



DMS BRIDGE PROGRAM

Program Handbook

2026-2027 Academic Year

Fall 2026 - Summer 2027

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Director's Welcome

Welcome to the Butler University Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program!

Throughout the history of the profession, PAs have risen to meet the challenges of quality, accessible patient care delivery. Today, as challenges abound, there are opportunities for physician assistants/associates (PAs) to provide thoughtful leadership and dedicated service to the profession and the broader healthcare system. The faculty and staff of the Butler University Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program are dedicated to equipping our graduates with the knowledge, skills, and credential to offer a unique perspective and knowledge for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

The curriculum is intended to provide a rigorous academic experience that will challenge students to think critically, develop new research skills, and apply the lessons of the classroom to real-life situations. Your ability to think deeply, pose important questions, and explore how those questions might best be answered will serve you well far beyond the bounds of this curriculum.

We look forward to partnering with you as a clinician-scholar to grow your knowledge, skills, and abilities. The opportunities to impact your organizations, communities, and the patients you serve through leadership, service, research, and patient care are significant. We are excited to offer an educational experience that aims to prepare you for such opportunities!



Cody A. Sasek, PhD, PA-C

Program Director

Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program

Butler University

Program Contact Information

Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program

Department of Medical Science

College of Health Professions

Butler University

4600 Sunset Avenue

Indianapolis, IN 46208

317-940-6485

DMSBridgeInfo@butler.edu

<https://www.butler.edu/pharmacy-health/doctor-medical-science/bridge-program/>

College of Health Professions Administration

Dean: Robert P. Soltis, PhD

Executive Associate Dean: Jennifer A. Snyder, PhD, MBA, PA-C

Associate Dean, School of PA Studies and Clinical Sciences: Cody A. Sasek, PhD, PA-C

Assistant Dean, Student Affairs: Gayle Hartleroad, EdD

Director, Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program: Cody A. Sasek, PhD, PA-C

CHP Office of Student Success

The Office of Student Success will assist DMS Bridge students with many issues, including policy clarification and support as a confidential student advocate, as able. The office can be reached at 317-940-8261.

Program Principal Faculty

Cody A. Sasek, PhD, PA-C

Adrian S. Banning, DHSc, PA-C

Breann Garbas, DHSc, PA-C

Program Staff

Erin Choate, MS

Admission and Marketing Coordinator

Butler University Doctor of Medical Science Program

Introduction

The Doctor of Medical Science (DMS) Bridge Program Student Handbook is published for the convenience of students enrolled in the Butler University DMS Bridge Program. The DMS Bridge Program is housed in the Butler University College of Health Professions (CHP). Professional programs in CHP include the MPAS Physician Assistant Program, Doctor of Pharmacy Program (campus and online), Respiratory Therapy, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Masters in Science in Nursing, and an additional DMS program for practicing clinicians. Undergraduate programs include Pre-Pharmacy, Health Science, Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Healthcare and Business.

It is the mission of Butler University to provide the highest quality of liberal and professional education and to integrate the liberal arts with professional education, by creating and fostering a stimulating intellectual community built upon interactive dialogue and inquiry among students, faculty, and staff. Butler University provides equality of opportunity in its educational programs for all persons. It is the policy of the University to provide equality regardless of age, gender, race, religion, color, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, national origin, or any other legally protected category.

The DMS Bridge Program Student Handbook does not constitute a contract, either expressed or implied. The Butler University DMS Bridge Program reserves the right at any time to change, delete, or add to any of the provisions related to the student handbook or any other governing document at its sole discretion. The provisions of this document are designed by the Butler University DMS Bridge Program to serve as firm guidelines rather than absolute rules, and exceptions may be made based on extenuating circumstances as determined by program and/or College leadership.

This DMS-Bridge Program Student Handbook is an extension of the College of Health Professions Student Handbook. In cases of perceived conflict, the CHP Student Handbook shall take precedence.

History

The Butler University Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program was formally established in 2021, with its first cohort matriculating in June 2021. The DMS Bridge Program is designed as a professional, doctoral degree developed exclusively for PAs who have graduated from an Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) accredited, entry-level program and passed the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) within 6 months of their intended DMS Bridge start date.

The DMS Bridge Program provides an avenue for new graduate PAs interested in expanding their understanding of issues of clinical practice, developing leadership skills, and achieving the end point of earning a Doctor of Medical Science degree. The DMS Bridge Program differs from the standard DMS Program by focusing on developing targeted research skills for clinically

focused PAs. All courses are online, allowing students to complete coursework without the need for residence in Indianapolis. The initial 7-week term of the program is completed on a full-time basis with the program capstone project carried out with part-time enrollment, typically over the course of a semester.

The program was awarded permanent program status by the Butler University Curriculum Committee and Faculty Senate in February 2024.

