

Policy: PA Student Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards Policy; Cadaver Lab Policy	Reviewed by: TNU PA Program
Source: ARC-PA Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education, 5 th Edition	Authorized by: Program Director
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Standards Addressed: A3.08 a), b), c)	Next Review: January 2025

Purpose of Policy:

This policy is written to clearly define the procedures demonstrating compliance with the ARC-PA standards related to addressing Trevecca Nazarene University's PA Program student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any education activities that may place them at risk.

All planning for and implementation of this policy is directed by the PA program's standards for accreditation and university policies and procedures to ensure compliance.

ARC-PA Standard(s):

- A3.08 The program *must* define, publish, make *readily available* and consistently apply policies addressing student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards before students undertake any educational activities which would place them at risk. Those policies *must*:
 - a) Address methods of prevention,
 - b) Address procedures for care and treatment after exposure, and
 - c) Clearly define financial responsibility

Policy & Procedures Overview:

The Trevecca PA Program recognizes that as students engage in certain required educational activities as part of the program (such as lab activities and patient care experiences), there are inherent risks of accidents, injuries, and/or exposure to infectious and environmental hazards. Such exposures may include but are not limited to needle sticks, splashing of blood/bodily fluids into the eyes, contact of blood/bodily fluids with an open wound on the student's body, or exposure to chemicals such as formaldehyde. These risks cannot be completely eliminated while still providing quality medical education.

The Trevecca PA program provides education and training about student exposure to infectious and environmental hazards, including methods of prevention, procedures for care and treatment after exposure, reporting of incidents, and clearly defined financial responsibility. This education/training occurs before students undertake any educational activities which would place them at risk. The program's training includes, but is not limited to, universal precautions, Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) standards, recommendations, and regulations. Current guidelines will be used as a basis for this information.

Student Training and Prevention:

Initial training for PA students will occur prior to undertaking any educational activities of the program's didactic phase which would place students at risk. Further education is assigned prior to beginning clinical rotations. All PA students are required to complete assigned training modules by the assigned deadlines. Students will also be required to sign a *University Assumption of Risk, Release, and Waiver of Liability Agreement*.

Initial training module assignments for PA students will be completed prior to the start of the first didactic semester. Students will provide signed documentation to the Academic Coordinator verifying completion and understanding of assigned training modules.

The second training module assignments for PA students will be completed prior to entering clinical rotations of the clinical phase of the program. Students will provide signed documentation to the Clinical Coordinator verifying completion and understanding of assigned training modules. Students may also be assigned additional clinical site-specific training to complete prior to individual clinical rotations as part of site onboarding for students.

If a student fails to complete an assigned training module by the deadline for completion or if a student refuses or persistently fails to comply with the program protocols for injury/exposure prevention (such as not wearing required PPE) or incident care/reporting, the student will be required to meet with the Promotions, Retention, and Disciplinary Committee to determine a corrective course of action. Students who are non-compliant will not be permitted to attend educational activities that may place the student at risk (such as Anatomy Dissection Lab, Surgery Lab, Medical Diagnostics and Procedures Lab, and clinical rotations) until all compliance deficiencies are resolved. Any absences incurred because of violation(s) of this policy will count towards a student's unexcused absences in accordance with the Attendance Policy.

Procedures for Care and Treatment After Injury, Accident, or Exposure:

Incident On-Campus: In the event an injury, accident, or exposure to an infectious or environmental hazard (such as a needle stick or blood/bodily fluid exposure) occurs when a student is on Trevecca's campus, students must alert their respective program instructor immediately. After any immediate emergency first-aid that may be necessary, students should promptly go to a local Emergency Treatment Center or Urgent Care Center for evaluation and to determine if further treatment is warranted. The role of the evaluating medical provider/facility is to provide initial screening, evaluation, testing, and initiation of necessary prophylaxis, follow-up, and referral (when indicated) for students who have had an injury, accident, or exposure to an infectious or environmental hazard (such as blood or bodily fluids).

Incident Off-Campus (including clinical rotations): In the event an injury, accident or exposure to an infectious or environmental hazard (such as a needle stick or blood/bodily fluid exposure) occurs when a student is not on Trevecca's campus, such as during a clinical rotation, students are to alert their preceptor (for clinical rotations) or respective program instructor immediately. For clinical rotations, students are to follow the guidelines of the medical facility where the accident or exposure occurs. The guidelines of the medical facility cover the provision of care related to infectious or environmental hazard exposures, and when indicated, students may be advised by the facility to undergo initial screening, evaluation, testing, and initiation of necessary prophylaxis, follow-up, and referral. If no treatment is available at the clinical site/medical facility, the student should report to a local Emergency Treatment Center or Urgent Care Center for advice and/or treatment.

