

RMC

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Doctor of Medical Science Program

Class of 2022 Student Handbook



PREFACE

Welcome to the Rocky Mountain College (RMC) Doctor of Medical Sciences Program (DMSc). This program-specific DMSc Student Handbook is published as an addendum to the RMC Catalog to aid students who are applying, preparing to begin Doctoral training at RMC, or actively engaged in the DMSc. The handbook must be used in conjunction with the following:

- Current edition of the Rocky Mountain College online catalog, which may be accessed at: www.rocky.edu (click on ACADEMICS and then COURSE CATALOG)
- Internet posting of RMC policies found at: <https://www.rocky.edu/academics/course-catalog>
- [Program Website: https://www.rocky.edu/dmsc](https://www.rocky.edu/dmsc)

Each applicant and student needs to clearly understand both the College and Program-specific policies. Please read these sources carefully and contact the DMSc Program Director with any questions or concerns you may have with respect to these important documents and how they apply to you.

Occasionally, updates, corrections, additions, or other changes to this handbook become necessary. Rocky Mountain College reserves the right to alter the contents of this handbook as needed and at any time. Any changes apply to all current and prospective students. The faculty reserves the right to alter the curriculum, schedule of required courses, exams, and other regulations affecting admission and graduation requirements. Every effort will be made to keep students well informed with respect to any changes.

Validation of college registration implies the student's acceptance of the published academic rules and regulations found in this and any other official program or college publication.

FROM THE PROGRAM DIRECTOR

Welcome to the Rocky Mountain College Doctor of Medical Sciences Program. We are excited to elevate your horizon! We are dedicated to enhancing your medical knowledge, leadership skills, quality medical delivery, and scholarly work.

Our faculty is committed to providing you with high quality Doctoral education culminating in the opportunity to publish scholarly work. Our excellent student to faculty ratio contributes to an environment of thoughtful discussion and positive interactions with colleagues. We are excited to be your mentors, advisors, and colleagues in fostering a culture of growth, professionalism, open communication, and leadership.

We look forward to providing you a top-notch education in this challenging Doctoral program. Thank you for the opportunity to be a part of your education.

Heather Heggem, DMSc, PA-C
Program Director
Doctor of Medical Sciences Program



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OUR PROGRAM

Rocky Mountain College Mission Statement

Rocky Mountain College educates future leaders through liberal arts and professional programs that cultivate critical thinking, creative expression, ethical decision-making, informed citizenship, and professional excellence.

Doctor of Medical Science Program

Mission

The DMSc program aims to promote the physician assistant profession through the enhancement of knowledge in leadership, healthcare policy, quality medical delivery improvement, and research.

Goals

The DMSc Program aims to provide a high-quality medical education experience which will challenge graduates to:

- Demonstrate a commitment to scholarship and lifelong learning
- Demonstrate leadership in medicine appropriate to a physician assistant
- Demonstrate competency in clinical medicine appropriate to a physician assistant

Program Outcomes

1. Demonstrate the importance of evidence-based medicine in clinical practice;
2. Contribute to the body of medical literature;
3. Recognize and describe aspects of quality in patient care;
4. Employ techniques and protocols that lead to safe patient care;
5. Promote patient safety;
6. Communicate effectively in clinical and other medical settings;
7. Acknowledge the importance of ethical behavior in medical settings;
8. Describe key differences between rural and urban medical practice;
9. Identify and manage legal, regulatory, economic, and organizational factors that affect medical practice.

Accreditation

Rocky Mountain College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) Program is included in that accreditation as of September 9, 2020.

Faculty and Staff

The full-time program faculty coordinate, direct, and oversee the curriculum, as well as monitor and evaluate students' academic and professional progress. You will work closely with each of these individuals throughout the 12-month curriculum. Program leadership, faculty, and staff maintain an open-door policy to enhance accessibility, communication, and professional exchange.

