
- Level III academic dishonesty
- Repeated Level I or II academic dishonesty
- Intentional or unintentional disruption of teaching, research, administration, and disciplinary proceedings or other institutional activities.
- Physical and/or mental abuse of any person or any form of harassment as defined under the Nondiscrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy
- Failure to follow directives of authorized University personnel acting in the performance of their duties
- Destruction, misuse, damage, or defacement of any University property, or property leased or controlled by the University
- Violence, hazing, or the threat of violence including possession or use of firearms, fireworks, explosives, incendiary devices, or other weapons of any description, including air rifles and pistols, on the University campus
- Unauthorized participation in, agitation of, or instigation of any activity that interferes with ingress or egress from University facilities and/or that interrupts any activities of the University community in its normal functioning
- The use, possession, sale, or distribution of nonprescription controlled substances
- Permitting or engaging in unauthorized possession, duplication, or use of keys or access cards to any University premises or services
- Any action without authorization from the University that modifies, destroys, discloses, or takes data, programs, or supporting documents residing in or relating in any way to a University computer, computer system, or computer network, or causes the denial of computer system service to an authorized user of such a system
- Repetitive violation of any University policy
- Commission of an act that would constitute a crime under federal, state, or local law

## Professional Misconduct Committee Procedures

The University has established a Professional Misconduct Committee (PMC) to hear each complaint. PMC membership shall be determined by the Program Directors. A student may be required to appear before the PMC or in certain circumstances be allowed to speak to the committee via telephone conference.

At least 5 business days in advance of the hearing, a student shall be given written notice of the allegations against him or her and of the opportunity to respond. Hearings before the PMC shall be informal. The allegations and evidence against a student shall be presented by the chair of the PMC. The student then will be given an opportunity to present his or her version of events, facts, and evidence in his or her defense. Formal rules of evidence do not apply. Documentary evidence and hearsay shall be admissible, but the PMC shall determine the proper weight to be accorded to hearsay evidence.

1. If the PMC finds that the facts do not support the allegation(s), the charges will be dismissed. The chair of the PMC will transmit the committee's recommendation(s) in writing to the Program Director within 2 business days following the conclusion of the hearing. The Program Director will review the recommendations of the PMC and provide a written response to the student within 2 business days outlining the decision on the matter.
2. If the PMC finds that the facts support the allegation(s) against the student, the student shall be found guilty, and the PMC will recommend disciplinary action(s), which can range from a written warning to dismissal from the program. The chair of the PMC will transmit the committee's recommendation(s) in writing to the Program Director within 2 business days following the conclusion of the hearing. The Program Director will review the recommendations of the PMC and provide a written response to the student within 2 business days outlining the decision on the matter.
3. A student referred to the PMC may not withdraw from the University until the findings of the PMC have been made and the student has been informed of the decision.
4. The PMC record of the case shall be maintained by the Program Director's Administrative Assistant apart from the student's academic record for 5 years following the student's last date of attendance.

## Student's Right of Appeal

Each student has the right to appeal the decisions of the Program Director. The student may continue to participate in academic and co-curricular activities until a final determination is made, including any appeal, except where immediate suspension is reasonably required for the safety and welfare of students, faculty, staff, or University property. If the decision the student is appealing includes program dismissal, the student may continue to attend classes during the appeal process, but he or she is not considered an enrolled student and is therefore not eligible for financial aid.

To request an appeal, the student must provide to the Registrar a completed PMC Appeal Request Form (available with procedures on [myUSA](#), Students tab) along with a written

statement of the basis for his or her appeal within 10 business days from the date the decision letter is mailed to the student's last known address.

An appeal may be based only on the grounds that

1. the PMC failed to comply with the procedural requirements outlined herein and/or elsewhere in this handbook;
2. there is relevant and material evidence which, in the exercise of reasonable diligence, could not have been produced or which was improperly excluded at the hearing before the PMC; or
3. the evidence presented at the PMC hearing was not sufficiently substantial to justify the final decision.

If the Registrar has not received the completed form and written statement (email or letter is acceptable) within the specified time frame, the decision of the Program Director will be final and no further appeals are available to the student.

If an appeal is filed, the Registrar will, within 10 business days, forward to the Dean of the division in which the student is enrolled, or the Dean's designee, the student's completed PMC Appeal Request Form and written statement, along with copies of all materials provided to the PMC, and the written decisions of the Program Director.

The Dean has 10 business days\* to consider the appeal request. The Dean may deny the appeal for failure to allege facts that, if true, would be sufficient to constitute grounds for appeal. The Dean may also modify the decision or approve the appeal request. Should the Dean deny the appeal, the decision of the PMC and Program Director will stand affirmed. The student will be notified in writing of the Dean's decision regarding the appeal.

The student can appeal the decision of the Dean to the University President. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the President within 5 business days from the date of mailing of the Dean's decision letter. If the decision of the President includes suspension or dismissal, the student will no longer be permitted to remain in any course. The decision of the President shall be final.

Refer to the Students tab on [myUSA](#) for procedures associated with the nonacademic appeal process.

The Program Director's Administrative Assistant will maintain all records included in an appeal apart from the student's academic record for 5 years following the student's last date of attendance.

\*Should the Dean, or the Dean's designee, receive an appeal request during the last 15 days of the term or during the trimester break, as indicated on the Academic Calendar, it will be considered during the first 10 business days following the first day of class of the subsequent term.

## Permanent Record

Records of the following will be maintained.

1. Records of the sanctions of the Academic Appeals Committee and the Professional Misconduct Committee will be maintained permanently.
2. Records of all other sanctions will be maintained for 5 years from the last day of the academic year in which the incident occurred.
3. A copy of any warning or disciplinary action that is placed on a student's record will be given to the student.

### **Religious Accommodation**

It is the policy of the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences that an instructor will make a reasonable attempt to accommodate student needs in the case of serious incompatibility between a student's religious creed and a scheduled test or examination. This requirement will not apply in the event that administering the test or examination at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship which could not reasonably have been avoided. Undue hardship occurs when granting a requested accommodation would require significant expense or difficulty for the University or other students in the class, or would result in the inability of the student to perform the essential functions of his or her course/program of study. The determination of undue hardship is dependent on the facts of each individual situation.

Accommodation for alternative examination dates will be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor involved.

Students must provide reasonable notice of their need for an accommodation by making such requests of the instructor during the first 2 weeks of an academic term, or as soon as possible after a particular examination date is announced by the instructor. The timing of the request may be considered in determining whether the accommodation would create an undue hardship.

For all degree programs, there will be times when students will be required to attend weekend and/or evening activities. A student should contact the instructor to request a religious accommodation if testing will occur during these times.

If the student and instructor are unable to come to a resolution, the student should bring the matter to the Program Director, who will make a final determination.

### **Repetition of a Course**

On occasion, a student may be required to repeat a course. Under such circumstances, the highest grade achieved is counted toward the cumulative GPA.

A student who receives a D in any course (or an F and has been readmitted), must repeat that course in its entirety. The student will be permitted to take additional courses as long as there are no schedule conflicts and all prerequisite conditions are met, up to a *maximum* of 12 credit hours (full-time) and 8 credit hours (Flex Program).

A student who takes a leave of absence incurring grades of W, will be registered in the same courses upon return from leave (providing courses are offered).

Students who must repeat a course should not expect to graduate with their entering cohort.

Please note, course schedules that are considered less than half time in the program may affect a student's eligibility for federal student loans. Students should contact the Financial Aid Office with any questions.

## **Student Code of Conduct**

Admittance to the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences carries with it an obligation and responsibility to abide by federal, state, and local law, respective county and city ordinances, as well as all University rules, regulations, and procedures. Admission to the University is a privilege, not a right, and is extended to those individuals who meet all admission criteria. All students, faculty, guests, patients, and staff of the University have a responsibility to report violations of the Student Code of Conduct to the appropriate officials. As a student you will be asked to read and acknowledge this as part of the enrollment process.

The following behaviors are to be adhered to at all times while on University facilities or when associated with the University in any manner:

- The University is a tobacco and e-cigarette free, drug free, and alcohol free environment, therefore no smoking or being under the influence of banned substances or intoxicants is permitted.
- Use of profane language is not acceptable.
- Weapons are not permitted.
- Violence, or the threat of violence in any form, is not tolerated.
- Sexual or other forms of harassment will not be tolerated.
- The Internet Acceptable Use Policy must be adhered to at all times.
- It is expected that students will:
  - conduct themselves with professionalism, courtesy, and respect for others in all dealings with institution staff, faculty, and other students;
  - present qualifications and background truthfully and accurately for admission and other academic-related documentation to the institution;
  - observe the institutional policies and rules on submitting work, taking examinations, participating in online discussions, and conducting research;
  - never turn in work or present another person's ideas or scholarship as one's own;
  - never ask for, receive, or give unauthorized help on graded assignments, quizzes, or examinations;
  - never divulge the content of or answers to quizzes or examinations to fellow students;
  - never improperly use, destroy, forge, or alter the institution's documents, transcripts, or other records; and
  - never divulge one's online username and password.

The following ethical behaviors **related to patient interactions** are expected of all students:

- titles and surnames when addressing authorized University personnel.

The following interpersonal behaviors are expected at all times:

- Of paramount concern is that students and graduates of the University display and present a positive and respectful attitude to their patients/clients, colleagues, supervisors, faculty, staff, community, and to the University. This attitude is a key ingredient to successful completion of studies at the University and to excel as health care professionals. Students will endeavor at all times to
  - respect the worth and individuality of every person (e.g., listen/pay attention while others are speaking and promote constructive feedback);
  - refrain from disruptive behavior;
  - refrain from proselytization (proselytization is defined as aggressively and/or harassingly trying to convert, recruit, or induce someone to join one's own political cause or to espouse one's own doctrine); and
  - respect confidentiality.

Always report any violations of the Code of Conduct to the appropriate institution official, and report any evidence of cheating, plagiarism, or improper conduct on the part of any student of the institution when there is direct knowledge of these activities. Failure to observe the Student Code of Conduct is professionally unacceptable and could negatively impact academic progression.

### **Student Conduct Policies (Specific)**

#### **Classroom and Laboratory Conduct and Standards**

Students are expected to arrive to lecture and lab sessions on time and with the appropriate clothing and equipment. The following behaviors are also expected in all lecture and lab session:

- No food or drinks (except in spill-proof containers) are permitted in the lecture or lab areas. Gum chewing is only allowed during written examinations. No bubbles may be blown.
- Students are expected to assist the instructors in the pre- and post-lab organization of equipment.
- Students will operate lab equipment in a safe and respectful manner.
- Shoes must be removed while on the lab tables or mats.

Flex courses may include labs for learning hands-on skills. Lab sessions are typically scheduled for Saturday and Sunday; however, some PT coursework requires weekday attendance. Students are notified of the next term's lab schedule approximately 2 months before the start of the term.

#### **Professional Dress and Appearance Code**

University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences students are highly visible to the public and should be sensitive to this fact. The following guidelines will be interpreted and enforced in a manner determined by the faculty and administration to be in the best interest of both the University and the professions of physical therapy, occupational therapy, and orthopaedic assistants. Further, the University is free to change these guidelines without prior notice to students, although every effort will be made to provide such notice.

It is intended that daily appearance on campus be analogous to daily appearance in the future as a health professional and as an ambassador for our University and profession. A high level of professionalism comes naturally when practiced at a high level daily.

