
Newsletter

PA PROGRAM DIRECTOR
MSU FINANCIAL AID OFFICE
FACULTY HAPPENINGS
DIDACTIC UPDATES
CLINICAL UPDATES
ADMISSION & RECRUITMENT

September 2021

PROGRAM UPDATES

PA Program Director, Roberto Canales

Time goes so fast is a saying that many of us can relate to. This saying has more meaning to me now as compared to when I was younger. Come to find out, research suggests that as one gets older, one encounters fewer new life experiences which equates to less time the brain needs to process events, hence life appears to speed up. This hits home when I think about the total number of PA classes I have helped to teach. There were 8 classes from my days as a faculty member at the University of Texas Medical Branch PA program, and there have been 20 here at MSU. Given that the MSU PA program graduated its 20th class December 2020 and will graduate its 21, we think this is cause for celebration. Although there are details yet to finalize, the program is planning a celebratory event for alumni & preceptors on Friday, October 29th, 2021. The event will require participation from students from both current classes and will involve an open house, and a meet and greet event at the Springfield Brewery. Assistant Professor Shannon Hauschildt will help to coordinate student participation and announcements.

September means we are getting ready to conduct candidate interviews for admission. After reviewing many of the 400+ applications last month, I was reminded about how competitive it is to get into a PA program. There are simply more well qualified applicants than we have space for. While simply meeting program requirements for admission has never been the sole determinant, it now appears that an applicant now has to go above and beyond in most of the [selection factors](#) used to select the class. While the knee jerk response might simply be to take more students, the reality is that there are several concerns that would first need to be addressed.

I was recently reminded, once again, how proud I am to be part of the MSU PA program. The summer semester continued the trend of very favorable preceptor evaluations for the Class of 2021. The Class of 2021 also continues to do well on the Physician Assistant Examination Association's (PAEA) end of rotation exams, the program's Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) testing, and patient simulation testing at the MU Simulation Center.

I was taken back by the robustness which members from the Class of 2022 demonstrated when they voluntarily performed over 120 sport physicals in one day as part of an annual collaborative effort between the program and Mercy - Aurora. The morning crew had a particularly challenging time. Between 9:15am and 1pm, over 80 area public school students had sports physical completed. There was very little time for bathroom breaks much less lunch. I was also reminded how much Dr. J. Deihl (Emergency Department Medical Director with Mercy – Aurora & MSU preceptor) loves to teach, he supervised the students.

LeAnne Snow recently demonstrated dedication to her duties as the Admission Coordinator. Mrs. Snow recently was faced with a situation in which she could have taken extended leave. However, instead she continued in her role with minimal disruption. Similarly, several faculty members rallied behind her to help ensure that the program would be able to process 400+ applications to the program in a timely manner.

The fall semester is certain to add more good memories. There will be applicant interviews in September, PA week October 6 – 12^h, student & PA program fundraising efforts, open house & reception event for alumni and preceptors on October 29th, White Coat Ceremony for the Class of 2022, and the Class of 2021 graduation,

MSU Financial Aid Office, Breanna Scanlon

I have been getting some questions regarding Graduate PLUS loan and so I thought I would share a little bit of information regarding this process.

The Graduate PLUS loan is used to help bridge the gap between your Cost of Attendance and the loans that you are offered. The Unsubsidized loan is offered to you through the FAFSA, and the interest rate is 5.28%. The Graduate PLUS loan application is offered through the Grad PLUS loan application (that is credit based) and has an interest rate of 6.28%.

Once you fill out the Grad PLUS loan application on studentaid.gov, you will complete the Entrance Counseling for Graduate PLUS loan (this only needs to be done once, when you first take out your Graduate PLUS Loan). Once those are complete, you will then need to fill out a MSU Graduate PLUS loan form that can be found on the Financial Aid Forms Section of the Missouri State-Financial Aid Website.

One thing to note about the credit check is that it is good for 180 days. The PLUS loan application will not extend past the initial 180 days until you fill out a new loan application 181 days later. You can redo the application during the 180 days, but you will only be changing the information (loan amount requested or Loan Period).

Once you fill out the MSU Graduate PLUS loan form and send it into our office at FinancialAid@missouristate.edu then it can take roughly 2 weeks for the loan to be processed onto your account.

I hope you all are having a great semester so far!
Do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions you may have.
If you have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to contact me any time!
Scanlon, Breanna L BreannaScanlon@MissouriState.edu

Faculty & Director Happenings

Roberto Canales alongside 18 other PA educators from across the country spent 20+ hours working with the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) as part of the Standard Setting Work Group. This group met to help PAEA develop performance standards on PAEA's End of Curriculum Exam. This exam is used by participating programs to help assess summative medical knowledge prior to graduation.

Nathan Miracle has begun teaching a section of GEP 101 First Year Foundations. All incoming freshman on the Missouri State campus are required to take this course. In this course students are introduced to all the university resources that are available to help them succeed throughout their academic career as well as providing studying and test-taking skills to help them throughout their time here.

Director of Didactic Education, Nathan Miracle

Fall semester 2021 is off and running. This is typically a difficult semester for students for a new reason, burnout. I encourage you all to take time for yourselves while also making time to continue enhance your medical knowledge and skills. Fridays will be spent in the procedures lab learning new skills that not only enhance your patient care skills but also set you apart from other medical professionals. The learning environment in procedures lab will be more relaxed than you are used to in your PA education, but don't let that allow you to take this class for granted. Learning these skills in a simulated environment, at times, can be frustrating or seem hokey but I promise you that even the simple act of being exposed to these skills and practicing them on a mannequin or foam pad prepares you for your direct patient experiences in your clinical year.

