



Area: University of Oklahoma School of Community Medicine PA Program, Tulsa
Title: Deceleration Policy

The curriculum is designed to be completed on a full-time basis over 30 months. Deceleration is a mechanism for allowing a student to complete the curriculum through required repetition of the didactic phase of the curriculum or delayed completion of the clinical phase. The maximum time to complete the program is 48 months from matriculation. Deceleration may be considered when a recommendation is made by the Student Progress Committee (SPC), or a student submits a request to decelerate.

Policy

Deceleration is defined by the ARC-PA as "the loss of a student from the cohort, who remains matriculated in the physician assistant program." The OU SCM PA program does not decelerate students who fail to meet the program's professionalism policies.

Deceleration may occur either through SPC recommendation or a student request.

SPC Recommendation

- The SPC may recommend deceleration to the PA program director when a student fails to progress as required in the Academic Standards and Progression Policy. An offer of deceleration is not guaranteed when a student fails to meet academic standards.
- The program director determines the final decision for deceleration.

Student Request

- A student may submit a written request to the PA program director to request deceleration. Reasons for deceleration may include, but are not limited to, personal, family, or health concerns that will impact the ability of the student to successfully progress through the curriculum.
- The program director determines the final decision for deceleration.

The maximum entering class size is approved by the ARC-PA. Any increase above the ARC-PA approved maximum entering class size for any reason (including a decelerated student) requires program notification to the ARC-PA using the Exceeding Approved Class Size required report.

SPC Interventions

The SPC may determine it appropriate to recommend a student to repeat specific components of the program curriculum or an entire phase of the program curriculum for reasons that may include, but not limited to, the student's taking of a leave of absence and/or failure of didactic or clinical course(s). The SPC will develop an individualized education plan, which may also include a re-entry plan, to support the student's success that details specific requirements to be met by the student in order for them to advance. Consideration will include the course(s) most affected by the leave of absence and/or failures. This SPC interventions are defined as follows:

Didactic Deceleration: Defined as a failure to satisfactorily complete didactic phase requirements prior to cohort advancement resulting in SPC recommendation for repetition of the entire didactic phase of the curriculum. Deceleration will require the student to rematriculate with the next cohort and successfully and satisfactorily complete didactic phase requirements to advance in the program.

Clinical Delay: Defined as a delay in completion of the clinical phase by four months or less, this is typically a result of an approved brief leave of absence and/or from retaking one or more failed clinical rotation(s). Delay will require the student to successfully complete the individualized education plan set by the SPC. Although the graduation date of the student may be delayed, the student will maintain matriculation with their original cohort for ARC-PA reporting requirements.

Clinical Deceleration: Defined as a delay in completion of the clinical phase by greater than four months, this is typically a result of an approved extended leave of absence and/or failed clinical rotation(s). Deceleration will require the student to successfully complete the individualized education plan set by the SPC. The SPC reserves the right to require the student to repeat the entire clinical phase. Although the graduation date may differ, the student will be considered a part of the next cohort for ARC-PA reporting requirements.

Deceleration interventions that require the student to join a new cohort will require them to comply with any revisions in curriculum requirements and policies of their new cohort. Decelerated students who return to the program and subsequently fail a course, fail to maintain academic progression, and/or fail to meet all technical standards will be recommended for dismissal from the program. Decelerated students who fail a course will not be offered course remediation.

Re-entry Remediation Plan

The option for deceleration will include a re-entry remediation plan determined by the SPC as part of the individualized education plan. Re-entry plans will define the student's responsibilities while decelerated. Plans may include, but are not limited to, a written examination, a practical examination, and/or completing a learning contract while on leave. Additionally, the student must provide a monthly update to the SPC on the progress of the re-entry plan.

The student must notify the program director in writing within seven (7) calendar days whether the terms of deceleration are accepted. If the student does not accept the option of deceleration, procedures for withdrawal or a recommendation for dismissal will be initiated.

Failure to meet the terms of the re-entry plan may result in withdrawal of deceleration and a notification of recommendation for dismissal from the program.

Finances

Deceleration results in delayed graduation and additional financial burdens to the student. Students are fully responsible for any additional tuition and fees and for any impact to financial aid eligibility. Students are advised to discuss these issues with the university financial aid office prior to making any decisions regarding requesting deceleration and/or returning to the program if granted the option of deceleration.

PA Faculty Committee Policy Date: 4/10/24

Academic Program Council Approval: 5/2/24