

APPENDIX O-1 CLARIFIED PROGRAM GOALS SPECIFIC TO OBSERVATIONS.

Note: only the relevant goals/benchmarks included in the observations of site visitors are included in this document to ensure brevity of our response.

ELON PA PROGRAM GOALS (SSR 14H)

Last revision: 6/2026

LEARN (Boldly Elon): Learning (DPAS)

Goal 1: Provide students with an innovative curriculum

We define an *innovative curriculum* as one that considers current knowledge in adult learning theory and looks ahead to workforce readiness. Current adult learning theories focus on active (engaged), student-centered learning.¹ Providing hands-on (engaged) learning activities that prepare students for the workplace are key. Active learning is a process that involves attaining knowledge through participation or contribution.² The “teacher” designs and prepares activities that allow the students to take learning into their own hands.¹

Engaged learning (active learning) activities include case-based learning, problem-based learning, hands-on learning experiences, gamification, metacognitive exercises such as schema building and retrieval practice, and simulated patient experiences.

Point of Care Ultrasound (POCUS) integration is an example of active learning and a useful professional skill that PAs can use. Literature recommends the need to be trained as early as possible.³ Medical literature also points to the facts that POCUS is both within the scope of practice for PA’s and is used in multiple settings common for PA employment. However, the absence of curricular training is the major barrier to their using POCUS professionally.⁴⁻⁷ POCUS has also been demonstrated in PA literature as an educational adjunct to improve students’ medical knowledge and clinical exam skills.⁸ Additionally, simulation provides learners with “praxis”—an opportunity to practice and demonstrate skills in a lower stakes environment while strengthening learning.⁹

Benchmarks and Outcomes

B1.1 The curriculum offered includes engaged learning activities for both pre-clinical and clinical learners

- Outcome 1.1: 100% of Elon PA didactic courses include some form of active (engaged) learning. See Table 1.

B1.2 The curriculum includes integrated simulation and POCUS in each module of the program. Modules 1-6 progress through the didactic curriculum. Modules 7 and 8 reflect the clinical curriculum.

- Outcome 1.2a: Simulation and POCUS are integrated into the curriculum.
 - Simulation and POCUS occur in every module of the curriculum
 - 100% of Elon PA learners have access to basic POCUS training.

Table 1: Overview of Engaged Learning, Simulation, and POCUS Activities in Elon PA Curriculum										
COURSE		c/o 2023			c/o 2024			c/o 2025		
Winter/Module 1		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS5000	Introduction to Medicine	SL		X	SL		X	SL		X
PAS5200	Medical Physiology	CBL			CBL			CBL		
PAS5400	Introduction to History & Physical Exam	RP	SP		RP	SP		RP	SP	
PAS5600	Professional Issues Seminar	CBL			CBL			CBL		

Spring/ Module 2		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS6100	Anatomy I	D		X	D		X	D		X
PAS6120	Pathophysiology I	CBL			CBL, Au	CBL, G		CBL, Au	CBL, G	
PAS6140	Clinical Medicine	CBL, G			Au, CBL			Au, CBL		
PAS6160	Pharmacology I	G	SP		G, CBL	SP		G	SP	
PAS6180	History & Physical Exam I	RP	SP		RP	SP		RP	SP	
Summer 1/ Module 3		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS6200	Anatomy II	D		X			X			X
PAS6220	Pathophysiology II	CBL			CBL	CBL		CBL	CBL, G	
PAS6240	Clinical Medicine II	CBL								
PAS6260	Pharmacology II	Gi	SP		G, CBL					
PAS6280	History & Physical Exam II	RP	SP	X			X			X
Summer 2/ Module 4		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS6300	Emergency Medicine	CBL, SL	LF, SP	X	Au, CBL, SL	LF, SP	X	Au, CBL, SL	LF	X
PAS6320	Surgical Care	CBL, SL			Au, Gi, CBL, SL			Au, Gi, CBL, SL	SP	
Fall 1/ Module 5		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS6400	Special Populations	CBL, Da						CE,		
PAS6420	Reproductive Medicine & Sexual Health	CBL	SP	X	CBL	SP	X	CBL	SP	X
PAS6440	Behavioral Medicine							V		
PAS6460	Advance Clinical Reasoning	PBL, TBL, Da	SP		PBL, TBL, Da	SP		PBL, TBL, Da	LF, SP	
PAS6480	Master's Project I	Da			Da			Da, AI		
Fall 2/ Module 6		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS6800	Clinical Phase Preparation	CBL	SP	X						
Clinical Year: Module 7		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS7000	Clinical Year Seminar I		SP	X		SP	X		SP, C2C	X
Clinical Year: Module 8		Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS	Active Learning	Simulation	POCUS
PAS7480	Master's Project II	Da			Da			Da		
PAS7500	Clinical Year Seminar II		SP	X*		SP, CBL	X*		SP, CBL	X*
Glossary of Active Learning Terms: AI=artificial intelligence, Au=audience response, CBL=case-based learning, C2C=clients to class, CE=community engagement, D=dissection, Da=data application, G=games, Gi=gamification, PBL=problem-based learning, SCPE=supervised clinical education practicum; RP=role play; SL=skills lab, TBL=team-based learning, V=Video										
Glossary of Simulation Terms: LF=low fidelity simulation, HF=high fidelity simulation, SP=standardized patient experiences										
POCUS cells marked with X indicate this is an integrated component of this course. POCUS cells marked with an X indicates that there is an opportunity for students to learn more advanced skills (optional)										