Student Reporting of Incident to Program:

Injuries, accidents, and environmental/infectious exposures of all kinds that occur while undertaking any educational activity must be reported to the program promptly. The program's *Student Accident/Incident Report* Form must be completed and submitted to the appropriate personnel (see following), based upon

which phase of the program the student is in (didactic or clinical), *within 24 hours* of the accident's/incident's occurrence.

For **didactic** students, the pdf copy of the *Student Accident/Incident Report* Form should be submitted via email to the Program Director, Academic Director, and Academic Coordinator. **Clinical** rotation students should email the *Student Accident/Incident Report* to the Program Director, Clinical Director and Clinical Coordinator.

Additional Program/Faculty Procedures and Documentation of Incident:

For didactic or clinical student incidents that are *not related to clinical rotations*, the applicable program instructor for the program activity in which the incident occurred will also complete an *Instructor Report Form for PA Student Accident/Incident*. For incidents involving didactic students, the *Instructor Report Form* should be submitted via email to the Program Director, Academic Director, and Academic Coordinator. For incidents involving clinical students, the *Instructor Report Form* should be submitted via email to the Program Director, Clinical Director, and Clinical Coordinator.

The *Instructor Report Form* is not utilized by preceptors for incidents occurring on clinical rotations, but rather (as described above), students are to submit a *Student Accident/Incident Report* to the program and follow the guidelines and reporting requirements of the medical facility where the accident or exposure occurs.

For both clinical rotation and non-clinical rotation incident reports received by the program, if any additional follow-up documentation is needed by the program regarding the incident, these will be requested/submitted as addendum documents for the incident.

Financial Responsibility:

Each student is required to have their own health insurance throughout the duration of the PA program. Any costs associated with student medical care and treatments will be filed with the individual student's insurance and are the student's responsibility and not that of the PA Program, the University, or clinical sites. Trevecca Nazarene University does not assume liability for injury, accident, or exposure to an infectious or environmental hazard (such as blood or bodily fluids) that may occur while a student is engaged in an experience related to their education.

Publishing of Policy & Procedures:

All active Student Handbooks will include applicable portions of this policy. A hyperlink for this program policy will be provided on the program's website to ensure the policy is published and readily accessible for prospective students as well as enrolled students. The procedures for care and treatment after exposure and requirements for Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) will also be posted in the program lab spaces for reference. The program *Student Accident/Injury Report* Form is made available to students on Canvas.

Cadaver Lab Policy:

The following cadaver lab policies and rules are to be observed at all times. As a PA student, you have the privilege to use this anatomical donation. It is the intent of each donor that you use this opportunity to learn from his or her gift.

No food or drink is allowed in the lab.

Respect and Privacy

Students will always maintain a professional environment in the cadaver lab.

- The anatomical donors must be treated with respect at all times.
- Your assigned cadaver is considered your “first patient” at PA school, and they have the same right to privacy and confidentiality as any medical patient.
 - Cadavers must be appropriately draped at all times. Only the region that is being worked on should be exposed.
 - Photography and videography are strictly prohibited.
- You may not remove anything from the lab without the express permission of the Course Director, Academic Director, or Program Director.
- Important: Do not remove the numbered tag from your cadaver.

Lab Safety

The following safety procedures are in place to prevent injuries and limit exposure to chemicals.

Personal Protective Equipment

Students must wear appropriate clothing to the lab setting, and the following personal protective equipment (PPE) is mandatory at all times when working in the lab:

- Scrubs
- Closed-toed shoes
- Apron
- Shoe covers
- Mask
- Gloves (nitrile; well-fitting)
- Bouffant cap (optional)
- Safety glasses
 - Regular prescription eyeglasses provide sufficient protection.
 - Contact lenses wearers should be aware that chemical fumes can pass into gas permeable and soft lenses. These fumes irritate the cornea. Protective eyeglasses (prescription or safety glasses) are recommended.
- Face shields
 - These must be worn when using hammers, chisels, bone pliers, or any type of bone saw.

Note: The following are other ways to decrease contact with embalming solution, including excessive inhalation of fumes:

- Avoid long periods of close-up dissection.
- Avoid touching your face with contaminated gloves.
- If cadaver fluid gets on part of your skin wash it immediately.
- Wash your hands and arms thoroughly at the end of each lab session.

Sharps

- Scalpel blades should be inserted carefully onto the handle using a hemostat. They should be removed using the scalpel blade remover device.

Injuries

- All accidents/injuries that occur in the cadaver lab, no matter how insignificant they appear, should be reported immediately to the lab instructor. They will initiate first aid and advise you to follow the Trevecca PA Program PA Student Exposure to Infectious and Environmental Hazards Policy detailed in the PA student handbook.

- You should promptly go to a local Emergency Treatment Center or Urgent Care to determine if further treatment is warranted.
- After evaluation, fill out the Student Accident/Injury Report Form that can also be accessed via this QR code:

- In an emergency, call 911 immediately.

First aid

- A first-aid kit is located in the scrub room in the cupboard clearly marked with the first-aid sign.