Students *must* abide by the following policies regarding professional dress and appearance while on the University campus. The University's campus consists of the entire physical plant, which includes the student parking lot, faculty and staff parking lots, all classrooms, laboratories, lounges, hallways, lobby, and library. The University is a 7-day-a-week campus and a professional environment. This dress code is in effect during scheduled classroom and lab hours.

- *University ID:* The University ID *must* be properly exposed above the waist on your front collar or on a lanyard at *all* times.
- *Grooming:* Students will portray the well-groomed appearance of a responsible health professional. Hair will be clean, neat, of natural color, and, in the case of both men and women, will not be excessively long. Nails *must* be groomed to ¼" or less with neutral polish only (no artificial nails). Men *must* be cleanly shaven or well groomed; beards or mustaches are acceptable. *No* heavy makeup, perfume, cologne, or aftershave.
- *Accessories, Jewelry, Body Piercing, and Tattoos:* All accessories and jewelry shall be free of writing, pictures, symbols, or any other insignia that are crude, vulgar, profane, obscene, libelous, slanderous, or sexually suggestive. Any accessory or jewelry that creates a safety or health concern, or causes or threatens to cause a disruption to the educational process, is prohibited. Dark glasses, sunglasses, hats, caps, visors, and other head coverings shall not be worn indoors. No tattoos may be visible.
  - *Unacceptable for men:* Earrings or other body piercing jewelry are prohibited on campus.
  - *Unacceptable for women:* Body piercing jewelry other than lobe earrings (maximum of two earrings per lobe) is prohibited on campus.
- *Swimsuit:* Recreational and instructional swimsuit attire must not be disruptive or distracting. For women, one-piece swimsuits are preferred. Suits *must* fully cover the chest and buttocks. For men, mid-thigh swimsuits are preferred. All swimsuits must remain nontransparent when wet. Any swimsuit not appropriate will require shorts and shirt.

All students must maintain high standards as individuals in order to uphold the reputation of our University and professions. Being neatly dressed, well-groomed, and avoiding faddish modes of dress is required. It is University policy that students maintain University dress code while on the University's campus or while participating in any coursework outside the University's campus. The following outlines the required Professional Dress and Appearance Code for scheduled events.

### ***Lecture Attire***

- *Acceptable attire for men:* Collared shirts only (button-down oxford or polo-type) are permitted. Shirts *must* be of a length that can be tucked into and remain in the pants. If you can do three full-extension jumping jacks without your shirt becoming untucked,



your shirt is acceptable. Dress or walking shorts (above the knee) or casual dress pants are preferred. Jeans are acceptable provided they are in good condition. Dress sandals (Teva or Birkenstocks), clean tennis or running shoes, or any other closed-toed shoe with socks are acceptable.

*Unacceptable attire for men:* Shirts without collars, t-shirts, tank tops, sleeveless tops, low-cut shirts, “grunge look” pants, and bib overalls, are not acceptable; nor are thong-type, “beach casual,” or flip-flop sandals. Underwear is not permitted to show outside or through the clothing. *No* exposure of gluteal fold is permitted.

- *Acceptable attire for women:* Shirts should have sleeves; however, a “professional-looking” sleeveless blouse is acceptable. Shirts *must* be of a length that can be tucked into and remain in the pants. If you can do three full-extension jumping jacks without your shirt becoming untucked, your shirt is acceptable. Dress or walking shorts (above the knee) or casual dress pants are preferred. Jeans are acceptable provided they are in good condition. Skirts and dresses may not be unreasonably short for a practicing health professional. Dress sandals, clean tennis or running shoes, or any other closed-toed shoe with socks/stockings are acceptable.

*Unacceptable attire for women:* T-shirts, tank tops, low-cut shirts, “hip-hugger” pants, “grunge look” pants, bib overalls, and “beach casual” or flip-flop sandals are not acceptable. Underwear is not permitted to show outside or through the clothing. *No* exposure of midriffs, cleavage, or gluteal fold is permitted.

### ***Guest Lecture Attire***

On occasion, students are required to wear business attire on days when guest lecturers and/or others are visiting the University. Students may also be required to wear business attire when giving formal presentations or case presentations as a part of their coursework. Appropriate business attire for men is a business suit including jacket, dress shirt, and a tie, or a blazer and dress pants with a dress shirt and tie. Appropriate business attire for women is a business suit (skirt or pants) including jacket and blouse. Skirts may not be unreasonably short for this professional health care environment (skirt hems should be no higher than three inches from the top of the patella). Shoes are to be closed toe and closed heel. Course instructors reserve the right to modify or further specify required dress for guest lectures or presentations. Refer to individual course syllabi for further requirements.

### ***Laboratory Attire***

Certain labs require laboratory dress and some require special dress for physical assessment or manual techniques inducing perspiration or for the handling of special materials. Unless otherwise noted in the class syllabus, students may arrive on campus in laboratory attire if lab is their first scheduled class of the day. However, students *must* change from laboratory attire into lecture attire for the remainder of their scheduled classes. Students without lab as their first scheduled class *must* arrive on campus in lecture attire and change into laboratory attire immediately prior to a lab session.

- Solid color gym shorts that allow for modesty and free movement and a plain solid-colored T-shirt are acceptable. T-shirts should be devoid of any print or pictures with the exception of official University of St. Augustine logo which is permissible. T-shirts MUST be clean, properly sized, and be of a length that can be tucked into and remain in the pants.
- When t-shirts are approved for University sponsored activities, students will be notified if they are also approved as lab wear. Athletic shoes with socks are required. Nails must be groomed to ¼" or less with neutral polish only (no artificial nails).
  - Scrubs, to include matching tops and bottoms, are acceptable for certain labs (Biomechanics and Neuroscience for example) as defined by class syllabi.
  - For many labs, women will need to wear a sports bra, halter-top, or a bathing suit top that exposes the scapulae and may be unfastened at the back.
- *Unacceptable attire for both men and women:* Jean shorts, cutoffs, or bright neon shorts are not acceptable. Underwear is not permitted to show outside or through the clothing. No exposure of midriffs, cleavage, or gluteal fold is permitted.

Students requiring medical or cultural allowances for certain policies, including dress and appearance code, must have the approval of their respective Program Director.

### ***Clinical Affiliation Attire***

Please refer the Clinical Education Handbook.

## **Student Information and Records**

### **Notification of Rights under FERPA**

Student educational records at the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences are governed by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

FERPA affords eligible students certain rights with respect to their education records. (An "eligible student" under FERPA is a student who is 18 years of age or older or who attends a postsecondary institution.) These rights include the following:

- The right to inspect and review the student's education records within 45 days after the day the University receives a request for access. A student should submit to the Registrar, Dean, head of the academic department, or other appropriate official, a written request that identifies the record(s) the student wishes to inspect. The school official will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. If the records are not maintained by the school official to whom the request was submitted, that official shall advise the student of the correct official to whom the request should be addressed.
- The right to request the amendment of the student's education records that the student believes are inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the student's privacy rights under FERPA.

A student who wishes to ask the school to amend a record should write the school official responsible for the record, clearly identify the part of the record the student wants changed, and specify why it should be changed.

If the school decides not to amend the record as requested, the school will notify the student in writing of the decision and the student's right to a hearing regarding the request for amendment. Additional information regarding the hearing procedures will be provided to the student when notified of the right to a hearing.

- The right to provide written consent before the University discloses personally identifiable information (PII) from the student's education records, except to the extent that FERPA authorizes disclosure without consent.
- The school discloses education records without a student's prior written consent under the FERPA exception for disclosure to school officials with legitimate educational interests. A school official is a person employed by the University in an administrative, supervisory, academic, research, or support staff position; a person serving on the board of directors; or a student serving on an official committee, such as a disciplinary or grievance committee. A school official also may include a volunteer or contractor outside of the University of St. Augustine who performs an institutional service or function for which the school would otherwise use its own employees and who is under the direct control of the school with respect to the use and maintenance of PII from education records, such as an attorney, auditor, or collection agent, or a student volunteering to assist another school official in performing his or her tasks. A school official has a legitimate educational interest if the official needs to review an education record in order to fulfill his or her professional responsibilities for the University.

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. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202

## **Student Rights**

All students enrolled at the University are accorded the basic rights as set forth by the Board of Trustees. Student rights are as follows:

- The right of respect for personal feelings.
- The right of freedom from indignity of any type.
- The right to expect an education of the highest quality.
- The right to make the best use of one's talents and time toward the objectives which brought him or her to the University.

- The right to inquire about and to recommend improvements in policies, regulations, and procedures affecting the welfare of students.
- The right for students and/or their representatives to meet with the appropriate Program Director, Chair, Dean, and the President.
- The right of freedom of expression and peaceful assembly as defined by the Constitution of the United States and laws of the States of Florida, California, and Texas.
- The right to participate in dialogue during public discussions that provide a diversity of opinion.
- The right to join organizations for educational, political, social, religious, and cultural purposes within the limits imposed by their responsibilities to each other and to the student life of the University.
- The right of due process.
- The right of freedom of the press and media (newspaper, radio, television, etc.) to publish and distribute materials will be granted when identified by authorship and sponsorship.

### **Student Responsibilities**

The University expects its students to be responsible for helping to maintain a healthy academic climate where students can grow and develop as mature individuals with a commitment to lifelong learning. Student responsibilities include the following:

- The responsibility of assuming the consequences of one's own actions and of avoiding conduct detrimental to fellow students and University employees.
- The responsibility of taking the initiative to volunteer for service on committees.
- The responsibility for ensuring that the essential order of the University is maintained.
- The responsibility for academic work and clinical education requirements.
- The responsibility to be fully acquainted with and to adhere to the University's Catalog, Student Handbook, and other published policies and procedures.

### **Transfer Credit Policy—All Programs**

Transfer of graduate credits previously earned from another accredited, degree-granting institution is limited to 25% of the total number of academic credits for the degree. Transfer of credits within the University is determined on a case by case basis. Transfer credit will in most cases be approved for graduate coursework awarded by schools, colleges, or universities that have recognition from the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and the U.S. Department of Education.

#### **Transfer of Credits from Another Accredited Institution**

Acceptance or rejection of transfer credits is subject to the following provisions:

- The course(s) should have been completed within 5 years\* preceding admission to the program, but the applicant may petition to the Program Director for an exception to this time limit.

\*Some programs may be more restrictive than others and will expect a maximum of 3 years preceding admission (see First Professional Division reenrollment timelines below).

- The course should have been completed with a grade of B or better. Courses having a B- or below will not be transferred.
- The course must be listed on an official transcript sent directly to the Registrar by the issuing institution.
- Graduate-level courses taken at accredited institutions can be used for credit transfer provided that the course work meets the corresponding requirements of the program and the course being substituted by transfer.
- The course number and name of the course requested for transfer should reflect the content of the course it is replacing. Additionally, if the course requested for transfer will replace an elective, the content should be closely aligned with that of the curriculum and its potential electives.
- Undergraduate work is not accepted for transfer.
- In general, credit can be transferred if the requested substitute course is at the same course level or lower than the course being substituted (e.g., 7000 level courses would transfer for a 7000-level course or 5000 or 6000 level). In cases where a course from a master's program is being requested for transfer into a doctoral program, consideration will be given to rigor and content and further documentation may be requested.
- Final approval for a transfer request is based upon review and authorization by the Program Director and will be based on assessment of whether a transfer of credit will allow the student to meet all program and course learning outcomes.
- If students are utilizing a variety of methods in transferring credits (from outside institutions, from another USAHS program, or from advanced standing), a maximum of 50% of the degree program total credits can be awarded. The remaining 50% of the total credits needs to be completed within the desired USAHS program.
- The Registrar is responsible for assuring consistency of transfer credit practice and procedure between the different campus locations.