Core Program Faculty

Heather Heggem, DMSc, PA-C

Program Director/Assistant Professor

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Patti States, MD

Assistant Professor

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Program Staff

Cody Halverson

Coordinator of Admissions for Health Professions

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Admissions

This working document serves as a comprehensive admissions policy for the Doctor of Medical Science (DMSc) Program at Rocky Mountain College. Below is a checklist for all item's candidates must provide to be eligible for admission. This information can also be found here: <https://www.rocky.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate/dmsc/admissions-requirements>

- Master's degree in Physician Assistant Studies
- Minimum overall graduate GPA of 3.0 (4.0 scale)
- Official transcripts from all graduate coursework
 - Previous RMC transcripts are already on file
 - Transcripts must be received prior to the scheduled class matriculation date or class standing will be revoked.
- TOEFL score must meet standard requirements of RMC for all applicants if English is not the first language
- Proof of current licensure/certification as a Physician Assistant in good standing. Applicants must be NCCPA certified to enter the DMSc. Please see the national requirements for licensure to enter into the PA profession at <https://www.nccpa.net/BecomingCertified>. In order to maintain certification please see <https://www.nccpa.net/CertificationProcess>. (These links include a detailed description of requirements for employment and information on national eligibility requirements for maintaining licensure and entry into the PA profession.)
- Please send to:

*Rocky Mountain College
Attn. DMSc
1511 Poly Dr.
Billings, MT 59102*

- Brief phone interview
- Completed online application

Failure to submit the mandatory transcripts or fulfill any other requirements specified in a conditional offer of admission to the program prior to the scheduled class matriculation will result in withdrawal of conditional offer.

Costs/Financial Aid

Deposit

Upon notification of acceptance to the Rocky Mountain College Doctor of Medical Science Program, applicants are required to submit a \$1000 non-refundable admissions deposit. This deposit, which must be received within seven days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays) of being notified of acceptance, will be applied toward the first term tuition and fees.

Application Fee: \$100

Tuition/Quarter:

January 2021 - \$7,500 Tuition

April 2021 - \$7,500 Tuition

July 2021 - \$7,500 Tuition

October 2021 - \$7,500 Tuition

Total tuition: \$30,000

Fees/Quarter:

Academic Lab Fee - \$95

Campus Technology Fee - \$105

For information on financial aid opportunities for DMSc students please read this [Special letter to Doctor of Medical Science students](#).

Academic Advisement

Students will be assigned an academic (faculty) advisor at matriculation. All faculty advisors are members of the program's core faculty. Students should maintain regular communication with their advisor, especially if academic, technical, or professional difficulties are identified.

Responsibilities of the faculty advisors include but are not limited to:

- Closely monitoring the students' academic progress. If concerns arise, the faculty advisor will schedule individual conferences to address specific performance problems and develop a plan for remediation/correction.
- Addressing concerns about individual professionalism or academic issues that are raised by other faculty, staff, or students.

Program Overview

The Doctor of Medical Science program is a 12-month program with 36 total credits. The program will consist of four terms that are 9 credits each.

First 12-week term:

- Evidence-Based Medicine and Professional Writing (3 credits)
- Healthcare Administration and Leadership (3 credits)
- Health Promotion (3 credits)

Second 12-week term:

- Health Care Policy (3 credits)
- PA Practicum I (2 credits)
- Scholarly Project (1 credit)
- Global Health (3 credits)

Third 12-week term:

- Healthcare Economics & Societal Outcomes (3 credits)
- PA Practicum II (2 credits)
- Scholarly Project II (1 credit)
- Communication in Medicine (3 credits)

Fourth 12-week term:

- Rural Healthcare (3 credits)
- PA Practicum III (2 credits)
- Scholarly Project III (1 credit)
- Patient Safety, Quality & Ethics (3 credits)

Course Descriptions

Evidence-Based Medicine and Professional Writing (3 Credits)

This course is designed to actively engage the learner in the most up to date medical literature to improve patient outcomes and safety. Students will learn tools to review the literature in an informed manner that drives best practices in medicine. Improving effectiveness in interpreting medical studies, research, and scholarly work. The learner will be introduced into thorough literature reviews that will be helpful in daily practice. This course also includes an introduction to professional writing with the intent to support writing for the scholarly project.

Healthcare Administration and Leadership (3 Credits)

This course is designed to prepare the learner to become an advocate and leader in the medical profession. Gaining a deeper understanding of healthcare administrative decisions that drive medicine throughout the world will help the learner to actively seek out leadership positions in the hospital or educational setting through better knowledge, communication skills, and leadership. The course encourages the practice of open communication in professional relationships based on respect, compassion, and integrity. This course encourages Identifying areas of change that lead to improvement in patient outcomes.