Accreditation

The Butler University Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program has received accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission.

Note: The ARC-PA does not accredit post-professional bridge-type doctoral programs like the Doctor of Medical Science programs.

Program of Study

The College of Health Professions is proud to offer a 50-credit hour, completely online, post-professional academic degree program specifically tailored for new graduate PAs leading to the Doctor of Medical Science degree.

The DMS Bridge Program incorporates 36-credit hours already completed during supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPE) from students' entry-level master's degree programs. The program's additional 14-credit hour curriculum includes two phases—the initial seven-week term, followed by completion of a semester-long Capstone Project.

During the initial seven-week term, the student is encouraged to avoid working due to the intensive, full-time nature of the program. Students must be available for synchronous and asynchronous online activities during that time. With the nature and timeline of the program's initial semester of coursework, students will not be positioned for success if they have other significant competing interests or responsibilities.

The program's Capstone Project is firmly grounded in biostatistics and research design and can be completed on a part-time basis. It is anticipated that the typical student will complete their Capstone Project in one semester. If the Capstone Project is not completed at the end of the term, students will be required to enroll in a Capstone Continuation course to maintain active enrollment with the program. The Capstone must be completed within two semesters unless permission is obtained from the DMS Bridge Program Director. During the semester-long Capstone Project, students may choose to work clinically.

The following previously earned SCPEs are combined with the 14-credit hour online, 700-level Bridge courses.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experience Equivalence	Credit Hours
Behavioral / Mental Health	4

Supervised Clinical Practice Experience Equivalence	Credit Hours
Emergency Medicine	4
Adult / Internal Medicine	4
Family Medicine	4
Pediatric Medicine	4
General Surgical Care	4
Women's Health	4
Elective Experiences	8

In addition to the above coursework, students complete the following courses as part of the DMS Bridge program of study to attain the DMS degree.

Program Courses	Credit Hours
DMS-BR 778: Issues in Clinical Practice	3
DMS-BR 780: Biostatistics	3
DMS-BR 782: Research Design	3
DMS-BR 784: Capstone Project	5
DMS-BR 786: Capstone Continuation*	3

*The Capstone Continuation course is only required for those students unable to complete their program Capstone within one semester.

This DMS degree does not earn a graduate the right to practice independently. State law dictates how PAs practice and their degree of autonomy. This is not changed by earning a Doctor of Medical Science degree, no matter the location of practice.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Butler University DMS Bridge Program is to provide an avenue for those interested in expanding their understanding of issues of clinical practice, developing leadership and research skills, and achieving the end point of earning a Doctor of Medical Science degree. The program aims to build on an intensive, entry-level PA curriculum to ensure PAs meet the changing demands of the healthcare environment.

Program Goals

- Build on an intensive, entry-level, curriculum to ensure PAs meet the changing demands of the healthcare environment.

- Provide a rigorous, professional doctorate curriculum that focuses on a greater understanding of medicine, research, and leadership skills for PAs.
- Demonstrate application of knowledge by producing targeted clinical research.
- Create opportunities for developing enhanced decision-making skills and upward mobility in the workplace.

Student Learning Outcomes

Graduates of the Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program will be able to:

- Apply leadership, decision-making, and problem-solving skills to patient care situations
- Identify and participate in corrective strategies that improve patient safety and enhance patient satisfaction, or quality of care outcome
- Search, interpret, evaluate, and apply scientific/medical literature/research to individualized patient care
- Perform and interpret results from descriptive and inferential statistical analyses
- Design a research study to address a research question

Program Policies

1. Eligibility and Admission

1.1 Requirements for Admission

Applicants to the Butler University Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program must be PAs that have successfully graduated from an entry-level PA program accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant within 6 months of their intended DMS Bridge Program start date. Matriculants must earn certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants after graduating from their entry-level program prior to matriculating into the 700-level courses of the program.

Applicants must be able to meet University technology requirements during the entirety of the doctoral program. Students will need access to a reliable computer and high-speed internet. Strong computer skills and/or the ability to quickly learn and adapt to new technology is necessary for success.

PAs who graduated prior to six months before DMS Bridge Program matriculation date are not eligible for the Bridge Program; however, they may apply to the standard [Butler University DMS Program](#).

1.2 Application Process

Students enrolled at an ARC-PA accredited PA program may initiate the admission process near the end of the didactic portion of their entry-level education.

To apply, candidates should submit the following:

- Butler application
- Official transcripts from all degree-granting colleges and universities should be sent immediately by mail or electronically to gradadmission@butler.edu*
- NCCPA certification number, must be received prior to matriculation
- Updated, comprehensive curriculum vitae
- 400-word personal statement answering:
 - Why should physician assistants earn a doctoral degree and how do you plan to utilize your doctorate?