The process for requesting transfer credits is as follows:

- The student completes a Request for Acceptance of Transfer Credit Form found on the [myUSA](#) portal Admissions tab and submits this to the Registrar. A course syllabus is required. It is the responsibility of the student to provide sufficient documentation to show equivalency to USAHS coursework.
- Requests for approval of transfer credits may be submitted within the first 4 months after acceptance into the program or at least 2 months before the start of classes for the trimester.
- The Program Director, in consultation with the appropriate course instructor(s), will review the transfer course syllabus to verify that its contents match those of the program's course, considering the nature, content, quality, appropriateness, and applicability of the credit earned. The Program Director will then notify the Registrar of the decision.

- The Registrar will notify the student if the request for transfer credit is approved and will post any transferred credit to the permanent academic record at that time.
- Students have a right to appeal the Program Director's decision to deny a course transfer. Such appeals will be forwarded to the Dean of the division who has final authority in the transfer determination.

### Transfer of Credits from One USAHS Program to Another USAHS Program

Transfer of credits may take place from one USAHS program to another. Should a student wish to transfer credits from one program to another, the following guidelines will apply:

- Students may request transfer of credits from another program for up to 50% of the total credits in the program toward which the credits will be applied.
- If electives are to be transferred, the Program Director will determine if those credits meet the program learning outcomes for the intended degree.
- Courses taught in a master's level program that include outcomes and assessment measures designed for the doctoral level may be considered for transfer into doctoral-level programs if they have been approved for such and according to Program Director approval.
- The Program Director, in conjunction with the Registrar, will give final approval to the transfer plan.

The process for requesting transfer credits is as follows:

- The student completes a Request for Acceptance of Transfer Credit Form found on the [myUSA](#) portal Admissions tab and submits this to the Registrar.
- Requests for approval of transfer credits should be submitted 2 months before the start of classes for the trimester.
- The Registrar will notify the student if the request for transfer credit is approved and will post any transferred credit to the permanent academic record at that time.

### Trimesters/Terms

University coursework is posted in student records according to the term (usually a trimester) in which all requirements for the course are completed. Academic-credit coursework (cohort based) is generally scheduled on a trimester basis. Trimester periods consist of approximately 8–15 weeks (based on the course) and begin the first part of January, May, and September.

## FIRST PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Contact Information

Regular meetings will be scheduled with student body representatives, but if you have any questions regarding our Student Handbook, Catalog, or any other activities, please do not hesitate to email, call, or make an appointment to stop by our offices.

#### St. Augustine Campus

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## **Academic Evaluation and Right of Appeal**

Students sign an acknowledgement of the appeals procedure as part of the orientation process. An Acknowledgement of Appeals Procedure Form can be found on the [myUSA](#) portal Admissions tab.

The responsibility for academic evaluation will rest with the instructor. For minor appeal issues, which are decisions that would not result in probation or dismissal, the student appeals to the faculty member involved in the particular issue. If the student is not satisfied with the faculty member's resolution of the issue, the student has the right to appeal the issue in writing to the Program Director within 3 business days of the instructor's decision. The Program Director then has 5 business days to research the issue and render a decision.

If the student is not satisfied with the Program Director's response, the student can appeal the issue to the President in writing within 5 business days after the Program Director's response. After hearing the issue, the President or designee has 2 business days to either render a verdict on the issue or redirect the issue at that point to the Academic Appeals Committee (AAC).

Any student who has been dismissed must formally appeal this decision in writing to the Registrar with a copy to the respective Program Director within 2 business days from receipt of the notification. If the student does not meet the stated deadline, the appeal may not be considered. In extenuating circumstances, the student may request an extension from his or her respective Program Director or Program Director designee (i.e., Registrar); however, this request must be made within the above stated deadline.

Appeal letters should address

- the rationale behind the appeal and why he or she believes the appeal is warranted, and
- future circumstances that will permit the student to rectify previous poor academic performance.

The Program Director will forward the student's appeal to the AAC within 2 business days. After discussion between the AAC and the Program Director, a decision is rendered. The Program Director will convey the AAC's decision to the student.

The AAC will meet six scheduled times per calendar year (see Academic Calendar). These meetings will convene 2 days prior to the first day of classes of each trimester and at midterm of each trimester. Procedures for the meetings are as follows:

### **Prior to Trimester Meetings**

The AAC will convene within 2 days prior to the first day of classes of the next trimester or at the earliest convenience for both the student and the committee members. The student must appear personally before the AAC at its convenience. A written decision will be given to the Program Director within 2 business days of adjourning the meeting with the student.

### **Academic Progression During the Appeal Process**

The First Professional student will be allowed to attend scheduled classes throughout the entire appeal process.

In the best interest of the student and clinical site, a student will not be allowed to progress to a clinical education experience when appealing a University dismissal. If the appeal process reverses the dismissal from the University, the student will be placed on a re-admittance contract and be required to remediate to meet all course requirements before entering a clinical education experience.

### **Midterm Meetings**

The AAC will convene on or about midterm of each trimester or at the earliest convenient time for both the committee and the student. The student must appear personally before the AAC. The AAC will give a written decision to the Program Director within 2 business days of adjourning the meeting with the student.

In the event of extenuating circumstances, if a student is unable to meet at the University's designated AAC meeting times, the student may request an alternate meeting time. This request must be submitted to the chair of the AAC in writing with detailed rationale supporting the need for an alternate time.

Students geographically distant from the University campus may be allowed to appear before the AAC meeting via phone conference solely at the discretion of the AAC.

Should the student not agree to the decision of the Program Director, the student has the right of an appeal to the President or appointed designee. The appeal must be submitted, in writing, within 5 business days to the President. Upon request, the President or designee will review pertinent records, including a review of the process to ensure that it was correctly followed, and may meet with the AAC and the student. The President or designee will follow the process as established in this Handbook and ensure that the process is followed. If the final decision by the President results in dismissal, the student will no longer be permitted to remain in any course.

Dismissal policies will be implemented as fairly and equitably as possible considering all extenuating circumstances.

Once a final appeal decision on academic dismissal has been rendered, the student does not have access to the appeal process for this same issue again.

### **Advanced Course Standing by Examination**

Based on previous academic coursework earned from another accredited degree granting institution or another program within the University and/or work experiences, a student may be granted advanced standing for a particular course after passing an examination on the contents of the course. The examination may be written or practical or both and there is a cost associated with each exam. A maximum of 25% of the total number of credits for the degree may be granted for advanced standing. The granting of advance standing by examination is independent of the granting of transfer credit.

Approval for advanced course standing is subject to the following provisions:

- Documentation supporting the reason for requesting advance course standing by examination. Supporting documentation may include transcripts showing applicable courses for credit, course descriptions, syllabi, continuing education courses/seminar descriptions and proof of completion, and work experience.
- Passing a challenge examination to verify competency in the particular subject matter. A student has only one attempt per course to pass the challenge exam. If the student fails the exam, the student must take the course in its entirety. The passing grade will be the same as the passing grade stated in the syllabus for the course in which advance standing is being requested.

The process for requesting Advanced Course Standing by Examination is as follows:

- The student obtains a request form for Approval of Advanced Course Standing by Examination found on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab and submits it to the respective Program Director with appropriate documentation.
- Requests for approval of Advanced Course Standing by Examination must be submitted at least 2 months before the start of classes for the trimester.
- In consultation with course instructors, the Program Director will review the request. If approved, the Program Director will notify the Registrar and a test time and date will be set up for each challenge exam. If the Program Director with consultation of the course instructor(s) concludes that the student's previous coursework and experience are inadequate for passing the challenge exam, they may encourage the student not to seek advanced course standing or to take some type of remediation before taking the challenge exam.
- The Registrar will notify the student if the challenge exam has been passed and will post the course and its credits to the permanent academic record at that time.

## **Awards**

### **Outstanding OT, PT, and Flex, Student Awards**

Each of the First Professional degree programs recognizes an outstanding student of the respective graduating class. This award is based upon the criteria listed below and is given to the graduating student whose characteristics most support either the OT or PT program mission statement. The outstanding OT student award is chosen by a combined vote of his or her fellow classmates and program faculty. The PT student award is chosen by a vote of the program faculty.

#### ***Outstanding Student Awards Criteria***

Professionalism

Demonstrates the ability to act as a member of the health care team and to be involved in the advancement of occupational therapy, physical therapy, or orthopaedic assistant.

Clinical Reasoning	Applies logic and critical thinking skills for the improvement of a patient’s welfare as well as to enhance the recipient’s own career.
Ethical Standards	Demonstrates appropriate principles and values.
Commitment to Continued Professional Growth	Possesses a continuing desire to acquire knowledge and advance the occupational therapy, physical therapy, or orthopaedic assistant profession.
Responsibility	Is dependable and assumes responsibility for one’s own actions.
Leadership	Is willing to be involved in student and/or professional activities.
Initiative	Is resourceful and self-directed.
Constructive Skills	Maintains a positive attitude and demonstrates creative qualities.

*Stanley V. Paris and Catherine E. Patla Award*

The Paris and Patla Award is presented in recognition of excellence in spinal and extremity manual therapy in professional physical therapy education to a First Professional PT graduate.

*Scholastic Achievement Award*

The Scholastic Achievement Award—named for the founding Program Director on each campus—is presented to the First Professional PT and OT graduate who has achieved the highest cumulative grade point average (GPA). Grades from both foundational science courses and professional courses are included in the cumulative grade point computation.

*Recognition for the Fellowship in Manual Physical Therapy*

The University’s Fellowship in Manual Physical Therapy is credentialed by the American Physical Therapy Association and recognized by the American Academy of Manual Physical Therapists. This postgraduate program includes a minimum of 1 year of clinical mentoring as well as didactic learning.

**Campus Location Change**

Students who wish to change to another campus location must submit a Campus Location Change Request Form, available on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab, to their current Program Director by midterm of the trimester prior to the requested change. Such requests will be considered on an individual basis and are contingent on space availability. The student will be notified of the outcome of the location change request via email by the Registrar’s Office. Please note: Program completion dates of students who change campus locations may be extended.

## Campus Exchange Program

Students who wish to study at a USAHS campus other than their home campus for one trimester may apply to do so, provided their program is available at another campus and they meet qualifications described below.

At this time Dual students in the DPT program are not able to participate.

A student who wishes to exchange must meet the following criteria:

- A student must be in good academic standing.
- A student must not have any misconduct issues in his or her record.
- A student must receive his or her Program Director's approval.
- A DPT student must be willing to exchange in Term 3, 4, 5, or 7 (due to internships, scheduling, graduation, and other factors). Flex DPT students should consult with the Program Manager to discuss options.
- An MOT student must be willing to exchange in Term 3, 4, or 5 (due to fieldwork experiences, scheduling, graduation and other factors). Flex MOT students do not currently have this opportunity unless they are requesting a transfer to a campus based program.
- A student must be willing to guarantee his or her own travel and lodging arrangements (students may want to consider contacting the other campus's student association leaders to see which students at the other campus may have room occupancies due to internships or other factors).

A student who believes he or she meets the criteria must follow the following process in order to become an exchange student:

1. Fill out the Campus Exchange Application found on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.
2. Submit the completed application (and application fee) to the student's home campus Program Director no later than the end of the fourth week of the trimester preceding the trimester the student wishes to exchange.
3. Await Program Director approval (students should note that just because they meet the criteria, they may not be approved based on classroom seat availability or other factors).