Health Promotion (3 Credits)

Patients may suffer from chronic, debilitating disease, and this course teaches evidence-based healthy lifestyle modification to improve patient outcomes. Healthy practices are effective in reducing stress, preventing and managing a myriad of diseases, and can lead to a better quality of life. In this course, students will examine and develop strategies to help promote and communicate various lifestyle improvement to patients, including nutrition, discontinuation of abusive substances, good sleep hygiene practices, and exercise.

Scholarly Project (1 Credit) (I, II, and III)

This course provides a template for the production of scholarly work by physician assistants with the goal of publishing in a peer-reviewed journal. Using tools from research design, literature searches and evidence-based medicine, the framework will be set for the student to publish scholarly work and enhance the PA profession. This course will take the student through a step by step approach each term to complete their scholarly project.

Health Care Policy (3 credits)

This course is designed to help the learner acquire a deeper understanding of health care policy and the laws that drive decisions in clinical medicine. Learning the steps taken in

healthcare policy to achieve better health outcomes, increased access to care, and healthcare cost savings .

Practicum (2 credits) (I, II, and III)

This course is designed to encourage the clinically practicing physician assistant to explore specific aspects of clinical medicine on a deeper level. The learner will learn ways to improve patient outcomes by providing safe, cost effective medicine. This course encourages critical thinking in the clinical setting chosen by the practicing PA and is supported through discussion boards with other practicing clinicians in similar work environments. The course encourages goal-oriented activity and furthering expertise in the clinical setting while developing confidence by expanding their medical knowledge. This course will build each term on previously gained knowledge.

Global Health (3 credits)

This course is designed to give the learner a deeper understanding of common global health issues and the role that the global health system plays. Discovering health priorities worldwide and advocating for policy change in diverse populations will be required.

Healthcare Economics & Societal Outcomes (3 credits)

This course is designed for the learner to understand the governing laws and policies in which medicine is practiced under. An emphasis will be placed on healthcare laws that affect patient safety, privacy, and access to care.

Communication in Medicine (3 Credits)

This course is designed for the learner to expand their knowledge of thorough history taking skills, motivational interviewing techniques, and developing effective relationships with both patients and colleagues. This course will also emphasize the importance of effective communication and leadership skills within a healthcare team environment.

Rural Healthcare (3 credits)

This course is designed to introduce the learner to the unique challenges and rewards of practicing medicine in rural communities. Exploration of rural health care policy and payment systems, demographics, access to healthcare, and the importance of the PA role in these communities.

Patient Safety, Quality and Ethics (3 Credits)

This course is designed for the learner to develop a deeper understanding of initiatives and policy designed to improve patient safety. Emphasis will be placed on improving patient safety in the practicing PA's environment with a plan to effect change at their organization.

PROGRAM STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

Academic Integrity

Students in the Doctor of Medical Science Program must comply with the RMC Academic Integrity Policy. Dishonesty in any form will not be tolerated in our Program. In addition to the ethical issue of honesty, as a professional program, we hold all our students to the AAPA Guidelines for Ethical Conduct for the Physician Assistant Profession. These guidelines can be found at the following website:

<https://www.aapa.org/>

Honesty and scholarship require that a person exercise care to make proper acknowledgement when using another's intellectual work. Disregard of these standards of scholarship exposes scholars to charges of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. Refer to the RMC Catalog for details on standards for academic integrity.

Assessments

Student assessments of learning and academic/scholastic achievement take several forms during the Doctor of Medical Science Program. These include:

- Examinations, quizzes, discussion posts, papers, scholarly project, and portfolios
- *Please refer to individual course syllabi for specific academic standards*

Technical Standards

Technical standards refer to those physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required of all Doctor of Medical Science candidates. Students admitted to the DMSc Program must meet certain essential requirements (technical standards) that are necessary to perform as a Physician Assistant. Please see the PA profession competencies at <https://www.aapa.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PA-Competencies-updated.pdf>.

Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis; but an applicant must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to independently undertake and complete the full program curriculum and achieve the required level of competence in the time period allotted by program policy. Candidates must hold a current NCCPA licensure and meet admission criteria in order to complete all required technical standards of the DMSc.