The clinical year will be here before you know it, so take time to enjoy the last month of your didactic education! Find time to spend with your classmates outside of class because next year you will only see each other for two days every six weeks.

DIDACTIC**Class of 2022, Sarah Phillips Class of 2022 President**

The past two months have been full of excitement for the didactic year students. During the last week of summer classes, students volunteered in the Aurora community to complete high school sport physicals for half of the day. This included performing the full physical exam, learning how to perform inguinal hernia checks, and taking a detailed health history. We were told that students in the morning shift completed over 80 sport physicals! Before a weeklong break, we completed a two week “mini rotation” where we got to wear our white coats for the first time. Students from our class were placed in all different settings ranging from dermatology to cardiothoracic surgery. We all had great experiences and it was a breath of fresh air to be out in the workplace where we were able to apply what we have been studying. Our mini rotations made each of eager to begin our clinical year in the spring!

After a much needed relaxing summer break, we dove back into more Clinical Medicine! We began with our gastroenterology unit and will begin pediatrics tomorrow. We have all loved our procedures course on Fridays and it is such a fun way to end the week. So far, we have learned sterile technique as well as suturing. Last week we had an IPE event where we partnered with the UMKC Pharmacy students for a poverty simulation. This was a great learning experience and we really enjoyed learning about how we can better help our future patients by adequately providing resources. This event was very practical, and we are thankful that beyond academic knowledge, MSUs program provides education on how to be prepared providers.



Assistant Professor Maben teaching the basics of sterile gloving



Munia Mustafa proudly displays her continuous running and simple interrupted skills.

Outside of the classroom, we have all tried to take fun study breaks and enjoy as much sunshine as we can before fall arrives. A lot of us have spent weekends studying at the lake, going camping and hiking, and studying by the pool! We also are excited to begin sand volleyball soon... We will keep you updated on how the 'Beta Blockers' perform on the sand court!



Good times were had by all – Procedures Skills lab. Thomas (lying), Josh, Danny, Munia, and Mallory



Melissa, Hannah, Sarah, and Rachel, incorporating fun into a busy Procedure Skills class

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Payden taking the lead in class discussions.

There is much to look forward to as we keep moving through the fall semester. We have begun planning our White Coat Ceremony and are busy finalizing details for PA Week coming up in October. Our class is hosting a Health Care Symposium on October 4th with a panel of nine different healthcare professionals, as well as throwing a PANcake party in the parking lot to kickoff PA week. We are also doing a supply drive for MSU Care Clinic during PA week and hope to get other professional programs and undergraduate societies involved. We would greatly appreciate any donations!

CLINICAL

Class of 2021, -Jesse Saab, Vice President c/o 2021

It's hard to believe we're halfway through our 6th rotation in the class of 2021. Time has flown by this year being out in clinicals getting to put our didactic year knowledge to the test, as well as learn so much more. In my experience, didactic year gave me the foundational knowledge needed to begin clinical year. Now, in clinical year, I'm learning *how* to be a provider. I'm molding my own personality as a soon-to-be PA-C and getting comfortable in my own shoes interacting with patients my way. My knowledge has also exponentially grown from putting it in practice every day on real patients. Only two more rotations after this one before graduation!

August has been a big month especially for me. From the get-go I've always wanted to do Emergency Medicine and I'm finally in my Emergency Medicine rotation. I've absolutely loved every single day. From a sweet 6-year-old with a complaint of "my iron is low" (he really came in for abdominal pain), to a woman that had a fence post rip open the side of her leg that I sutured back up, all the way to someone with bilateral pulmonary emboli that hadn't seen a doctor in 5 years – you never know what's going to come in through those ER doors.

That wasn't even the biggest news of August. On August 10th, I became a father. My wife and I welcomed our beautiful little boy to the world. My wife is my hero for everything she went through to bring the little guy into the world. I'm happy to say they're both doing very well, and we greatly enjoy our family time. Having a kid normally is tough but having a kid during PA school has been even more challenging. I wouldn't change a thing though! We are blessed beyond measure.



Admission & Recruitment

Submitted by LeAnne Snow

The program received a record number of 422 applications for admission consideration to the cohort beginning January 2022. Applications were competitive this cycle with an average overall GPA of 3.6 and an average of 4480 paid, patient care experience hours. Of this highly competitive applicant pool, sixty candidates were selected for interviews that will take place throughout the month of September. This year's interview candidates average 3.7 science and overall GPAs; and 3.8 in their last 60 hour GPA. They also average 5623 hours of paid patient care experience. We are pleased to host a diverse group of interview candidates that include veterans, MSU Health Professions Scholars, first generation college students, as well as a wide range of life experiences including many international experiences.

Thanks to the following students who have volunteered for the student Q&A panel and facility tour during the Thursday pre-interview orientations: Nicole Poganski, Miranda Ruth, Anna Biernbaum, Cassidy, McCandless, Jesse Saab, Mason Simkins, Marc Havlicek, Hannah Swyers, Taylor Heimann, Rachel Peth, Sarah Phillips, Kelby Kujawa, Daniel Orsini, Gerri Idos, Payden Shapland, Hannah Garrad, Hanna Williams, Ashley Rorman, Sarah Dobard, Lauren Robb, Melissa Toman, Colton Peltz and Michael White.

On social media, this fall will be the third year we feature didactic students for #studenttakeover as they learn and practice skills in procedures lab. Be sure to check out our Facebook page to stay up-to-date with department happenings. As a reminder, we would love to feature class/student updates, volunteer activities and photos on our social media platforms. Please submit photos, suggestions for social media posts or blog article proposals to lsnow@missouristate.edu.

OTHER NEWS

EVENTS

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