*If a student has not yet graduated from their entry level PA program, they should provide a copy of an unofficial transcript. An official transcript must be sent from the issuing institution immediately upon graduation and before matriculation into the DMS Bridge Program.

A telephone or virtual interview may be required.

1.3 Admission Decision

The decision to admit, decline, or place on an admission waiting list is at the sole discretion of the Butler University DMS Bridge Program Admission Committee. Admission to the Butler DMS

Bridge Program is competitive and limited based on space availability. The DMS Bridge Program has a rolling admissions process, and applicants will be considered as they apply to the program. Applicants will be notified as soon as possible following the committee's decision. Admission decisions are considered final.

1.4 Language Requirement

Applicants must be fluent in English (the language of instruction of this program). When the applicant speaks and/or writes in English as a second language, the applicant must submit Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) scores for review. International students must have a TOEFL score and evaluation of any international transcripts. Please note that this takes additional time. A TOEFL score of 550 (paper-based test) or 79 (internet-based test) meets Butler University's English language proficiency requirements. Butler's TOEFL school code is 1073. World Education Services or Educational Credential Evaluators must evaluate all international transcripts.

Applicants who believe the TOEFL requirement should be waived may petition the Office of Admission.

1.5 Technical Standards for Admission

The College of Health Professions faculty has specified non-academic criteria ("technical standards") that all candidates/students are expected to meet, with or without reasonable accommodation, to participate in the educational programs of the College.

Please refer to the CHP Handbook for further details regarding technical standards for admission and continuation in CHP programs, including the DMS Bridge Program.

1.6 Transfer Credit

Other than the approved supervised clinical practice experiences noted previously, no other courses may be transferred into the DMS Bridge Program.

1.7 Program Deferral

Students with highly unusual or extenuating circumstances, i.e., military service, inability to schedule PANCE exam due to external factors, etc. should request an admission term deferral from the DMS Bridge Program Director, who will forward to the DMS Bridge Program Admission Committee for review and approval or denial.

2. Technology

2.1 Technology Requirements

All students are required to have a computing device and internet access throughout the program. Computers must have a webcam and microphone that are either built-in or external. Students will be able to choose and purchase a device from any manufacturer that meets their

learning needs. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure they have a functioning device for all courses at all times, with no exceptions. Students should have access to a stable high-speed internet connection.

Devices That Are Not Acceptable (they may not work with all Canvas applications):

- Dedicated tablet running Windows RT or Android operating system
- Chromebook
- iPad (as primary device)

2.2 E-mail and Computer Use

Important information is typically communicated by e-mail in the DMS Bridge Program. Students are expected to check their e-mail once a day. Because faculty, College administration, and fellow students rely heavily on e-mail for communication with students, it is an academic expectation that all students will routinely read and respond appropriately to their Butler University e-mail messages. Respond to e-mail or phone messages from Butler faculty and staff within 24 hours.

Appropriate use of computers and e-mail, both in synchronous sessions and elsewhere, is a professionalism issue. Use of e-mail should be consistent with professional standards. Use of computers during class must be limited to tasks associated with the learning activity.

Students may forward Butler e-mail messages to a non-Butler account by contacting the Information Technology Help Desk.

2.3 Social Media

The following are general policies regarding social media as a Butler University student:

- Think before you post. There is no such thing as a “private” social media site. Search engines can locate your posts years later. Do not post something today that you may regret in the future.
- Maintain confidentiality. Do not post or discuss sensitive, confidential, proprietary, or protected health information about students, employees, patients, or other members of the Butler community. Use good ethical judgment; follow federal guidelines and University policies.
- Be respectful. If readers see your affiliation with Butler, they may read your words as representing the University, even if you provide a disclaimer saying your views are your own. As a general rule, be respectful and don’t post anything you would be uncomfortable saying in a public setting—or in front of your colleagues, fellow learners, supervisor, etc.
- Be transparent about your role at Butler. If you participate in or maintain a social media site on behalf of the University, clearly state your role and goals. Strive for accuracy, correcting errors quickly and visibly. If you have questions about whether it is appropriate to write about certain material, ask your supervisor, advisor, or Program Director first.

- Protect your identity. Do not provide personal information about yourself or others that scam artists and identity thieves might steal. This includes telephone numbers, mailing addresses, and e-mail addresses.
- Respect University time and property.
- Any violation of the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) or other University policies may result in appropriate disciplinary action including, but not limited to, dismissal from the program and criminal and/or civil charges and fines.

2.4 Use of Ambient Artificial Intelligence

While the convenience of having an AI "assistant" take notes is tempting, the nature of academic discourse requires a space where privacy, intellectual property, and open dialogue are protected. To maintain these standards, the DMS Bridge Program has established the following policy regarding ambient AI tools (e.g., Otter.ai, Fireflies, Grain, or similar "AI Notetakers").