Technological accommodation can be made for some disabilities in certain areas, but all candidates should be able to perform in an independent manner. Students with disabilities are responsible for requesting accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act through the procedures outlined in the Rocky Mountain College

catalog. (See Accommodations/Disabilities in the General Policies and Procedures section of this handbook.)

Professional Standards - Code of Ethics

Students are required to demonstrate professional behavior throughout the duration of their enrollment at Rocky Mountain College.

Professional behavior means having and demonstrating respect for everyone, holding oneself to ethical and moral standards of behavior, and developing the knowledge and skills that enable one to provide competent and compassionate patient care. At a minimum, Rocky Mountain College DMSc students are required to abide by the profession's Code of Ethics.

Code of Ethics

The Rocky Mountain College DMSc Program recognizes its responsibility to prepare its graduates to maintain the highest standards in the provision of quality health care services. To that end, this program teaches, endorses, and strives to adhere to the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) code of ethics. See AAPA website to view code of ethics.

1. Physician assistants shall be committed to providing competent medical care, assuming as their primary responsibility the health, safety, welfare, and dignity of all humans.
2. Physician assistants shall extend to each patient the full measure of their ability as dedicated empathetic health care providers, and shall assume responsibility for the skillful and proficient transaction of their professional duties.
3. Physician assistants shall deliver needed health care services to health consumers without regard to sex, race, age, creed, socio-economic, and political status.
4. Physician Assistants shall adhere to all state and federal laws governing informed consent concerning the patient's health.
5. Physician Assistants shall seek consultation with their supervising physician, other health providers, or qualified professionals having special skills, knowledge, or experience whenever the welfare of the patient will be safeguarded or advanced by such consultation.
6. Physician Assistants shall take personal responsibility for being familiar with and adhering to all federal/state laws applicable to the practice of their profession.
7. Physician Assistants shall provide only those services for which they are qualified via education and/or experience and by pertinent legal regulatory process.
8. Physician Assistants shall not misrepresent in any manner, either directly or indirectly, their skills, training, professional credentials, identity, or services.
9. Physician Assistants shall uphold the doctrine of confidentiality regarding privileged patient information, unless required to release such information by law or such information becomes necessary to protect the welfare of the patient or the community.
10. Physician Assistants shall strive to maintain and increase the quality of individual health care services through individual study and continuing education.
11. Physician Assistants shall have the duty to respect the law, to uphold the dignity of the Physician Assistant profession and to accept its ethical principles. The Physician Assistant shall not participate in or conceal any activity that will bring discredit or dishonor to the Physician Assistant profession, and shall expose without fear or favor any

- illegal or unethical conduct in the medical profession.
12. Physician Assistants, ever cognizant of the needs of the community, shall use the knowledge and experience acquired as professionals to contribute to an improved community.
 13. Physician Assistants shall place service before material gain and must guard against conflicts of professional interest.
 14. Physician Assistants will strive to maintain a spirit of co-operation with their professional organization and the general public.

Specific Program Standards of Conduct

- Students will be required to conduct themselves in a manner that emulates the professional code of ethics defined by the AAPA.
- Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that indicates respect toward other students, faculty, and patients.
- Students must refrain from any behavior that would bring harm or abuse to any person or property.
- Any behavior that significantly disrupts teaching, research, administrative, or student functions is considered unprofessional.

Failure to demonstrate any of the qualities defined in the AAPA Professional Code of Ethics or the Specific Standards of Conduct listed above will serve as grounds for dismissal.

Evaluation of Professional Behavior

Formal evaluation of professional behavior will be performed by the program's faculty at the following points in the Physician Assistant curriculum:

- At the end of each quarter (program faculty evaluation)

The first time a student receives an unsatisfactory rating on any professionalism evaluation, he/she will be placed on Academic Probation that will continue until the next regularly scheduled evaluation. Any subsequent unsatisfactory professionalism evaluation will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Completion/Graduation Requirements

The Doctoral of Medical Sciences Program degree will be granted to all students who have completed the requirements for graduation as specified in this Student Handbook and the corresponding [Rocky Mountain College Catalog](#), and are recommended for graduation by the program's core faculty. Successful candidates for graduation must have completed the following:

- Successfully complete, with a minimum grade of a C in each course, the entire program curriculum and achieve the required minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0.
- Demonstrate professionalism and competency to practice medicine as a physician assistant.