For students who do exchange, the following apply:

- If a student receives a grade while on exchange that requires repeating a course, the student will be expected to repeat the course at his or her home campus in the following trimester.
- A temporary advisor on the host campus will be assigned to the exchanging student during the trimester in which the student is exchanging.
- Academic progression for the student will occur on the host campus on which the student exchanges for the trimester the student is on that campus.
- Professional misconduct issues will be handled on the campus at which the incident took place.

- The appeal process will be handled through the student’s home campus appeals committee.
- Tuition remains at the home campus rate.

## **Continuing Education**

Students will not be excused from campus-based classes or Internship I/Level I Fieldwork to attend Continuing Education classes. Students participating in Level II Fieldwork or Internships II and III may request to participate in continuing education approved by the facility, the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education or Academic Fieldwork Coordinator, and the Program Director.

## **Counseling**

Clinical psychologists under contract to the University can provide a variety of services to include peer counseling, crisis intervention, mental health programs, consultative services, assertiveness training workshops, anxiety management seminars, leadership development seminars, and interpersonal skills building workshops. If a student is in need of their services, he or she may contact their office directly at the address below. If a student is referred for counseling by the Program Director, the first two visits will be covered at the University’s expense. If a student refuses to go for counseling, the issue will be referred to the Professional Misconduct Committee. The costs of any additional visits are the student’s responsibility.

### **St. Augustine campus**

Psychological Services of St. Augustine  
1100-1 S. Ponce de Leon Boulevard  
St. Augustine, FL 32084  
Telephone: 904-824-7733

### **San Marcos campus**

Dr. Nancy Gamble  
135 E. Third Avenue, Suite B  
Escondido, CA 92025  
Telephone: 760-743-5524

### **Austin campus**

Contact the Student Services Advisor for additional information. Also visit the following websites: [www.plumeriacounseling.com](http://www.plumeriacounseling.com) , and/or [www.blueprintcounseling.com](http://www.blueprintcounseling.com).

### **Miami campus**

Contact the Student Services Advisor or Dr. Eric Chaconas, Campus Coordinator, for information.

## **Degree Completion**

Acceptance into the University and payment of tuition (on a trimester by trimester basis) is not a contract assuring that the student will graduate with the degree for which he or she applied. Graduation will depend on a satisfactory grade point average, professional conduct, issues of safety, and the satisfactory completion of clinical internship/fieldwork and exit exams (where applicable). Students in the First Professional DPT program must also complete their courses in their final trimester in order to participate in the commencement ceremony. \* This Handbook and the course syllabi detail what is considered satisfactory.

The following requirements must be met for a student to be eligible for graduation:

- Each student must satisfactorily complete all academic and clinical courses and be in academic good standing.
- All fiscal obligations to the University or its subsidiaries must be paid in full.
- The student must submit an application for graduation 1 trimester prior to the proposed date of graduation.
- The student must attend at least one approved professional conference.

\*Should a student be unable to successfully complete part of the final coursework but has successfully met all other degree requirements including the exit examination, the student may be allowed to walk at commencement with the respective cohort class. The candidate will sign an acknowledgement regarding participation in the ceremony. The candidate will be “hooded” during the ceremony, but will not receive a diploma. If the coursework is completed within the first 7 days of the subsequent term, the diploma and transcript notation will reflect the cohort’s conferral date. Should the coursework be completed after the first 7 days of the subsequent term, the diploma will be issued and transcript notation will be dated to reflect the subsequent conferral date upon degree completion.

### **Dual Degree Option**

Dual-degree-option students who elect not to return to the University to pursue the DPT portion of the program immediately after earning the MOT degree must submit a Program Withdrawal Form to the Registrar’s Office by midterm of the last trimester of the MOT program.

Dual-degree-option students who want to complete the DPT portion of the program through the Flex DPT program must submit a Program Change Request Form to the Registrar’s Office by midterm of the last trimester of the MOT program. This form is located on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

### **Duplicating (St. Augustine)**

Students may request that the Faculty Office Assistant make copies that will be used for student presentations on or off campus. Last minute copying requests for student presentations may not be granted. To assure the material is available on time, copy requests should be submitted 24 hours ahead of the scheduled presentation.

### **Employment**

Outside employment is strongly discouraged for full-time First Professional students.

Students wishing to be employed in on-campus student employee positions must meet the following requirements:

- Minimum 3.0 USAHS GPA
- In good standing at USAHS
- Second term or more (some exceptions may apply)

Students should refer to [www.usa.edu](http://www.usa.edu), Employment Opportunities, for more information and application.

## **Exit Examinations**

All students in programs requiring exit exams are required to pass the exit examinations. These exams are designed to test the retention and integration of cognitive and clinical skills. They are given prior to a student's scheduled graduation.

## **Expected and Maximum Completion Time Frames**

There are three program options with expected completion time frames for First Professional students.

- Full-time DPT/MOT
  - DPT expected completion is 7 terms.
  - MOT expected completion is 6 terms.
- Flex DPT/MOT
  - DPT expected completion is 12 terms.
  - MOT expected completion is 9 terms.
- Dual Full-time MOT/DPT
  - Expected completion is 10 terms.

When a student's regular completion time frame changes due to academic or personal reasons, the following maximum time frames for completion apply:

- Full-time DPT maximum completion is 11 terms.
- Flex DPT maximum completion is 18 terms.
- Full-time MOT maximum completion is 9 terms.
- Flex MOT maximum completion is 14 terms.
- Dual MOT/DPT maximum completion is 15 terms.

Note: Only under extenuating circumstances approved by the Program Director will a student be allowed to transition to part-time status in which the following maximum time frames to complete the graduation requirements apply:

- Part-time DPT maximum completion is 14 terms.
- Part-time MOT maximum completion is 12 terms.

## **Faculty Advisors**

A Faculty Advisor will be appointed for each student. This advisor will serve in two capacities. The first is to advise the student on academic matters, and the second is to assist in professional development. Should a student wish to change advisors, he or she should meet with the appropriate Program Director.

## **Fingerprints and Criminal Record**

Students acknowledge that their fingerprint results and criminal arrest/conviction record may limit internship placement availability and that internship placement is a requirement for graduation from USAHS. In addition, graduation from USAHS does not guarantee licensure or employment. A student's arrest/conviction record may also affect eligibility for licensure as



requirements vary from state to state. It is the student's responsibility for understanding the licensure requirements for the state(s) in which he or she intends to seek licensure.

Enrollment at USAHS is at the student's own risk and is not a guarantee of graduation, licensure, or employment.

## **Good Academic Standing, Academic Progression Warning, Academic Progression Probation, Dismissal**

### **Good Academic Standing**

Prior to completion of 59 credits for MOT and 61 for DPT, it is expected that a student will meet the following minimum criteria:

- Complete at least 75% of all credits attempted each trimester
- At the completion of the first trimester (or 17 credit hours for MOT and DPT) have a GPA of 2.0
- At the completion of the second trimester (or 38 credit hours for MOT and DPT) have a GPA of 2.3

Failure to meet any of the above criteria will result in the following actions:

- Students will be issued an Academic Warning and will be required to meet with their Faculty Advisors to develop a plan to improve their academic study. If a student fails to meet the satisfactory academic progress criteria for 2 consecutive trimesters, they will be placed on Academic Progress Probation and will be required to meet with the Academic Progression and Retention Committee (APRC).

The University requires that all students enrolled in the professional education programs have a 2.50 GPA after the completion of the third (full-time) trimester, or 59 credits for MOT and 61 credits for DPT, in the academic curriculum to continue in the respective program. If a student does not achieve this cumulative GPA he or she is dismissed from the program.

### **Academic Progression Warning**

1. An emailed letter of academic concern will be issued to any student who has a grade at midterm below a C level. The intent of the concern letter is to notify the student of less than satisfactory academic progress and the potential for course failure. A student receiving an academic concern email letter at midterm must first contact—by phone, email, or in person—the instructor(s) for the course(s) within 1 week of receipt of the concern letter. The student and course instructor(s) will discuss the student's performance, and the student will develop a plan, approved by the instructor, to improve future performance. The student must then inform his or her Faculty Advisor of the plan. If a student does not contact his or her course instructor and advisor, a note will be placed in the student's academic file noting the failure to comply with this policy.
2. An Academic Warning will be given to any student who is not in academic good standing at the conclusion of any trimester. The intent of the academic warning is to notify the student of less than satisfactory academic progress. A student receiving an academic

warning at the end of the trimester must contact his or her Faculty Advisor during the first week of the subsequent trimester and develop a plan, approved by the student's advisor, to improve future performance.

### Academic Progression Probation

- A student who makes a grade below a C in any course will be placed on Academic Progress Probation and must undergo remediation and repeat the course for credit. Such students will be made aware in writing that they are at risk for failure to complete the program.
  - A student who is no longer in good academic standing must meet with the instructor and his or her Faculty Advisor to develop a plan for remediation and monitoring. The plan may allow him or her to take additional coursework with the approval of the Program Director.
  - The student must receive a grade of C or better on the course retake to progress academically.
  - If the student receives a grade of C or better, the student will be taken off academic probation.
  - If the student receives a grade below C when retaking a course, the student will be dismissed.
- Any student who is on probation may not participate in any work-study program unless approved by the Program Director. Students placed on probation are at risk of not graduating from the University and not passing the national board exams.
- Any student who does not successfully complete the coursework necessary to exit probation may be at risk of being denied federal financial aid due to not maintaining satisfactory academic progress.

### Dismissal

1. A student will be dismissed from the program if
  - an F is received in any course;
  - two grades of D are received;
  - a student receiving a failing grade during fieldwork/internship is also subject to this policy (See the Clinical Education Handbook); or
  - after the completion of 58 credits, the student has a grade point average below 2.5.
2. The Registrar notifies the APRC and the Program Director of any students who are being recommended for academic dismissal. The student will be notified of his or her dismissal by the Registrar.
3. A student may appeal the dismissal to the Academic Appeals Committee/Program Director (see Academic Evaluation and Right of Appeal). If an appeal is successful, a readmission agreement between the student and the Program Director (or Dean) is made that documents the conditions for continuation at the University. Readmission agreements can only be appealed if there are mitigating circumstances and an appeal can be made only to the University President.

4. When a student is suspended for academic probation or for professional misconduct he or she will turn in his or her student ID badge to the Registrar and remain off campus. Students may visit a campus if they have made an appointment by phone with their Faculty Advisor or Registrar and restrict their activities to that appointment.

## Health Records

Each student is required to provide a completed Student Medical Record Form to be kept on file by the Clinical Education Office. Failure to submit the Student Medical Record Form will prevent the student's participation in practicum, internship, and fieldwork clinical experiences. Detailed instructions regarding required medical records are sent to new students prior to registration. Required medical forms are due to the Clinical Education Office by the date provided each term.

## Health Services

All students are required to carry health insurance. Proof of health insurance must be provided to the Clinical Education Office each trimester.

The University is not licensed to provide health care services.

- St. Augustine campus

Flagler Hospital has a 24-hour emergency service. For nonemergency care, the University contracts with a family practice physician to provide services:

Dr. James Connor  
1851 Old Moultrie Road  
St. Augustine, FL 32086  
904-824-8088

Additionally, there are local walk-in clinics that are equipped to provide emergency and nonemergency care.