General Prohibition

The use of ambient AI recording, transcription, or summarization tools is strictly prohibited during all program-related activities. This includes, but is not limited to:

- In-person and virtual classroom lectures and seminars.
- Private advising sessions and office hours.
- Departmental meetings and research colloquia.

Privacy and Data Security

Most ambient AI tools process and store data on external servers, often using the input to train future models. To protect the privacy of students and the intellectual property of faculty, automated bots are not permitted to join virtual meetings or record audio in physical spaces.

Impact on Academic Freedom

Robust academic discussion requires a "safe harbor" where participants can test ideas without fear of a permanent, searchable, and potentially decontextualized transcript being generated by a third-party service.

Exceptions and Accommodations

- **Approved Accommodations:** Students with documented disabilities through the Student Disability Services Office may be granted permission to use specific assistive technologies. These exceptions will be managed on a case-by-case basis.
- **Instructor Discretion:** Faculty members may occasionally record their own lectures for pedagogical purposes, provided all participants are notified in advance.

Note on Compliance: Unauthorized use of AI recording tools may be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and, depending on local jurisdiction, may infringe upon privacy laws regarding two-party consent.

2.5 Technology Resources

A variety of technology resources are available throughout one's time as a Butler University student. Several include:

- Microsoft Cloud Apps--Word, Excel, PPT, etc.
- Adobe Creative Cloud – Student access must be requested for students by faculty with the Butler IT Help Desk
- Butler Licensed Databases via electronic library

2.5.1 Microsoft 365

Microsoft 365 is free for all current Butler students, faculty, staff and affiliates. This license is valid until the end of a student's time at Butler. At that point, the Microsoft Office programs will no longer work after 30 days (unless a subscription is purchased through Microsoft). Microsoft Office files will remain on the student's computer and will not be affected.

To receive Office 365 on your computer, please follow these steps:

1. Go to office.com and log in with your full Butler email address and password
2. Click Install Office, then Office 365 apps in the top right of the webpage
3. When the download is finished, run the installer and follow the prompts
4. Once the install is finished, launch any one of the Microsoft Office programs, and activate your license by signing in using your Butler email address and password

2.5.2 Butler Technology Discounts

Butler offers hardware discounts on purchases through Apple, Dell, and HP (<https://butleru.my.site.com/askbutler/s/article/Computer-Discounts>).

Various software discounts are available as well (<https://butleru.my.site.com/askbutler/s/article/What-kind-of-software-discounts-can-I-get-through-Butler>).

2.5.3 Technology Support

For IT-related questions, please contact the IT Help Desk at 317-940-HELP (4357) or email helpdesk@butler.edu.

Ask.Butler – Many questions can be answered electronically! This service can be accessed at <https://butleru.my.site.com/askbutler/s/>.

Support information/tools can also be found on Canvas and in course materials.

3. Academic Policies

3.1 Satisfactory Academic Progress

Students enrolled in the College of Health Professions' Doctor of Medical Science Bridge Program are expected to make satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of their plan of study and degree requirements. Continuous program enrollment is expected.

All program courses must be passed with a minimum grade of "B" or "Pass". Courses may be repeated only once. A cumulative GPA below 3.0 at the completion of any semester could result in dismissal from the program. Two failed courses will result in dismissal from the program.

Appeals of dismissals or other academic or professional matters are guided by pertinent CHP policies. These policies can be found in the CHP Student Handbook.

3.2 Residency

Campus residency is not required. All coursework is completed online. However, all students are invited and encouraged to attend the University and CHP hooding and commencement ceremonies after completion of the program.

3.3 Degree

Students who complete all requirements of the DMS Bridge Program will be conferred a Doctor of Medical Science degree. All students who anticipate completing program requirements must register to graduate.

3.4 Academic Calendar

The DMS Bridge Program follows the seven-week University academic calendar for courses, with seven-week courses following the B term calendar. Capstone courses will follow the traditional three semester (fall, spring, summer) calendar.

3.5 Academic Advisor

As advisors, faculty members advise; they do not make decisions for students. Faculty members primarily are academic advisors, but they also are available to assist with any problem which even remotely affects academic progress. They may not have all the answers, including matters related to financing of the program, but can help direct the student to resources. The student is responsible for ensuring they have the correct requirements for graduation. Academic advisors do not counsel students on medical, personal, or mental health issues; rather, they will refer students to the appropriate campus resources for assistance.

3.6 Class Attendance

Students are expected to attend and participate in all class activities and sessions. This includes synchronous class sessions. With the nature and timeline of the program's initial semester's coursework, students will not be positioned for success if they have other significant competing interests or responsibilities. Work during the first seven weeks of the program is not advised.