- Complete, to the satisfaction of the program faculty, a portfolio and Scholarly Project.
- All program requirements must be finished within 12 months of the student's scheduled program completion date (calculated on the basis of the original program matriculation date).

Retention Standards/Changes in Student Status

Earning a Doctoral Degree is predicated on the faculty's determination that a student is *suitable* for that degree in terms of professionalism, personal conduct, and academic achievement. ***Grades alone are not sufficient to warrant promotion to the next quarter or graduation.*** The faculty reserves the right to dismiss any student when the student's documented behavior is not in keeping with the standards of the medical profession, or when the student's presence in the DMSc is considered detrimental to the student in question, the other students in the college, or to society in general.

Leave of Absence: A leave of absence for medical or personal reasons from the DMSc may be granted by the program director. Requests for leaves of absence must be made in writing to the program director. Such students will be permitted to resume course work upon receipt of documentation of satisfactory resolution of the problem necessitating the leave of absence . Repetition of course work previously and satisfactorily completed prior to the leave of absence will not be required provided resumption in training occurs within one academic year from the date the leave of absence begins.

Withdrawal: Students may voluntarily withdraw from the program in accordance with college policies and procedures. (Consult the current [Rocky Mountain College policy](#) for details.) Written notice of intent to withdraw must be provided to the program director prior to initiating the formal college withdrawal process.

Probation: Being placed on probation is a warning to the student that his/her performance is below the minimum requirements of the program. During probation, a student must raise his/her grade point average or correct other identified problems to the required minimum standard or risk dismissal from the program.

- This change in program status is imposed by the program director in accordance with the Standards of Performance policies and procedures outlined in this Student Handbook.
- The minimum length of probation is one quarter.
- A student on probation will be subject to dismissal for failure to resolve the deficiency OR the occurrence of any other violation which mandates program dismissal.

Suspension: Any student may be suspended from continued participation in the program to allow sufficient time to investigate allegations of unprofessional behavior, violations of academic integrity, or other claims of personal misconduct. Suspension will be imposed by the program director.

Dismissal: Dismissal is a permanent separation from the program. The following is a list of conditions under which students will be dismissed from the Rocky Mountain College DMSc Program:

- Violation of any college or program rules, regulations, policies, or procedures with regards to academic integrity.
- Failure to achieve the required minimum grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 after having been on Academic Probation for one quarter.
- Refusal or failure to satisfactorily complete a remediation plan for any course.
- Judged to be professionally unfit for the practice of medicine by at least two different faculty.
- Students on probation or on an extended curriculum (i.e., their projected program completion date is extended beyond the originally scheduled program completion date for their class based upon their date of matriculation) are subject to immediate dismissal upon receipt of a failing a course grade or violation of any of the terms of their probation.

Dismissal from the Rocky Mountain College DMSc for any of the above conditions can occur at the program level. Students who wish to challenge the program's appeal decision may initiate a subsequent appeal to the Office of the Provost/Academic Vice President.

Refunds

When a student withdraws before 60% of the quarter elapses, the College must return to the Department of Education any unearned federal financial aid funds up to the unearned percentage of institutional charges for the portion of the period the student did not complete. Federal dollars that need to be returned will be applied in the following order: unsubsidized federal Stafford loan, subsidized federal Stafford loan, federal Perkins loan, federal PLUS loan, federal Pell grant, federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant, and Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnership program. The calculation of the return of these funds may result in the student owing a balance to either the College and/or the federal government.

If the student owes a balance to the College, the amount is due at the time of withdrawal. Arrangements for monthly payments may be set up if the student cannot pay the total amount. The student will not be able to validate his or her enrollment, attend future classes, or obtain transcripts or diplomas, until the balance is either paid in full or satisfactory payment arrangements have been made. If the student owes an overpayment to the Department of Education, the College will report the amount owed to the Department of Education through the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS). The student will not be eligible for future federal financial aid funds until payment arrangements have been set up with the Department of Education or until the overpayment has been paid in full.

The withdrawal calculation for those students receiving institutional assistance or those receiving no assistance, who withdraw from the College before they have completed 60% of the quarter, will be evaluated in the same manner as a student receiving federal financial aid.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Academic Policies and Procedures

Evaluation/Progress Reviews

Each member of the program's faculty participates in systematic evaluation of student progress throughout the program with regards to academic, technical, and professional performance. When deficiencies are observed, individual student counseling is performed and a plan for remedial training is developed.