- San Marcos campus

Emergency services are available at the following locations:

Palomar Medical Center  
555 E. Valley Parkway  
Escondido, CA 92025

Tri-City Medical Center  
4002 Vista Way  
Oceanside, CA 92056

- Austin campus

Emergency and nonemergency medical services are available at the following Austin locations:

St. David's Urgent Care  
5700 West Slaughter Lane  
Austin, TX 78749  
512-394-0020

Nextcare Urgent Care  
6001 West William Cannon Drive #302  
Austin, TX 78749  
512-288-3627

Austin Immediate Care  
5000 West Slaughter Lane #100  
Austin, TX 78749  
512-282-2273

St. Davis South Austin Medical Center  
901 West Ben White Boulevard  
Austin, TX 78704  
512-447-2211

Seton Southwest Hospital  
7900 Farm to Market 1826  
Austin, TX 78737  
512-324-9000

University Medical Center at Brackenridge  
601 East 15th Street  
Austin, TX 78701  
512-324-7000

- Miami campus

Emergency and nonemergency medical services are available at the following Miami locations:

Kendall Regional Medical Center  
11750 SW 40<sup>th</sup> St  
Miami FL 33175  
305-223-3000

Baptist Health Medical Plaza at Doral  
Urgent Care  
9915 NW 41<sup>st</sup> St  
Doral FL 33178  
786-586-3830

## **Liability Release and Claim Waiver**

Upon acceptance, students are asked to sign a general Waiver of Liability Form on behalf of the University prior to their participation in any athletic or extracurricular event while in residence. A copy of this form is located on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab. These forms are placed in the student's file for record keeping purposes.

## **Licensure Exams – Effective Spring 2017**

DPT students will not be given permission to sit for a licensure exam that is scheduled prior to all degree requirements being met.

## **Lockers**

On the St. Augustine, San Marcos, and Austin campuses, lockers are not assigned and are therefore on a first-come, first-served basis. Students must supply their own locks and remove these locks at the end of each term. All lockers are subject to search at any time as they are considered University property.

Lockers are located in the following locations:

- San Marcos campus: Hallway by the library and first floor of Building C
- St. Augustine campus: Academic building in the first floor lavatories
- Austin campus: Buildings A and B on the upper level near the amphitheater classroom

## **Orientation**

All new First Professional students are required to attend orientation. Orientation activities include payment of tuition, submission of vehicle registration information required for parking decals, introduction to University departments, and a review of the Student Handbook.

## **Parking**

In addition to parking policies listed in the general section of the Handbook, First Professional students who park on campus must display a current, valid parking decal. Each incoming student will be issued a parking decal at new student orientation. This decal is valid while a student is enrolled at the University. The decal must be used only by the student to whom it was issued. Replacement or additional decals can be purchased in the University Gear Store for \$10.00.

Students must provide a copy of their vehicle registration as part of the new student registration and when purchasing a replacement decal.

Students are responsible for updating the University whenever any changes occur to their vehicle type or license tag. This can be done through the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab.

Students are required to permanently affix the decal to the back window on the driver's side of the vehicle; motorcycle decals must be permanently affixed to the front screen. If a valid decal is not displayed, the automobile will be subject to ticketing, booting, or towing, and any subsequent charges will be the student's responsibility.

### **Flex St. Augustine Campus**

Flex students follow the same parking policy as First Professional students and may use the permanent University student parking lot. (Note: After 5:00 p.m. students may park in the west and south visitor/staff/faculty parking lots).

### **Flex San Marcos Campus**

North County Transit offers a public transportation system called the Sprinter. The closest station to the campus is San Marcos Civic Center Station (#12). It is about three quarters of a mile from this station to the campus. There are currently no public bus options to the campus. For more information about light rail, visit [http://www.gonctd.com/sprinter\\_stations.htm](http://www.gonctd.com/sprinter_stations.htm). Students can ride the Sprinter and bike/walk to the campus. There are bike racks available for individuals biking to school. Always secure your bike with an appropriate, applied chain and lock.

Student parking permits will be available at registration each trimester. Students are required to affix this permit to the driver's side rear of their vehicles, and motorcyclists are required to affix it to the front screen of their motorcycles. If such permit is not displayed, vehicles will be subject to ticketing, booting, or towing, and any subsequent charges are the student's responsibility.

Students are permitted to park in any of the parking spots on the perimeter of the two buildings excluding designated visitor, handicapped, or car pool spots unless the appropriate parking permit is displayed.

Any students who are parked in unapproved spots in the parking lot will be issued a citation of \$50.00 by the University. The parking citation money will go to the Student Physical Therapists Association (SPTA) and Student Occupational Therapy Association (SOTA) organizations. Students are responsible for any parking tickets received from the city for improperly parking on the street.

### **Flex Austin Campus**

Students are permitted to park in any of the parking spots on the perimeter of the three buildings, excluding designated visitor or handicapped spots, unless the appropriate parking permit is displayed. All University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences students are responsible for any parking tickets received for improperly parking on the street.

### **Program Change**

All program change requests will be considered on an individual basis and are contingent upon space availability.

### **Incoming Students**

Incoming (new) students who want to request a change of their admission to another degree program must make a request in writing (email is acceptable) to the Director of Admissions at least 6 weeks prior to the start of the trimester. To be considered, the student must have successfully completed all of the required prerequisites for the program to which he or she is requesting change. The Director of Admissions will notify the student via email of the outcome of the request. Please note: The start and completion dates of students who change degree programs may be extended.

### **First Term Students**

Program Change Request Forms must be submitted to the student's current Program Director by midterm of the first trimester. Program change requests not received by the midterm deadline will be considered during the subsequent trimester. To be considered, the student must have successfully completed all of the required prerequisites for the program to which he or she is requesting change.

### **Second Term (and Beyond) Students**

Program Change Request Forms must be submitted to the student's current Program Director by midterm of the current trimester.

### **Program Change Request Process for Current Students**

In order to be considered for a program change, a student must

- be in good academic standing at the time of the request: program change requests will not be considered from students who are currently remediating or retaking coursework, who are under review for appeal or professional misconduct, or who are on academic probation; program change requests from students who are on approved leave of absence will be considered;
- complete the Program Change Request Form located on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab and
- submit the completed form to
  - his or her Program Director,
  - the Program Director of the degree program to which the student is seeking transfer, and
  - the Director of Admissions (The Director of Admissions will approve only if the student has successfully completed all of the required prerequisites for the program to which he or she is requesting transfer);

Once the Program Change Request Form has been considered by all applicable administrators, the student will be notified of the outcome via email by the University Registrar. **USAHS scholarships are not transferable from one program to another.** Changing programs may extend the degree completion date.

### **Reenrollment Timelines**

A USAHS First Professional program graduate who decides to seek admission to another USAHS First Professional degree program must enroll within 3 years of his or her graduation date or he or she may be required to retake foundational (HSC) coursework and complete additional internship/fieldwork experiences. To be considered for admission to another First Professional degree program, a USAHS graduate must submit to the Admissions Office a completed application for admission; however, transcripts and GRE score reports do not need to be resubmitted with the new application.

Dual-degree students who delay beginning the DPT portion of the program after receiving the MOT degree must reenroll in the DPT program within -3 calendar years or they may be required to complete additional foundational coursework and/or internships in order to complete the second degree. To reenroll, a returning Dual student must notify the University Registrar in writing (email is acceptable) of his or her intent to resume classes at least 6 weeks before the start of the trimester.

### **Student Honor Council (St. Augustine, Austin)**

#### **Purpose of the Honor Council**

The Honor Council is composed of elected representatives from the First Professional students who serve to perpetuate our academic community's dedication to integrity, professionalism, and ethical standards as set forth by the University of St. Augustine for Health Sciences Student Code of Conduct. This assembly recognizes that each student member of our academic community must display a personal commitment to our impeccable values and honor code in order to maintain an atmosphere of trust and respect. The Honor Council functions by providing leadership to model professional behavior, supporting and actively perpetuating the

Honor Council mission, and providing a mechanism for responding to lapses in the Code of Conduct.

Students should refer to [myUSA](#), Students tab, Handouts for more information.

## **Student Membership in Professional Associations**

All University of St. Augustine students must be members of their respective national professional associations (American Physical Therapy Association [APTA], American Occupational Therapy Association [AOTA]). Dual students will be members of both professional associations (MOT during first 6 trimesters; DPT during last 4 trimesters). Current students will be asked to show proof of membership each term as part of the practicum courses. MOT students will also need to provide evidence of a state membership.

### **Student Associations**

The first trimester students will be assessed a one-time mandatory student activity fee of \$20.00. This fee is subject to change.

Examples of activities covered by the student association fee include but are not limited to

- authorized University functions,
- community awareness programs, and
- miscellaneous preapproved events.

This fee is allocated for campus-based student professional associations. Physical therapy students will be members in SPTA. Occupational therapy students will be members in SOTA. Dual degree students will be members of SOTA in the first half of the Dual Degree program and SPTA in the second half. Student representatives from all classes and programs meet monthly with Program Directors to share information and discuss concerns.

All student events are to be coordinated through these associations with all allocated monies to be controlled by the SPTA and SOTA organizations. All functions/events involving the University or the use of its name require prior review and written approval by (1) the respective Program Director and (2) the University's Director of Marketing. Possible examples of University-sanctioned events might include community/charitable events such as the annual 5K run and University or departmental picnics/celebrations. A student-organized off-site baseball team would be an example of a non-University event that could be supported by the student associations but would need approval if the University name was used.

The SPTA and SOTA organizations operate independently; however, financial support may be provided upon agreement of the supporting organization. Any use of funds requires two signatures from current officers of the respective organizations.

## **Student Retention Program: Tutoring**

Based on availability, students who have a documented need (course average below 75%) for assistance in a class may request tutoring. This request for a tutor needs to be signed by the student's instructor who verifies the at-risk need by signing the Tutor Request Form. Students obtain the form and return it signed by the instructor to the Faculty Advisor, Administrative



Assistant, or Student Services Advisor in charge of the Tutor Program. Availability of tutors is not guaranteed.

The Tutor Program Manager will indicate the name and phone number of a recommended tutor on the bottom of the form and explain that it is the responsibility of the student to contact the tutor directly to arrange a mutually convenient schedule.

If the student is requesting a tutor before there is a grade to verify a course average below 75%, the student may receive tutoring with faculty permission until midterm. At midterm, the tutoring need will be reevaluated.

## POST-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Contact Information

A student should contact the University when he or she requires guidance or assistance with the online education degree programs, but only after consulting this Handbook.

Each individual online degree program will email timely notices and information. Official letters will be sent to students after any review of academic progress or other actions critical to the progression in the academic program. Students will be able to access course grades and final grades online. The University Registrar will issue a user name and password to access grade information on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab. Students will also receive periodic newsletters from the program Administrative Assistant. These newsletters will keep students in touch with the academic program and its offerings.

### Correspondence

All correspondence should be emailed to the Administrative Assistant or Program Director listed below.

Telephone—Please have the Student Handbook available when you make calls:

Main Number: 904-826-0084 or 800-241-1027

- Ask for the Administrative Assistant.
- If the assistant is unable to answer your question, you may be directed to contact the Program Director.