We understand that emergencies occur. If a student has an urgent matter come up and a request needs to be made, the student should reach out to the course's faculty to discuss alternate options in the event of extenuating circumstances. Excused absences are only granted for significant, unalterable events. Unexcused absences may result in loss of points or credit for activities, such as group interactive sessions or quizzes, that cannot be reasonably replicated. Excessive absences may be reason for deceleration or dismissal from the program.

3.7 Academic Accommodations

It is the policy of Butler University to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a disability so they can meet these required technical standards. Each accommodation request will be individually assessed to determine whether it is reasonable. Determining what is a reasonable accommodation is an interactive process which the candidate should initiate with the University's Student Disability Services (SDS) office.

If a student has a disability and would like to request an accommodation, the student must report the disability directly to Student Disability Services (SDS). With the rapid nature of the DMS Bridge Program, this should be done as soon as a student is aware that a disability may exist. Accommodation requests cannot be considered until the student has submitted the appropriate documentation to SDS and has engaged in an interactive discussion with the appropriate SDS staff member. Please contact SDS at 317-940-9308 or sds@butler.edu for an individualized, confidential discussion regarding the specific of the situation. For accessibility information or to request disability-related accommodations, please visit

<https://www.butler.edu/disability>.

3.8 Accommodations for Religious Observance

[The Accommodation for Religious Observance policy](#), provided below, was first approved by Faculty Senate on November 6, 2012. The policy outlines the steps to take if you seek an accommodation for your religious practice or observance. Students can receive academic accommodations for religious observance if academic requirements create a conflict with required religious observance. It is the student's responsibility to be in communication with their professors at least two weeks prior to the need for the accommodation.

Butler University respects all students' right to religious observance and will reasonably accommodate students' religious practice with regard to class attendance, examinations, and assignments when requests are made in a timely manner. Butler University recommends that each class should have a syllabus that provides a schedule of activities for the class. It is the student's responsibility to inform instructors of course conflicts resulting from religious observations at least two weeks in advance of the observance so that accommodations can be made. Requests must be made in writing, and the student should include a proposed alternative due date, examination date, or make-up outline. The professor should review the request and if the student's proposed suggestion is acceptable, should notify the student of the agreement. Any solution that

is mutually agreeable to both student and faculty member is acceptable. If accommodations cannot be agreed upon, the instructor and students should seek the advice of the associate dean in the appropriate college. No adverse or prejudicial effects will result to students because they have made use of these provisions.

3.9 Leaves of Absence

Students considering a leave of absence for any reason should discuss this with the DMS Bridge Program Director and CHP Executive Associate Dean. The program values confidentiality in these matters and will only involve those individuals necessary to support the student in considering and navigating the leave of absence process.

A DMS Bridge student, after presenting a written request to the Executive Associate Dean of the College (with a copy to the DMS Program Director), may be granted an official leave of absence for personal or academic reasons for a period not to exceed one calendar year.

If the leave of absence is approved, the Office of the CHP Executive Associate Dean provides written notification including applicable beginning and ending dates to the student, the University Registrar, and the Director of the Office of Financial Aid. When a leave of absence is taken, the program determines the re-entry requirements. The student must notify the Program Director in writing of his or her wish to return to the DMS Bridge Program or to extend the personal leave at least sixty calendar days prior to the anticipated date of reentry.

Medical leaves of absence are granted by the University. Please see the CHP Student Handbook for more information. When a leave of absence is taken, the Program determines re-entry requirements and may require the student to repeat some, or all courses completed prior to the leave of absence. In all cases of leave of absence, the student is required to complete the full curriculum to be eligible to earn the DMS degree. For purposes of deferring repayment of student loans during a school-approved leave of absence, federal regulations usually limit the leave to six months. However, all questions regarding financial aid or student loans should be directed to the Office of Financial Aid.

3.10 Grades and Grade Appeal Process

3.10.1 Course Grades

Please refer to Butler's [Grade Policies](#) for more information related to absences, early term grades, final grades, pass/fail options, repeat grades, right of appeal, and withholding grades. Please note that graduate students may not use the pass/fail option unless the course has already been designated as a pass/fail course by their graduate program.

The faculty of record assigns grades for all courses. The DMS Bridge Program course grading scale for seven-week courses is as follows:

Grade	Score
A	94.00 - 100.00%
A-	90.00 - 93.99%

B+	87.00 - 89.99%
B	80.00 - 86.99%
F	≤ 79.99%

The DMS Bridge Program course grading scale for capstone courses is based on pass/fail scoring.