Testing Policies

Computerized testing: Computerized testing is subject to potential technological failure. Fortunately, these occurrences are rare, but when they occur, the program makes every effort to equitably account for technical difficulties. Students are required to adhere to program decisions if these events occur.

Test Absences

Students are expected to take examinations at the designated time. In the event of an illness, the student must contact the course/module director and/or the program director **BEFORE** the test to inform her/him of the anticipated absence. A student who has missed an examination due to excused illness or personal crisis will have **NO MORE** than 48 hours in which to complete that examination. Students with a prolonged illness or personal crisis will be reviewed individually by the program director and arrangements made accordingly.

Student absences from scheduled examinations and sessions will be excused only under extraordinary circumstances. Examinations will not be administered prior to the scheduled examination time without the approval of the program director.

Remediation

Remediation is required whenever a faculty member identifies and documents any deficiency in a student's knowledge, skills, abilities, or professionalism. Deficiencies may be identified during activities, academic advising, remedial instruction, or other formal program instructional and/or student assessment activity.

Remediation will be required whenever a failing grade is earned on any formal examination or assessment.

When the need for remediation is identified, the student will meet with the corresponding course director via skype within two (2) school days of written notification. (The posting of a failing grade on a written examination on Moodle will be considered written notification of the

student.)

The course director will be responsible for developing a formal documented remediation plan, which may include any or all of the following learning activities or any other actions that will assist the student in overcoming the identified deficiencies. Examples of remedial activities include:

- Examination review/analysis
- Individual or group tutorial instruction
- Assigned topic(s) literature search and written abstraction, or summation of the information learned
- Assigned case studies with written responses to study questions
- Oral re-assessment
- Other learning activities (videos, CME programs, etc.)

The student must also meet with their assigned faculty advisor within two days of the notification of need for remediation. The purpose of the meeting is to assess the student's overall program status and discuss/identify any external influences that may have contributed to their unsatisfactory progress. If a specific need for assistance is identified, the advisor will assist the student in locating/scheduling the needed assistance.

A deadline for completion of the remediation activities will be established by the course/module director. Failure to successfully complete the required remediation will result in the assignment of a failing grade (F) for the course in which the remediation was required.

The completed documentation of remediation and academic advising activities performed will be filed in the student's program record. Remediation does not ensure that the student will successfully attain the required level of performance, but it serves to support the student in their attempt at skill mastery.

Grade Assignment

All grades are assigned by the program core faculty. Students wishing to appeal a grade and pursue a grade change (including any clinical rotation grade) must follow the Grade Grievances procedure outlined below.

Grade Grievances

When a grade concern arises, it is the student's responsibility to resolve the issue with the faculty member who was responsible for assigning the grade. If the matter cannot be resolved to the student's satisfaction with the instructor, the student should contact his/her advisor for assistance. If still unresolved, a written appeal to the program director may be made within 5 days of the grade assignment. The program director will independently evaluate the situation and render a decision. The decision of the program director is final.

Academic Progress

Students are required to maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 and achieve a course letter grade of “C” or better in all courses.

The program core faculty will review academic progress at the end of each quarter. Any individual who does not meet the specified end-of- semester cumulative GPA requirements will be placed on academic probation for one quarter. The cumulative GPA must be raised to the minimum requirement during the probationary quarter. Failure to meet the minimum GPA at the end of the probationary quarter will result in immediate dismissal from the program. Students are also required to achieve a semester GPA of 3.0, regardless of their cumulative GPA. Any student who does not achieve a semester GPA of 3.0 will also be placed on academic probation regardless of their cumulative GPA. Any student who has two subsequent quarter GPAs of less than 3.0 may be dismissed from the program, regardless of their cumulative GPA.