#### ***Master of Health Science in Athletic Training***

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#### ***Doctor of Health Science and Doctor of Education***

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#### ***Transitional Doctor of Physical Therapy***

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## ***All Programs***

Cindy Mathena, Dean of Post-Professional Studies [cmathena@usa.edu](mailto:cmathena@usa.edu)

Technical support [techhelp@usa.edu](mailto:techhelp@usa.edu)

## **Being Prepared**

A student's success in this program is based on his or her ability to use technology. If at any time a student finds him- or herself lost or with questions, he or she can try one of the following options:

- Check the [myUSA](#) portal Online Education tab for problem-solving advice.
- See links provided at <http://usa-document.com/is/> for more helpful information.
- Contact the program Administrative Assistant.

## **Advanced Course Standing**

Based on previous academic coursework earned from another accredited degree-granting institution or another program within the University and/or work experiences, a student may be granted advanced standing for a particular course by either passing an examination on the contents of the course or by a competency assessment. The examination may be written or practical or both, and there is a cost associated with each course being challenged. A maximum of 25% of the total number of credits for the degree may be granted for advanced standing and the total percentage of credits transferred by any means cannot exceed 50% of the total credits of the program.

Courses in the Post-Professional programs not eligible for transfer include comprehensive examinations, capstone, and dissertation courses.

Approval for advanced course standing is subject to the following provisions:

- Supporting documentation may include transcripts showing applicable courses for credit, course descriptions, syllabi, continuing education courses/seminar descriptions and proof of completion, and work experience.
- There are two ways to gain advanced standing:
  - Passing a challenge examination to verify competency in the particular subject matter. A student has only one attempt per course to pass the challenge exam. If the student fails the exam, the student must take the course in its entirety. The passing grade will be the same as the passing grade stated in the syllabus for the course in which advance standing is being requested.
  - Competency assessment. Students may also request advanced standing based on a competency assessment. This allows a student with prior knowledge/credit

or experience in specified content to show successful competency, as defined by the instructor, in each of the course learning outcomes.

The process for requesting Advanced Course Standing by Examination and Competency is as follows:

- The student obtains a request form for Approval of Advanced Course Standing found on the [myUSA](#) portal Students tab and submits it to the respective Program Director with appropriate documentation.
- Requests for approval of Advanced Course Standing must be submitted at least 2 months before the start of classes for the trimester.

#### For Advanced Standing by Examination

- In consultation with course instructors, the Program Director will review the request. If approved, the Program Director will notify the Registrar and a test time and date will be set up for each challenge exam.
- If the Program Director, with consultation of the course instructor(s) concludes that the student's previous coursework and experiences are inadequate for passing the challenge exam, they may encourage the student not to seek advanced course standing or to take some type of remediation before taking the challenge exam.

#### For Advanced Standing by Competency Demonstration

- At the beginning of or prior to the term, the student requesting competency examination/assessment will request a meeting with the lead instructor.
- For each course learning outcome, the student will propose, in writing, a method of mastery demonstration either through presentation of past experiential learning activities documented in a manner that is assessable (for example, a portfolio), by physical assessment and demonstration of the outcome, or a combination of both methods.
- The instructor will provide feedback, and upon mutual agreement, both parties will sign the proposal. A schedule for demonstration of the outcomes can also be established at this time.
- Once completed, the instructor will either recommend the student as having passed the course fully, or having passed portions of the outcomes, will recommend which portions/modules of the course should be completed in the traditional fashion. A Pass/Fail grade will be awarded.

The Registrar will notify the student if the challenge exam has been passed or any credits were awarded for competency. The Registrar will post the course and its credits to the permanent academic record at that time.

## **Capstone Project**

### **tOTD**

It is an expectation of the University for doctoral students to contribute publishable works considered valuable to the field of occupational therapy. The Capstone Project is a summation

of the body of knowledge learned during the degree program. It is designed to assist the student in critically reviewing professional literature and expressing ideas using a scientific style of writing; therefore, a degree audit is necessary at the completion of all coursework to determine if the student meets the requirement to progress into the final phase of the program. This final phase, the Capstone sequence, allows students to focus on the development of a project, report, or research study and application of this valuable information to make a positive contribution to the profession.

In summary, Capstone 1 is the project proposal phase, including requesting approval from the University's IRB, if the project requires approval. Capstone Projects involving human subjects or data collection must be approved by the IRB. The IRB meets several times each trimester to review project proposals. The Faculty Advisor will inform the student about strictly enforced IRB submission deadlines and information regarding the IRB process should it become a component of the Capstone Project. Capstone II is the project or research development and implementation phase. These manuscripts will require a good deal of time commitment and assistance from an assigned Faculty Advisor. It is anticipated that, after completion of this written project, a student will be ready to submit the manuscript to an appropriate journal for review and possible publication or be able to submit the material for an oral or poster presentation at a professional meeting. The final Capstone Project may take the form of one of the following options:

- Community service project or product demonstrating excellence (PDE)
- Case report
- Publishable article including perspective paper, clinical Commentary, or clinical research

Finally, all Capstone Projects are required to be presented at the University prior to graduation. The results of the project are shared through a poster presentation required for completion of the one-credit Residency course, which requires a 1-day, on-campus attendance scheduled the day of the student's graduation ceremony.

#### ***Course Prerequisite***

- For USAHS alumni with a master's: Completion of coursework (a minimum of 24 academic credits)
- For student with a master's: Completion of coursework (a minimum of 29 academic).
- For student with a bachelor's: Completion of coursework (a minimum of 54 academic credits)

#### ***Course Instructions***

The Capstone Project sequence is a total of six credits, divided into three courses:

- OCT 7150 Capstone Project I is one credit.
- OCT 7497 Capstone Project II is four credits.
- OCT 7400 Residency is one credit.

1. The student registers for Capstone I—for one credit.
2. The student completes the written assignments including the Capstone proposal. The Capstone I Faculty Advisor evaluates the Capstone proposal and works with the student to make revisions as needed.
3. The Capstone I advisor will make an initial determination if an IRB application will need to be completed. If so, a first draft will be completed in Capstone I.
4. Once Capstone I requirements are satisfactorily completed, a grade is submitted and the student is awarded one credit.
5. The student has a 1 trimester time frame for full completion of the Capstone I course.
6. The Program Director assigns a Capstone II Faculty Advisor based on the Capstone topic.
7. The student registers for Capstone Project II—for four credits.
8. The Capstone II Faculty Advisor and the student will make the final determination whether IRB approval is required following IRB guidelines.
9. If required, the IRB application is completed and submitted for IRB approval.
10. The student completes the written assignment and submits it to the Faculty Advisor. Revisions are made as necessary. Multiple revisions may be necessary until the University is satisfied that the criteria have been met and the case report or article is deemed publishable.
11. A PowerPoint presentation is virtually presented to the Capstone II Faculty Advisor and Program Director at least 3 weeks prior to the intended graduation.
12. When the Faculty Advisor determines the manuscript and presentation of the project met University standards, he or she submits a grade and the student is awarded four credits.
13. The final version of the Capstone Project is to be completed within 2 trimesters after approval of the proposal.
14. The student registers for Residency—for one credit—to formally present results of the Capstone Project within a poster presentation venue at the University. This presentation is scheduled on the same date the student intends to attend the graduation ceremony; therefore, limiting on-campus attendance to one visit during the entire program.
15. When the Program Director determines the poster presentation met University standards, he or she submits a grade and the students is awarded one credit.

## tDPT

Before a student can register for Capstone I, a degree audit will be completed by the Program Director to approve the progression into the final phase of the degree program. Capstone I is a reflection of a student's curriculum and project proposal phase. Capstone I must be completed prior to registration for Capstone II.

The University is searching for ways for a doctoral student to make a contribution to the profession and has elected to promote the value of publishable case reports and/or articles reflecting information important to the profession. The Capstone Project is a summation of the body of knowledge learned during the degree program. It is designed to assist the student in critically reviewing professional literature and being able to express ideas using a scientific style of writing. These manuscripts will require a good deal of time commitment and assistance from

an assigned Faculty Advisor. It is anticipated that, after completion of this written project, a student will be ready to submit the manuscript to an appropriate journal for review and possible publication or be able to submit the material for an oral or poster presentation at a professional meeting.

Completion of this course requires submission and grading of a written manuscript. If the student is in a certification track, the topic must be in the student's certification area and related to physical therapy practice in that specialty area.

### ***Option A: One Case Report***

A case report for publication is a detailed presentation, analyzing a particular real-life patient case. It should be well reasoned and referenced showing a depth of comprehension and understanding, as well as exhibiting learning and reasoning sufficient for a publishable product in a peer-reviewed journal.

Recommended Text: *Writing Case Reports*, 2nd. ed., by Irene McEwen (APTA Publication, 2001)

### ***Option B: One Article***

An article may take one of the following forms:

- Literature review: Critical analysis of literature on a specific topic of interest to PTs
- Perspective: Scholarly paper addressing professional issues
- Descriptive technical Report: Describes, evaluates, and documents the specification or mechanical aspects of a device used by PTs in intervention or measurement

### ***Course Prerequisite***

- For the student with a master's: Completion of coursework (a minimum of 19 academic credits)
- For the student with a bachelor's: Completion of coursework including required courses (55 academic credits)
- All students: 2.25 overall GPA or 2.50 for students accepted into the program after January 1, 2012

### ***Course Instructions***

The Capstone Project is a total of five credits divided into two courses:

- PHT6496 Capstone Project I is one credit
  - PHT6497 Capstone Project II is four credits
1. The student registers for Capstone Project I—for one credit.
  2. Capstone I is an online course.

3. The student completes the online course and the written assignments including the Capstone proposal.
4. The course instructor assigns a Faculty Advisor.
5. The Faculty Advisor evaluates the capstone proposal and works with the student to make revisions as needed. When the Faculty Advisor considers the proposal completed, he or she submits a grade and the student is awarded one credit for Capstone Project I. The student has a 1 trimester time frame for full completion of Capstone I course.
6. The student registers for Capstone Project II—for four credits.
7. The student completes the written assignment and submits it to the Faculty Advisor. Revisions are made as necessary. Multiple revisions may be necessary until the University is satisfied that the criteria have been met and the case report or article is deemed publishable. When the Faculty Advisor decides that the manuscript has met University standards, he or she submits a grade and the student is awarded four credits. The final version of the Capstone Project is to be completed within 2 trimesters after approval of the proposal.

### ***Grading***

Capstone Project I is Pass/Fail and Capstone Project II is awarded a letter grade. The assigned Faculty Advisor will determine when the submissions have met the University's criteria.

The University has developed a proposal format and criteria sheets for grading your manuscript. Contact the University prior to commencing your manuscript in order to follow the required format.

## **Clinical Residency**

### **tDPT**

A student may choose to complete a clinical residency under the supervision of a mentor rather than completing the Capstone experience. The residency option needs to be decided early in the program to allow time for the approval process and to complete residency requirements. The following information details the residency and mentor standards.

### ***The Residency Site***

A clinical residency site is an approved site where there is quality physical therapy care being delivered in the area in which the student wishes to specialize. The Transitional DPT Program Director will work with the student to set up a residency and will monitor the student's progress throughout the residency. It is the responsibility of the student to seek out and make arrangements with the clinical site and mentor. The University may be of some assistance in providing potential sites/mentors through its network of graduates and clinical education sites. Established Residency Credentialed Programs offered through other universities or clinics may also be utilized as long as they meet our requirements. Any site which has been approved as an APTA Clinical



Residency/Fellowship Credentialed Program would receive favorable consideration by the University.

If a student is interested in a clinical residency in orthopaedics or a fellowship in manual therapy through the University of St. Augustine, he or she will work with the University's Residency/Fellowship Director to establish the specific requirements for the program. The Clinical Orthopaedic Residency and the Fellowship in Manual Therapy through the University of St. Augustine each have specific applications, separate from the Transitional DPT program.