3.10.2 Course Remediation Policy

If a student is unable to demonstrate competence of course learning outcome(s) through a course's assessment(s), the student may be required to remediate the material to ensure demonstration of a specific outcome or outcomes to pass the course. The course instructor will determine if remediation is indicated as well as the requirements to successfully remediate any activity or assessment and the remediation's impact on the course grade.

3.10.3 Incomplete Course Grades

As outlined in the Butler University Student Handbook, a grade of Incomplete (I) may be assigned by an instructor when exceptional circumstances such as illness prevent a student from finishing all work required in a course. The student must, apart from the work to be completed, be passing the class at the time of Incomplete request. The Incomplete must be removed within the next session (fall, spring, or summer semester). If the incomplete, "I", is not completed within the stated time, the "I" will be changed to "X."

A grade of (I) may not be assigned as a grade option to avoid assignment of a poor or failing grade that a student has earned in a course, or to delay assignment of a grade for a course when the student intends to repeat the course in a future semester.

3.10.4 Appeal of Course Grades

To appeal a course grade, the student shall first discuss the matter with the course instructor. Following this discussion, if resolution is not obtained, the student should follow the procedures outlined in the College Student Handbook.

3.11 Capstone Continuation

It is anticipated that students will complete the capstone project in one semester. A student considering the need for enrollment in the DMS-BR 786 Capstone Continuation course should first discuss this with their capstone advisor.

If after this conversation, the student believes an extension of the Capstone Project through enrollment in DMS-BR 786 is necessary, the student should complete the Capstone Continuation Request Form and submit it to the Bridge Program Director no later than the end of week 10 of the DMS-BR 784 course (Friday by 11:59pm ET). This request will then be considered by the DMS Bridge Program Academic Progress Committee, with approval or denial of the request communicated to the student. Enrollment in DMS-BR 786 or reenrollment in DMS-BR 784 will include additional tuition.

The Capstone Continuation course is not intended to be an extension of DMS-BR 784, other than for reasons related to project scope or extenuating circumstances. It is also not a second opportunity to complete passing-level quality work for DMS-BR 784 as a whole or any of the final assignments associated with the course (written proposal, recorded presentation, or peer review). If a student makes insufficient progress on the project while enrolled in DMS-BR 784 or submits written proposal drafts too late in the semester to allow for substantive feedback and revisions that allow the student to achieve a passing grade for the course, the student would not be eligible for the DMS-BR 786 Capstone Continuation course and will be given a course grade of “F” for DMS-BR 784. The student would then need to re-enroll in DMS-BR 784 and successfully complete all elements of the course to graduate.

3.12 Program Completion

Students have two semesters to complete the program’s Capstone Project (DMS-BR 784 and 786), unless granted an extension by the DMS Bridge Program Director. Students must remain continuously enrolled in program courses from the time of matriculation to graduation, including the Capstone Continuation course, as required to complete all program requirements.

4. Professionalism

It is expected that students will exhibit professional behavior toward other student learners, Butler University administration, and faculty/staff in all interactions, whether in-person or electronically. Professionalism is a required component of each course.

Faculty, staff, and students of the College have a responsibility to report all alleged violations of the professional conduct code by graduate and professional phase students to the CHP Executive Associate Dean of Academic and Administrative Services or the Assistant Dean of Student Affairs, who will then report it to the Executive Associate Dean.

Deficiencies in any areas of professionalism will be brought to students’ attention by their advisor, and/or Program Director in the form of written evaluations. Remediation will be implemented where appropriate; however, violations could result in immediate probation, suspension, dismissal, or termination from the program per the College of Health Professions Professional Conduct Code.

4.1 Honor Code

Students are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that is above reproach at all times. Ethical conduct is one of the most important attributes of a competent health care professional. Students are accountable for their own professional behavior. They are also charged with reporting to the program any unprofessional behavior or infractions of this honor code on the part of others. Having adopted the high ethical standards of the PA profession, the program expects that each student will complete all assignments on an individual basis unless otherwise directed by program faculty. Misrepresentation or lack of honesty is not acceptable.

4.2 Academic Integrity

Butler University is an academic community. It exists for the sake of the advancement of knowledge; the pursuit of truth; the intellectual, ethical, and social development of students, and the general well-being of society. All members of our community have an obligation to themselves, to their peers and to the institution to uphold the integrity of Butler University. In the area of academic integrity, this means that one's work should be one's own and that the instructor's evaluation should be based on the student's own efforts and understanding. When the standards of academic integrity are breached, mutual trust is undermined, the ideals of personal responsibility and autonomy are violated, teaching and learning are severely compromised, and other goals of the academic community cannot be realized.