Academic Appeals

The DMSc Program recognizes due process and the rights of a student to appeal program decisions/actions affecting student progress within the program. Student’s appeals must be based upon the program’s failure to follow established policies or procedures. Students must present evidence that supports their appeal of a program decision/action according to the appeal process as defined herein:

1. All appeals must be submitted to the program director, in writing, within 5 working days of the occurrence that is the subject of the grievance.
2. Appeals will be reviewed during a meeting of the program core faculty, and a decision will be rendered to the student within 10 working days of receipt of the appeal. Students will be invited to attend the faculty meeting at which the appeal is considered to present their case and respond to any questions the faculty may have. As this meeting is a purely an academic proceeding, no legal counsel will be allowed to attend or participate. The appellant student may, however, request participation by other students or non-program faculty with approval of the program director.
Proceedings may not be recorded in any manner (audio, video, digital, etc.)
3. Students who wish to challenge the program’s appeal decision may initiate a subsequent appeal to the Office of the Provost/Academic Vice President. This appeal must be initiated within 10 working days of the program’s appeal decision and must be submitted in writing.
4. All academic appeal decisions rendered by the Provost/Academic Vice President are final.

Readmission

Any individual who has been previously offered admission into the program but failed to matriculate in the designated class will be required to initiate a new application for admission.

General Policies & Procedures

Accommodations/Disabilities

Rocky Mountain College and the DMSc Program are committed to providing courses, programs, services, and facilities that are accessible to students with disabilities. Students with disabilities are responsible for identifying themselves, providing appropriate documentation, and requesting reasonable accommodations. In order to ensure provision of needed accommodations/support services from the onset of participation in the DMSc, students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the [Rocky Mountain College graduate student Section 501/ADA Coordinator](#) immediately after accepting a position in the program to provide/initiate the necessary documentation to establish an accommodations plan. Refer to the most recent edition of the [Rocky Mountain College Catalog](#) for further information.

Name and Contact Information Changes

It is every student's responsibility to keep the program informed of current contact information throughout their program application and enrollment. The contact information that must be kept current includes:

- Name changes
- Mailing address
- Telephone number(s)
- E-mail address

The program will not be held responsible for consequences incurred as a result of our inability to contact students in a timely manner due to contact information changes that were not reported to the program, or for e-mail or other correspondence that goes unread.

Enrolled students are responsible for checking the Rocky.edu e-mail account, Moodle correspondence, and phone voice messages at least daily.

Grievance Procedures

Students are encouraged to pursue informal resolutions to conflicts in a professional manner. Grievances of a non-academic nature, if formally pursued, must follow the policies and procedures described in the [Rocky Mountain College Catalog](#).

Nondiscrimination/Harassment

The following are specific policy statements of Rocky Mountain College:

1. EOE/AA Policy -- It is the policy of Rocky Mountain College to afford equal opportunity in employment and admissions to all individuals. No person, on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, or handicap shall be excluded or denied benefits or otherwise discriminated against in employment or admission or participation in education programs or activities. Discrimination shall not be tolerated in any service or operation

including, but not limited to, recruiting, testing, counseling, awarding financial aid, research, etching, assignment of work-study and assistantships, granting of degrees, or participation in RMC sponsored student recreation or organizational activities.

2. Sexual Harassment Policy -- It is the policy of the College to provide a working, learning, and teaching environment free from unlawful harassment of any kind, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment of any student, on or off campus, is prohibited and will not be tolerated. Retaliation against a person who reports or complains about harassment, or who participates in the investigation of a harassment complaint, is also prohibited.

Each member of the College community is responsible for adhering to and implementing these policies. Employees and students will be subject to disciplinary action for violation of these policies.

Program Evaluations

Students are required to complete all course, program, and faculty evaluations. Student input is a vital and integral component of the program's ongoing self-assessment and improvement process, and is an absolute requirement for program accreditation. All mandatory evaluations provided by students are completed in a confidential manner. Many of the evaluations are available via Moodle, providing for easy statistical analysis of the survey results and tracking, while maintaining student anonymity. A student's history of completing course evaluations is a component of professional evaluation.

Security and Safety

Rocky Mountain College and the DMSc Program strive to ensure the security and safety of students. Students should assume responsibility for notifying the program and/or college when security or safety concerns arise.

RESOURCES

Facilities

Libraries

In addition to the [Educational Resource Center](#) (ERC), students have access to more resources through the Billings Area Health Science Information Consortium, a group of public and private libraries dedicated to meeting the needs of students and professionals. These librarians are specifically trained in the needs of PA students and, thus, are excellent sources of information on how to access medical literature.

Professional Organizations

American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) <http://www.aapa.org/>

National Commission for Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) <http://www.nccpa.net/>

Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) <http://www.paeaonline.org/>