The duration of employment at the residency site is to be not less than 9 months or 1,500 hours. The 1,500 hours may be taken over the 9 months or over a more extended period of time in the case of part-time employment. Once the 1,500 patient hours and 200 hours of educational activities have been completed, the student will receive five credits toward the Transitional DPT degree. The Clinical Orthopaedic Residency and the Fellowship in Manual Therapy here at the University of St. Augustine will have additional requirements.

The clinical residency site must be able to provide to the student a sufficient patient load in the area of specialization being sought. Sufficient is defined as being 80% of the patient load in the area of specialization.

Characteristics of a quality clinical residency site include the following:

- An invigorating environment
- Learning objectives targeted to specific needs of the student
- Ethical practices in the clinic
- Congruent patient care philosophy between the site and University
- Administrative support of clinical practice
- Effective staff communications
- Commitment to professional development
- Sufficient support services
- Adequate space and staff for patient load

### ***Residency Standards***

The University has adopted the following standards to be met by all residency sites:

- Minimum of 1,500 hours of direct patient care hours (approximately 9 months of full time clinical work in the area of specialization)
- No more than six residents to one approved mentor; the mentor may supervise residents at more than one site and may bring the residents together for group activities
- Minimum of 200 hours of didactic and clinical activities as follows:
  - 130+ clinical hours of 1:1 (one-on-one) with the mentor, with not less than 75% (i.e., 97.5 hours) with the mentor observing the resident with the balance being the resident observing the mentor

- 10+ hours of case presentations to the mentor and staff
- 10 articles reviewed (journal club) with mentor

One credit is awarded for each 40 hours of one-on-one mentor time, case studies, and other designated learning activities. If 5 hours per week were given to such activities, then a total of five credits would be earned in a 40-week period. All educational hours must be documented in the Residency Journal and appropriately signed by the mentor. If the minimum of five credits is not achieved within the 1,500 patient-care hours, then the residency must be continued until the educational requirements are met.

### ***The Mentor***

A physical therapist mentor will have a post-professional degree that specializes in the clinical area being sought by the student. A mentor will need to have some or all of the following qualifications:

- At least 2 to 5 years of clinical experience in the area of specialization
- APTA Board Specialization or other recognition/certification in the area of specialization, preferred
- Teaching experience (academic, continuing education presentations, and/or clinical instructor)
- Actively engaged in patient care
- Able to spend 1:1 clinic time with the resident
- Agrees with and upholds the patient care philosophy of the University

### ***Responsibilities of the Mentor***

The mentoring activity is a significant portion of the residency in terms of the student's learning. During the 1,500-hour clinical residency, the mentor is responsible for facilitating learning for the resident by

- assisting the resident in developing residency objectives and goals;
- supervising the resident in direct patient care by instructing and refining treatment and evaluation techniques a minimum of 3 direct hours a week;
- coordinating a weekly meeting of journal club, case presentations, and article review;
- providing other mentors to assist the resident in achieving objectives;
- meeting with the resident once each month to review and revise the resident's objectives;
- providing critique and guidance to the resident for the development and submission of case reports and poster/platform presentation;
- conducting a weekly review and signing of the Residency Journal;
- assisting or providing guidance in the development of effective communication with the physical therapy staff, other health professionals, and community at large;

- identifying the resident’s success or lack of success in maintaining responsibility of achieving objectives; and
- evaluating the resident’s skill level and reporting the results to the University at least once per trimester.

### ***Financial Arrangements with the Site***

The financial arrangement between the student, the residency site, and mentor is a matter of agreement between those three entities. The University will not be a party to the negotiation nor will it have any financial arrangement with the site or mentor. We hope that the site, which may discount the normal salary exchange for mentoring time, will be generous with their time.

### ***Registering for Clinical Residency***

If a student is electing to complete a Clinical Residency in lieu of the Capstone Project, it is important to contact the University as soon as possible to plan and discuss the Clinical Residency. The Program Director will assist the student in completing the appropriate forms and planning the educational requirements. For further information, contact the Transitional DPT Program Director.

## **Computer Equipment**

Online students will be required to have access to or have their own computers. Check the [myUSA](#) portal Online Education tab for the most updated software requirements.

## **Course Availability (for Distance Learning and Electives)**

It is the student’s responsibility to verify the availability of a course and to make scheduling adjustments if he or she finds he or she must take the course during a particular trimester so his or her progress through the degree program will not be delayed.

## **Course Schedules**

If a student moves through his or her coursework with a cohort group, he or she will have weekly assignments due along with his or her fellow classmates. It is the student’s responsibility to check the syllabus for due dates.

If an online course is self-paced, a student may complete assignments as he or she is ready. However, the student will be provided with a time frame or due date for completion of the course. It is the student’s responsibility to check the syllabus for complete information on schedules, assignments, and due dates.

## **Degree Completion**

Acceptance into the University and payment of tuition is not a contract assuring that the student will graduate with the applied for degree. Graduation will depend on a satisfactory grade point average, professional conduct, and the satisfactory completion of all degree

requirements. The following requirements must be met for a learner to be eligible for graduation:

- Each learner must satisfactorily complete all degree requirements and be in academic good standing.
- All fiscal obligations to the University or its subsidiaries must be paid in full.
- Should a student be unable to successfully complete part of the final coursework but has successfully met all other degree requirements, the learner may be allowed to walk at commencement. The candidate will sign an acknowledgement regarding participation in the ceremony. The candidate will be “hooded” during the ceremony, but will not receive a diploma. If the coursework is completed within the first 7 days of the subsequent term, the diploma and transcript notation will reflect the expected conferral date. Should the coursework be completed after the first 7 days of the subsequent term, the diploma will be issued and transcript notation will be dated to reflect the subsequent conferral date upon degree completion. The graduate will have the option of participating in the commencement ceremony subsequent to degree completion to receive the diploma.

Once all coursework and assignments have been completed, the Administrative Assistant will provide the student with a link to the graduation application. The application must be completed 60 days prior to the expected commencement. Refer to the Academic Calendar in this Handbook to identify the due date for applications for the upcoming graduation.

The Program Director will perform a degree audit to verify completion of the minimum number of credits and the overall GPA as follows:

- tDPT – 2.25 or 2.50 for students accepted into the program after January 1, 2012
- DHSc – 3.0
- EdD – 3.0
- tOTD – 3.0

The Bursar’s Office will assure that all fiscal obligations to the University or its subsidiaries have been met in full.

Commencement ceremonies are held three times per year—April, August, and December. See the Academic Calendar in this Handbook or the [myUSA](#) Students tab for dates.

## **Dissertation Committee**

DHSc and EdD

The Dissertation Committee must consist of three official\*, qualified, and approved members:

1. Primary Advisor/ Dissertation Committee Chair (this person must have a terminal degree in the specific area of research that the student is conducting+)
2. A Secondary Advisor (this person will be the cohort advisor)
3. Department Director or an approved alternate

The student has the first right of selection for the committee chair. This means the student can propose the selection of his or her own Dissertation Committee Chair. However, if the student cannot find, or does not know of anyone, then USAHS will find appropriate members for the committee. If a student needs the department to find advisors, he or she needs to notify the department utilizing the Dissertation Committee Proposal Form.

Approved committee members will be issued a small honorarium by USA for their service to the student and the community; thus official paperwork will need to be processed and this form will serve as the initiation of that process.

\*Official committee members must possess a PhD or and EdD in a related area, be approved by the Director and complete requisite documents for USAHS.

+ Please be advised that it is generally frowned upon in the doctoral educational community to hire another person to do the statistics. It is the student's responsibility to find and enlist statistical assistance for research data analysis. However, these persons do not inform the student on the statistical decisions or on the analysis of the research; only the student can do that, as only the student has reviewed the literature in the field to the level that is necessary to make such critical interpretations of data. Please also note that "statistics" is not considered a subset of the research, and thus generally a statistician would not qualify as a member of the dissertation committee.

### **Advancing to Candidacy**

In a doctoral program there are specific provisions that are required to be met—prior to the students advancing to candidacy and becoming eligible to conduct doctoral research.

There are five features that are required to be complete to advance to candidacy:

1. 48 credits of coursework must be successfully completed.
2. The qualifying examinations must be successfully completed.
3. A Dissertation Committee must be proposed and approved.
4. A formal dissertation proposal must be submitted and approved.
5. An IRB form must be ready to be submitted, for all institutions to be involved in the proposed research. If research is to be conducted at an institution other than USAHS, the student must first obtain IRB approval at the institution where the research is being conducted and submit this approval with the USAHS IRB submission.

Once a student has completed these five features of the program he or she is eligible to become a doctoral candidate, and may register for the dissertation process (Committee approval and IRB approval are still required prior to collecting any data).

### **Progression**

It is understandable that not everyone will progress at the same rate through the dissertation process. The following are the provisions for time lapse in the progression of the dissertation timeline. Should a student not be able to complete the requirements of the dissertation course that he or she is enrolled in, he or she is permitted to apply for a withdrawal (grade of W) and repeat the course. This will constitute paying for the class again and being placed in the

following cohort. It is also possible that the student may be granted an I grade for situations involving active research and data collection. The determination of the I grade would require both Dissertation Committee and departmental approval.

### **Dissertation**

It should be understood that everything that the student does from the point of enrolling in Dissertation Research Studies to the end of Dissertation IV should be a continuous process wherein all writing and rewriting in collaboration with the Dissertation Committee should be a fluid process all of which ultimately will contribute to the final doctoral dissertation. The student should be engaged in continual literature review and modification of the understanding of the research domain in question.

### **Doctoral Dissertation Cohort Model**

The EdD/DHSc Doctoral Dissertation Process has been implemented to remediate difficulties that are specific to online doctoral candidates, their preparation, and support. In this unique model, the Doctoral Dissertation Cohort Model, the students will be prepared for the dissertation process as a cohort and they will travel through their dissertation processes as a cohort. Each student will still have his or her own research-specific dissertation topic that he or she will be focusing on and a Dissertation Chair that is an expert in that domain of research; however, each will also have the support of his or her peers and the support of a common advisor/professor for all of the stages of the dissertation process. The Cohort Advisor/professor will travel with the cohort from the Dissertation Research Studies course to Dissertation I through Dissertation IV. This professor will serve as the second reader on each of the student's Dissertation Committees, he or she will serve as the instructor for the courses that the cohort will be enrolled in, which will focus on the processes and procedures common to all of the doctoral dissertation students. The cohort advisor will also serve as the University liaison for all dissertation processes. All steps in the dissertation courses will first be submitted to the course online, read by the Dissertation Cohort Advisor, edited by the student in response to comments, and then sent to the primary advisor (also known as the Dissertation Committee Chair) for comments and further revisions. At any time, students and faculty may ask for a clarification meeting.

In this way the department plans to provide the necessary support that the online doctoral dissertation candidate needs. We also expect to foster the collegial environment the students have grown to expect from their participation in the online graduate program at USAHS already, by allowing them to be in the courses together and thereby facilitating communication, inter-professional collaboration, and support between our doctoral candidates as they work toward the completion of their individual dissertations.

### **Good Academic Standing, Academic Progression, Retention, Warning, and Probation**

The role of the Advanced Studies Progression Committee (ASPC), in conjunction with the Registrar's Office, is to monitor each student's academic progress throughout the curriculum.

At the end of each trimester, grades are submitted to the Registrar. The Registrar will notify students who are placed on probation or are dismissed from the respective academic program of their status.

