



Policy Title:
Student Employment Policy

Policy Identifier:
PA-A3.14i

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| Prepared by: PA Program Faculty | Creation Date: 01/01/2026 |
| Reviewed by: PA Executive Committee | Review Date: 01/01/2026 |
| Approved by: PA Executive Committee | Effective Date: 01/01/2026 |
| Category: Academic and Professional Conduct Policies | |

ARC-PA Standards

A3.14i

Scope

University of South Carolina School of Medicine Columbia (USC SOMC) Physician Assistant (PA) students.

Policy Statement

The USC SOMC PA Program is a rigorous, full-time professional program that requires substantial academic and clinical commitment. Because of the demanding nature of the curriculum and the need for consistent engagement in coursework, clinical rotations, and professional activities, outside employment is strongly discouraged while enrolled in the program.

Students are expected to prioritize their academic and clinical responsibilities to ensure successful completion of program requirements and development of professional competence.

Reason for Policy

To ensure compliance with ARC-PA Standard A3.14i by defining the program’s policy on student employment during enrollment. This policy is designed to protect the integrity of the educational experience, safeguard academic performance, and maintain compliance with accreditation standards regarding student workload and supervision.

Definitions

- **Outside Employment:** Any form of paid work or professional service performed by a student outside of program-related responsibilities.
- **Full-Time Enrollment:** Continuous participation in the PA Program’s didactic and clinical curriculum, including classes, labs, clinical experiences, simulations, and assessments.
- **Good Academic Standing:** A status indicating the student meets all academic and professional standards required for progression.



Policy Guidelines

1. Academic Commitment

The PA Program is an intensive, full-time program requiring extensive study, preparation, and participation in didactic and clinical activities. Students are expected to devote 40–60 hours per week to program-related responsibilities. Because of the program’s rigor, students are strongly discouraged from working while enrolled.

2. Employment During Enrollment

Students who choose to engage in outside employment must ensure that such work does not interfere with academic or clinical responsibilities. Employment will not be accepted as an excuse for poor academic performance, missed deadlines, absences, or scheduling conflicts. Students are not permitted to work for the program in any capacity or substitute for faculty, clinical, or administrative staff.

3. Clinical Phase Considerations

During Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (SCPEs), students are required to be available for irregular and extended hours, including evenings and weekends. Employment during this phase is strongly discouraged and may conflict with rotation schedules or required study for End-of-Rotation assessments.

4. Notification and Advising

Students considering outside employment should discuss the decision with their faculty advisor to assess potential academic impact. Advisors and program leadership may counsel students on time management and academic priorities but cannot grant formal approval for outside employment.

Enforcement and Accountability

Students whose outside employment negatively affects their academic or professional performance may be subject to review by the Student Progress and Promotions Committee (SPPC). Continued academic or professionalism concerns related to employment may result in disciplinary action, including probation or dismissal in accordance with program policies.

Contacts

Program Director
USC School of Medicine Columbia
Physician Assistant Program

History

| Date of Change | Change |
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| 01/01/2026 | Policy drafted into new template. |