POLICY

Number: 657

Area: OKC PA Program- PA Student Affairs

Title: Graduation and Commencement Ceremonies

Students in the Physician Associate Program who meet the minimum standards for graduation and have the recommendation of the Academic Affairs and Promotions Committee are eligible to participate in the commencement ceremonies of the College.

1. **Awarding of Diplomas**
   Diplomas are awarded once a year. The Registrar is responsible for ordering diplomas after the Physician Associate Program submits the list of “degree candidates”. The Physician Associate Program has as its date of graduation:
   
   a. Fall – the fall graduation date set by the program.

2. **Ordering of Diplomas**
   
   a. Diplomas for fall graduates are ordered when requirements are completed for graduation.
3. **Official Name on Diploma**

Diplomas will be ordered under the name listed on the student’s official academic record at the time of graduation. Variations are allowed such as:

a. Using maiden name, and/or dropping the full middle name and using an initial.

b. The last name and the first name must be spelled out so that the name on the diploma and the academic record can always be matched. The use of a middle initial is acceptable.

c. The adding of a suffix is acceptable providing the student completes a “Change of Name” form with evidence of the suffix being part of the student’s legal name.

d. Students who wish to make changes in how their name appears on their diploma must make the request in writing to the Office of Admissions and Records prior to Physician Associate Program diplomas being ordered. Students who request a name change after diplomas have been ordered will be required to pay an additional cost for reprinting of the diploma.

e. Married names cannot appear on the diploma if the marriage has not taken place at the time of the diploma order.

f. Students who change their names after the graduation date may request a new diploma at their expense.

4. **Date of Graduation**

While the University has exempted the College of Medicine from the official policy establishing date of graduation, the College has imposed its own standards:
All Physician Associate students must fill out an “Application for Graduation.”

5. Graduation Ceremony

a. The commencement ceremony recognizing the achievements of students having completed all requirements for the Master of Health Sciences degree is an honored tradition. It is at this time the graduates are invested with the Master’s hood representing the University and the discipline of Medicine. Additionally, the graduates take an oath for the profession of Medicine. The hooding of graduates and the recitation of the oath is the symbolic commitment to respect the privileges inherent with the degree.

b. The PA Program will assume the responsibility of performing the graduation ceremony.

c. All eligible students in the Physician Associate Program are expected to participate in the commencement ceremonies.

d. In order to be eligible to participate in the graduation ceremony, a student may not be delayed greater than three (3) months after the designated ceremony date. Students not meeting this timeframe will be eligible to participate in the ceremony of the following year.

e. Graduation will be held in October/November.

6. Participation in Graduation Ceremonies

a. Students who have circumstances which may prevent attendance at commencement must submit a letter of explanation to the Program Director. Alternate arrangements for recitation of the oath will be required.
b. Recitation of the Oath
The Physician Associate Program uses as its official oath an adaptation of the original Oath of Hippocrates and the Declaration of Geneva.

c. Individual Hooding
At the discretion of the PA Program, graduates may be individually hooded by an immediate family member defined as a spouse, mother, father, child or sibling, if one of the following applies:

I. The family member is a Physician Assistant.
II. The family member is a physician with an M.D. or D.O. degree.
III. The family member is full-time, part-time, volunteer, or adjunct faculty within the University Of Oklahoma College Of Medicine.
IV. The family member is an elected local, state, or federal official.

7. Graduation Ceremony Speaker
a. the PA Program will solicit from the graduating class the name of an individual for consideration to deliver the commencement address. The PA Program may invite the students’ choice or it may extend an invitation to an individual of the Program’s choosing.
b. only the PA Program has the authority to extend the invitation.
The policies/procedures stated here apply to students in the Physician Associate Program receiving the Master of Health Sciences degree.