Students are responsible for being fully aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty; claims of ignorance cannot be used to justify or rationalize dishonest acts. Academic dishonesty can take a number of forms, including but not limited to cheating, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitation, and interference. Plagiarism includes self-plagiarism. As such, it is not appropriate to submit work previously completed at another institution or in another course.

For more information on Butler University's Policy on Academic Integrity, please visit the website below: <https://www.butler.edu/student-life/student-handbook/academic/academic-integrity/>.

The College also has its own academic integrity policy. Please refer to the CHP Student Handbook for further information.

4.2.1 Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

While AI technology is constantly evolving, using AI tools, unless previously approved, to assist in assignments counts as plagiarism and will be treated as such. If use of AI is suspected, a student may be asked to schedule an oral exam or other method to reiterate the assignment's material. Consequences for the use of AI in any means outside the bounds of what is explicitly allowed include failure of the assignment, failure of the class, and/or referral to the College Student Professional Conduct Committee.

Please check with the course instructor before the use of artificial intelligence engines, software, artwork-generating programs, or the like, to produce work for any program class or activity. If permission is granted for such use, it will be limited to the specific purpose in which it was proposed. Outside of explicitly allowed/permitted use, utilization of AI is prohibited in the DMS Bridge Program.

4.3 Use of the Doctoral Credential

Students and graduates should pay careful attention to the appropriate use of the 'doctor' credential. In an academic setting, it is common for those with a clinical doctorate, such as a Doctor of Medical Science degree to be referred to with the doctor title. You'll find the formality of title use varies considerably from institution to institution.

In a clinical setting, **it is the position of the Butler DMS Bridge Program that the doctor title should be reserved for physicians, so as not to confuse patients or staff or lead to a misunderstanding of the level of medical training which we possess.** State medical boards would also likely frown upon any confusion this might cause.

When appropriate, graduates may use the DMS credential in correspondence, email signatures, and other appropriate occasions. The Butler conferred Doctor of Medical Science credential is abbreviated DMS, without periods or spaces. At Butler, we avoid the DMSc as a “c” following a doctoral credential is occasionally used to denote a student who is a candidate for but has not yet received their degree. This is more common in academic degrees with longer programs and qualifying exams for candidacy (a specific period in training after coursework is completed), such as is the case for the PhD or EdD degrees.

4.4 Proctorio

Proctorio is a secure testing tool that provides online proctoring with identity verification, test monitoring, lock down browser components and other features to support academic integrity. Compatibility, download instructions, and a practice quiz are available in the DMS Bridge page in Canvas.

4.5 Turnitin

Turnitin is a software detection tool/service that Butler University and the DMS Bridge Program may utilize to evaluate written documents for plagiarism. Students who submit their work through Turnitin and the faculty that utilize the tool can see the percent agreement of the submitted work with other published works, including papers submitted through other institutions utilizing Turnitin. Course assignments and capstone projects may be submitted through Turnitin. The use of Turnitin is intended to serve as both a formative check for the student to avoid unintentional plagiarism as well as way for the program to ensure academic and professional integrity.

5. Student Services

Many student services are available to Butler students, whether attending classes in-person on campus or remotely.

5.1 Counseling and Consultation Services

Counseling and Consultation Services (CCS), a part of the student Health Services located in the Health and Recreation Complex, provides licensed and professionally trained staff that offer counseling services to all currently enrolled students. CCS supports the educational mission of Butler University by providing short-term therapeutic intervention that supports students in their personal and academic goals. In accordance with this mission, the services are not focused on remedial or reconstructive (long-term therapy or multiple appointments weekly) experiences. Likewise, CCS is not appropriate for students whose conditions are deemed more

complicated (for example, medically, in level of severity, pharmacologically, legally, or due to specialized circumstances) than can be treated in an ethically appropriate way by CCS staff. Students presenting with such conditions will be referred to appropriate resources in the community at the discretion of the CCS Director. Students are responsible for paying the costs incurred for services and treatment provided through outside agencies. To learn more about CCS go to <https://www.butler.edu/counseling-services/>.

5.2 Student Success Center

The Student Success Center is a coordination site for services, programs, and resources that promote academic success. The Student Success Center is committed to supporting and guiding students as they strive to reach the highest standards of academic excellence. To learn more about their offerings go to <https://www.butler.edu/learning>.

5.3 Libraries

The collections of the Ruth Lilly Science Library are available for use by all members of the Butler community. All graduate students currently enrolled at Butler University are eligible to check out materials from the Butler University Libraries. A Science Librarian is available for assistance during working hours Monday-Friday.

5.4 Student Health Services

Butler University Health Services provides ambulatory health care to students currently enrolled in the University. Student Health Services, located at the HRC, places an emphasis on treating the medical, emotional, and educational needs of students. To learn more about Butler University's Student Health Services go to <https://www.butler.edu/health-services/>.