To remain enrolled in the MHScAT, tOTD, tDPT, DHSc, EdD, or MSN programs, the student must maintain

- active status or approved leave of absence status, and
- good academic standing.

### Active Status

A student is in active status if the student

- registers and begins a course within 12 weeks after official acceptance into the program; and
- completes a course within 6 months of acceptance into the program; and
- registers for a minimum of nine credits each ensuing full calendar year—or fewer credits with the written permission of the Program Director—and completes those courses within the prescribed period; and
- maintains timely and effective communication with the program office.

### Leave of Absence

See Leave of Absence under Campus Policies and Procedures.

### Inactive Status

A student will be placed on inactive status when failing to complete nine credits within a 12-month period based on the date of admission to the program. The student will receive a letter from the Registrar notifying him or her of this status change.

When the student completes nine credits within 1 calendar year, he or she will be placed back on active status. (Note: seminars alone do not count toward academic credit and meeting this requirement.)

If the student does not complete at least nine credits within 1 year of being placed on inactive status, he or she will be referred to the Progression Committee for possible dismissal from the program. A student may be placed on inactive status only once during enrollment in DE programs. The student will be dismissed from the program if he or she fails to meet the yearly requirements for coursework progression a second time.

### Good Academic Standing

To remain in good academic standing a student must

- maintain 3.0 GPA (see Probation information below):
  - tDPT—Maintain a 2.25 GPA and 2.50 for students accepted into the program after January 1, 2012;
- not earn a grade below a C (see Dismissal section); and

- be in compliance with the University Academic Integrity Policy, which stipulates that all academic work represents the individual work of the stated author. Input and assistance from others must always be appropriate and fully acknowledged.

## Probation

A student who makes a grade of D in any course will be placed on academic probation and must undergo remediation and repeat the course for credit. A remediation plan must be developed by the student and will be monitored by the Program Director.

- When retaking the course, the student must receive a grade of C or above in order to progress academically.
- If the student receives a grade below a C on retake, the student will be dismissed.
- When the grade of C or above is achieved on retake, the student will be taken off academic probation if his or her GPA is above his or her program level.

If the GPA of a student falls below the acceptable program level, the student will be placed on academic probation by the Program Director.

Following being placed on probation, the student will be required to submit an academic study plan to the Program Director to explain how he or she plans to elevate the GPA to the program's acceptable level. The Advanced Studies Progression Committee will review all study plans. The student will be expected to elevate his or her GPA to the acceptable program level or above within 1 calendar year. If a student fails to elevate his or her GPA, the student's record will be referred to the Advanced Studies Progression Committee for review and possible dismissal from the program.

A student will not be permitted to progress to the final stage of the program while on probation. Remedial coursework may be necessary to increase the GPA prior to starting the final project.

## Withdrawal of Acceptance into the Program

If a student does not register for one course within 12 weeks after official acceptance into the program, the Program Director will notify the Registrar to send the student a notice of withdrawal of program acceptance.

## Dismissal

Based on recommendations of the Advanced Studies Progression Committee, the student may be dismissed from an Advanced Studies Program when a student

- fails to maintain active status;
- does not return to active status after an approved leave of absence period;
- receives a grade of F in any course;
- receives a grade below a C when retaking any course;
- while on probation, a student does not improve academic performance to program-level GPA within the prescribed calendar year;



- does not complete at least nine credit hours within 1 year after being placed on inactive status;
- has more than one W in any course or three withdrawals total during the program;
- fails to comply with the University Academic Integrity Policy; or
- fails to complete the program requirements within 6 years. Failure to complete the program within the prescribed enrollment period may result in dismissal by the Progression Committee. An extension of the program enrollment timeline for extenuating circumstances may be requested in writing to the Program Director who will present the request to the Advanced Studies Progression Committee for review. If the Progression Committee approves the extension, the student will pay the prescribed trimester extension fee by the due date upon being billed by the accounting department. If the extension fee is delinquent by 2 weeks, the student may be dismissed.

Upon dismissal, the student will receive a letter (sent certified mail) from the University's Registrar.

### Right of Appeal

Any student who has been dismissed from the program may formally appeal this decision in writing to the director within 10 business days from receipt of the notification. If the student does not meet the stated deadline, the appeal may not be considered. In extenuating circumstances, the student may request an extension from the Program Director; however, this request must be made within the above stated deadline.

The appeal letter should address the following:

- The rationale behind the appeal and why the student believes the appeal is warranted.
- Future circumstances that will permit the student to rectify previous poor academic performance or deficient course activity.

The Program Director will notify the Academic Appeals Committee of the appeal within 2 working days. The Academic Appeals Committee will convene at the earliest convenient time.

The AAC will provide a recommendation to the Program Director within 2 business days following their meeting.

The Program Director will inform the student, the AAC, the Progression Committee, and the Registrar in writing of his or her decision regarding the appeal at the earliest convenient time for all parties involved.

Should a student not agree to the decision of the AAC, the student has the right of an appeal to the President or his or her appointed designee. The appeal must be submitted, in writing, within 5 business days to the President. Upon request, the President or his or her designee will review pertinent records, at his or her discretion, including a review of the process to ensure that it was correctly followed, and may meet with the AAC and the student. The President or his or her designee will follow the process as established in this Handbook and ensure that the process was followed.

Dismissal policies will be implemented as fairly and equitably as possible considering all extenuating circumstances.

## The Right of Petition

A student may petition the University for an exception, exemption, waiver, or special consideration of any policy. All petitions must be submitted in writing, preferably limited to one page, and accompanied by supporting documentation. Petitions should be addressed to the Program Director who, in consultation with appropriate administration and faculty, will decide the outcome. Petitions are accepted for purposes such as

- reconsideration of a rejected applicant for admission to the University,
- extending the course of study to complete the program,
- transfer of credit when the initial transfer request was denied,
- permission to continue in the program after being counseled out, or
- appealing a grade or dismissal from the program.

The Program Director's decision may be appealed to an arbitration committee, whose decision is final. Each petition is a case unto itself and does not create a precedent for any cases to follow.

## Orientation

Prior to beginning online courses, each student will receive a username, password, and directions for logging into the course platform. Students should sign into the [myUSA](#) portal Online Education tab and view the tutorial video. This will provide the student with some general information about online learning and assist in navigating the platform software used to complete online courses.

## Possible Restrictions

### MHScAT, tOTD, tDPT

The University subscribes to the philosophy of honesty in advertising and promotion and wishes to ensure that students have the time to make themselves fully aware of any limitations of the program. Entrance into the MHScAT program is competitive and preference will be given to graduates of University programs that bring clinical experience to the classroom. The University will endeavor to take as large a student body as its resources permit without compromising the quality of the program. Interviews and other assessments may be implemented to assist in selecting the most appropriate students.

## DHSc

Doctoral-level studies are rigorous. A successful degree completion requires commitment and responsibility. A student should give serious consideration to the amount of effort and support required before committing him- or herself to the program. A student must proceed in a timely and disciplined manner. He or she will begin the Introduction to Doctoral Studies course upon the next trimester offering (January, May, or September). This will be the starting point for the academic program and it is expected that the student will follow an orderly trimester sequence

until the entire DHSc program is completed. The academic program and dissertation is built on a 3- to 4-year time frame or 9 to 12 trimesters. The tuition is due each time a student enrolls in a course. Leaves of absence are available to the student up to a maximum of 3 trimesters.

## EdD

Doctoral-level studies are rigorous. A successful degree completion requires commitment and responsibility. A student should give serious consideration to the amount of effort and support required before committing him- or herself to the program. A student must proceed in a timely and disciplined manner. He or she will begin the Introduction to Doctoral Studies course upon the next trimester offering (January, May, or September). This will be the starting point for the academic program and it is expected that the student will follow an orderly trimester sequence until the entire EdD program is completed. The academic program and dissertation is built on a 3- to 4-year time frame or 9 to 12 trimesters. The tuition is due each time a student enrolls in a course. Leaves of absence are available to the student up to a maximum of 3 trimesters.

## **Registering for Coursework Online (Applies to All Transitional and Post-Professional Students)**

To register, a student must sign into his or her [myUSA](#) portal account, click on the Students Tab, and select the Registration for DE Programs located on the left menu column.

If a student is registering for a seminar or certification please call the Continuing Education Office at 1-800-241-1027, ext. 1266.

## **Registering for Seminars**

When registering for Continuing Education seminars students may pay by check, money order, or credit card.

## **A Few Important Facts About Seminar Registration**

Students should register as early as possible. It would be helpful to register a minimum of 30 days prior to the start date of the seminar. A deposit of \$100.00 is required at time of registration to secure a spot and the balance will be due 4 weeks prior to the seminar. It is particularly important to register early for the Preparation/Certification-week 4 to 6 months prior to taking certification. There are limited slots each year for this exam. A 50% nonrefundable, nontransferable deposit is required for certification.

Occasionally seminars are cancelled; this decision is usually made 3 weeks prior to the start of the seminar. Students will be notified immediately if this has occurred.

If the student is an MPT or DPT graduate of the University of St. Augustine, because he or she successfully completed S1 and E1 as part of his or her program, he or she does not have to repeat the seminars.

Manual Therapy Certification is offered on the St. Augustine, Austin, and San Marcos campuses. Sport Physical Therapy and Primary Care are tested at the first certification week of the year only, and Craniofacial is offered during one of the scheduled weeks on the St. Augustine

campus. Sports Physical Therapy students need to contact North American Sports Medicine Institute (NASMI) to register and attend the necessary certification segments provided by NASMI. *The corresponding coursework for the sports courses is no longer available*, but students may complete a directed study or directed readings course to correspond with each seminar.

Students need to attend the seminar before completing the credit assignment. Students do not have to wait until completing the credit assignment before taking the next seminar.

If a student would like to register for a seminar or certification, and/or request additional information on the subject, please call the Continuing Education Office at 1-800-241-1027, ext. 1400.

### **Reinstatement**

Students that voluntarily withdraw from the program in good standing may be reinstated into the program for a fee of \$50.00. These students will be permitted to bypass the normal application process and submit a one-page re-admittance application if it has been no more than 2 years since withdrawal from the program. Any student seeking reacceptance after the 2-year period must follow the normal application process.

### **Time Limit**

#### **MHScAT**

It is required that MHScAT students complete all program requirements within 7 trimesters or 2 years and 4 months. An extension of up to 1 year and 2 months may be requested. If the Program Director approves the extension, there is an extension fee of \$333.00 per trimester.

#### **MSN**

It is required that MSN students complete all program requirements within 2 years. An extension of up to 1 year may be requested. If the Program Director approves the extension, there is an extension fee of \$333.00 per trimester.

#### **tOTD**

It is required that tOTD students complete all program requirements within 5 years. An extension of up to 2 ½ years may be requested. If the Program Director approves the extension, there is an extension fee of \$333.00 per trimester.

#### **tDPT**

Students are expected to complete the transitional DPT program in 4 years. An extension of up to 2 years may be requested. If the Program Director approves the extension, there is an extension fee of \$333.00 per trimester. The maximum time to complete the degree is 6 years.

## DHSc

It is required that students complete all degree requirements within 5 years. An extension of up to 2 ½ years may be requested. If approved by the Program Director, there is an extension fee of \$333.00 per trimester.

## EdD

It is required that students complete all degree requirements within 5 years. An extension of up to 2 ½ years may be requested. If approved by the Program Director, there is an extension fee of \$333.00 per trimester.