Accidental Cuts

- Wash the cut thoroughly with antiseptic/antimicrobial skin cleanser (in dispensers) for at least 15 minutes.

Eye injuries

- If something gets into your eyes, go to the scrub room, wash your hands, and retrieve the eyewash from the cupboard with the first-aid sign.
- Use the eyewash to rinse your eyes thoroughly for at least 15 minutes.

Feeling faint

- If you feel faint, if enough warning allows, alert an instructor and remove yourself from the dissection room to the scrub room or outside of the cadaver lab.

Pregnant students

- Students who are pregnant or believe they may be pregnant are responsible for discussing attendance in the cadaver lab with their physician. They must also inform the Course Director and Academic Director as soon as possible.

Cleaning and Maintenance

The lab must be kept clean and neat at all times.

Cadavers

- At the end of each lab session, cover the cadaver with the towels provided and spray them thoroughly with the wetting solution to prevent the tissues from drying out.
- Report any mold to lab instructor immediately.

Tables and body bags

- Remove as much free liquid as possible from body bags using the shop vacuum. Dispose of it in the utility sinks in the scrub room while running hot water.
- After each lab session, dissection tables and body bags should be wiped down with bleach wipes.
- Keep all body bags closed when the cadaver is not in use.

iPads

- After each lab session, charge ipads at the docking station.

General lab cleaning

- All students in the last lab of the day should wash and dry all instruments and return them to their proper location, wipe down all work surfaces and trays, and sweep and mop the floors.
- Students coming into the lab after hours should clean as necessary to leave the lab in the condition in which they found it.

Proper trash disposal

Ensure that all trash is properly disposed in the appropriate bins as follows:

- Cadaver waste tissues: white bucket below the dissection table. Seal lid.
- Gloves, shoe covers, aprons, masks, and cadaver fluid-soaked paper towels: hazardous waste trash cans
- Scalpel blades that are removed manually: "sharps" container below the dissection table. They must never be placed in a regular trash can.
- Paper towels, packaging, etc.: regular trash can

Security

- Access to the lab is via your electronic student ID card.
- The lab is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

- After entering, make sure the exterior door is fully closed.

- Keep the lab doors closed at all times. Do not prop the door open for any reason.
- Only PA students, faculty, and other authorized Trevecca Nazarene University personnel are allowed in the cadaver lab. Under no circumstances may a student bring an unauthorized visitor into the lab.

- For safety and security after hours, students should use the lab in the presence of another student.

Campus security:

Location: Tidwell Building, 1st floor Telephone: 615-642-3523 Email: security@trevecca.edu Office Hours: 24hours

Formaldehyde exposure

Participation in the anatomy lab will expose you to formaldehyde. If you are pregnant or become pregnant during the course or have other health conditions that could predispose you to adverse reactions (e.g. respiratory illness, skin conditions), please consult with your physician for their recommendation regarding participation in anatomy lab. In addition, please inform the Course Director and Academic Director.

Potential health risks

Dissection labs are equipped with ventilation systems that reduce formaldehyde exposure in the lab. Further, formaldehyde concentrations in the air are monitored in the cadaver lab as required by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). However, you should know that formaldehyde, and solutions containing the chemical, are irritants and sensitizing agents. Additionally, chronic exposure is potentially carcinogenic. Material safety data sheets for chemicals in the embalming solution are available upon request.

- Inhalation: Low concentrations in the air can irritate the mouth, nose and throat. Extremely high concentrations pose an immediate danger to health. If you are sensitized to formaldehyde, inhalation exposure may cause allergic respiratory reactions and difficulty breathing.
- Oral: Ingestion can cause severe irritation of the mouth, throat and stomach possibly resulting in nausea, vomiting
- Eyes: Formaldehyde may irritate the eyes, causing them to sting or tear up. Direct contact with eyes and skin may cause burns, blurry vision and loss of vision. For your safety, determine the location of the nearest eyewash.
- Skin: Formaldehyde is absorbed through intact skin and may cause irritation or allergic dermatitis. However, due to rapid metabolism systemic effects from absorption through skin is unlikely.
- Sensitization: Some people may develop an allergic reaction after repeated exposure to formaldehyde. Once sensitized, low exposures can initiate an allergic response, typically a rash.
- Pregnancy: Formaldehyde has been shown to be teratogenic in laboratory animals. However, studies involving humans are ambiguous and variable. A recent comprehensive meta-analysis of human and animal studies concluded that there is evidence of an association of maternal exposure with adverse reproductive and developmental effects.
- Chronic exposure: Long-term exposure to formaldehyde has been associated with cancers of the lung and nasal passageways.

Practices to limit personal exposure

You can reduce your personal exposure by taking the following precautions.

- Wearing personal protective equipment: lab aprons, safety goggles and gloves.
- Avoiding contamination of personal items. Store them at a distance from specimens. Do not bring food or drink to lab.
- Washing hands at the end of class.