5.5 Health and Recreation Complex

Graduate students may obtain access to work out at the Health and Recreation Complex for an annual membership fee. The HRC also has monthly and quarterly membership rates. To learn more about wellness opportunities, go to <https://www.butler.edu/hrc/>. Students can enroll either by going to the front desk at the HRC or by going online to <https://www.butler.edu/well-being/student-wellness/recreation/membership/membership-information/>. HRC Operations can be contacted directly at 317-940-6073 with any issues.

5.6 Campus Safety and Security - Butler University Police Department

In cases of campus fire or medical emergency:

- Call 911 from campus phone
- Call Butler University Police Department at 317-940-9999 (in addition to 911) from any other phone

For other campus emergencies:

- Call Butler University Police Department at 317-940-9396

Butler University is not responsible for loss or damage to a student's personal property on premises owned or operated by the University, regardless of cause.

5.7 Registration and Records

The Office of Registration and Records is a helpful resource for students seeking support while registering for classes or when seeking a transcript. Registration and Records can help with the class drop/withdrawal process, facilitate name change requests, and also publishes the academic calendars the DMS Bridge Program follows.

5.8 Financial Aid

The Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships supports students in the financing of their education. While program faculty may be able to offer support, all financially related questions should go to the staff of the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships. More information, including information on tuition and fees can be found at <https://www.butler.edu/admission-aid/financial-aid-scholarships/graduate/>.

6. Graduation

Students should plan to apply for graduation in their first semester of enrollment in the DMS Bridge Program. This application is necessary even if the student does not plan to take part in Commencement Exercises. This form triggers the Graduation Audit process and provides an opportunity for the student to submit the preferred formatting of their name for their diploma.

To access the online graduation application from the My.Butler.edu Student Center, select the Other Academics tab, choose the Apply for Graduation option, then click on the Apply for Graduation link. Select the term all program requirements will be completed, click on Continue, and then click on Submit Application. Further information can be found at <https://www.butler.edu/registrar/graduation>.

If there are any questions regarding a student's completion of all degree requirements, the student should consult with their academic advisor. However, it is ultimately the responsibility of the student to make sure all degree requirements have been met to qualify for graduation. All students are invited and encouraged to attend the Doctoral Hooding and Commencement Ceremonies after completion of the Program.

7. Letters of Reference

All requests for letters of reference or for completion of forms related to academic performance and/or personal qualities require written authorization from the student (or graduate) for release of such information. Most faculty prefer an email or personal request in writing with sufficient lead-time (it is best requested two weeks in advance), and instructions

such as date and format of the letter. When making a request to faculty, please include the full name of the position and the overall purpose and guidelines for the letter, as well as the person to whom it should be addressed and the method of submission.

8. Student Evaluation of Courses

At the end of each course, students are required to complete a course evaluation. These evaluations are administered online using the University system, Class Climate. Anonymous compilation of the evaluations is provided to course principal faculty, the Program Director, the Department Chair, and Dean of the College of Health Professions. Evaluations are reviewed and used to make improvements in faculty teaching, individual courses, as well as the overall curriculum. Therefore, constructive student feedback is extremely important.

9. Student Grievance/Harassment Policy

Butler University is committed to maintaining a respectful educational environment, free from harassment. Harassment of any kind is not acceptable behavior at Butler; it is inconsistent with the commitment to excellence that characterizes Butler University's activities. More information on Butler's harassment policy can be found at the following link:
<https://www.butler.edu/student-life/student-handbook/campus-life/harassment/>.

Inquiries about policies and procedures regarding student grievances or harassment may be made to the Program Director, the Office of the Dean, or the University Title IX Coordinator:

Title IX Coordinator
Atherton Union, Room 200
titleix@butler.edu
317-940-6509

Butler University is committed to fostering safe and productive living, learning, and working environments free from discrimination and harassment. Faculty members are expected to report any incident of discrimination and/or harassment that students may report to them. These incidents should be reported to the [Office of Institutional Equity](#). The Office of Institutional Equity is responsible for promoting and ensuring fair and equal treatment for all individuals within the university community. Its primary role is to address issues related to discrimination, harassment, and unequal treatment based on protected characteristics such as race, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, disability, religion, or age. After the Office receives a report, the Director will then reach out to the reporting student for further discussion. If you would like to speak with someone confidentially who will not be required to report what you share, there are several resources available, including the [Office of Student Advocacy](#), [Counseling and Consultation Services](#), and ordained clergy providing

pastoral care in the [Compass Center](#). Information about these and other resources can be found on the [Office of Institutional Equity](#) and [Addressing Incidents of Bias](#) websites. If you have questions or would like support on using this policy, please reach out to the Director of the Title IX Office at titleix@butler.edu.