Goal 2: Prepare students for academic excellence, using an evidence-based approach to clinical decision-making, and for self-direction

Academic excellence is defined as meeting program progression standards at competency-based program checkpoints (as defined in the student handbook) and passing the national certifying exam for PAs (PANCE).

An *evidence-based approach* to clinical decision-making involves developing an understanding of academic integrity, the application of evidence-based guidelines, the development of a research question and using current scientific evidence to make decisions related to the care of patients.²

Self-direction means that learners have opportunities to self-assess and choose assignments that best serve their growth and development in some courses. Self-direction is an important skill for developing lifelong learning.³

B2.2 An evidence-based approach to medicine is included in each module of the curriculum. Modules 1-6 include didactic education. Modules 7 and 8 are clinical education.

- | Didactic Year | Academic Integrity | Assignment | Casework | EB Guidelines | EB Practice | Master's Project | QI |
|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-----------|
| Winter/Module 1 | X | X | | | | | |
| Spring/Module 2 | | X | X | X | | | |
| Summer 1/Module 3 | | X | X | X | | | |
| Summer 2/Module 4 | | | | X | | | X |
| Fall 1/Module 5 | | X | X | X | X | | |
| Fall 2/Module 6 | | X | | | X | | X |
| Clinical Year | Academic Integrity | Assignment | Casework | EB Guidelines | EB Practice | Master's Project | QI |
| Module 7 (Jan-June) | X | | X | | X | X | |
| Module 8 (June-Dec) | X | | X | | X | X | |
- Glossary:*
Academic Integrity involves a review of academic integrity and ethical implications;
Assignments noted include those that requiring supporting evidence from high quality sources;
Casework involves in-class review of cases that require supporting evidence;
EB Guidelines=evidence-based guidelines. Courses use EB guidelines to determine diagnoses and/or treatments.
EB Practice=evidence-based practices such as forming questions, evaluating the strength of data, etc.
Master's project—the capstone project based on research inquiry and appraisal of literature;
QI=Quality improvement. Courses introduce QI and provide an opportunity to use data to discuss quality care and compliance

THRIVE (Boldly Elon): Caring (DPAS)

Goal 3: Attract, matriculate, and retain students from diverse backgrounds and experiences

A cohort with *diverse backgrounds and experiences* includes learners with lived experiences that are currently underrepresented in the medicine (URiM), as well as with a variety of pre-matriculation health experiences such as those who have worked in hospital settings, community health settings, and clinical research, etc.

The AAMC defines *URiM*¹ as “those racial and ethnic populations that are underrepresented in the medical profession relative to their numbers in the general population”. For our program, this data is pulled from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS)² and includes anyone *voluntarily self-identified* as: American Indian or Alaska Native; Black or African American; Hispanic, Latino, or of Spanish Origin; or Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; Nonresident Alien; two or more races.

Benchmarks/Outcomes

B3.1 Elon PA recruits and matriculates cohorts with *diverse backgrounds and experiences* that meet or exceed the current national average of health care experience hours (PAEA ProgramReport36_2023, Table 47, currently mean 3,235 hours³)

- Outcome 3.1a: The pre-matriculation health care experiences for current Elon PA students is provided in Table 3.1A with a variety of experiences noted from outpatient, inpatient, surgical, allied health, and clinical research.
- Outcome 3.1b: The incoming cohort profile includes data (contact hours and pre-matriculation healthcare experiences) on the current first year cohort. The health care experience hours of Elon PA learners are double the national average.

Table 3.1a pre-matriculation health care experiences of Elon PA students
<i>C/O 2026</i>
Pre-matriculation health care experiences included nursing assistants, patient care technicians, emergency management personnel (from EMT to Paramedic level), athletic training, medical scribes, medical assistants, clinical research assistants/coordinators, mental health/behavioral health technicians, Xray techs and registered vascular technologists.
<i>C/O 2027</i>
Pre-matriculation health care experiences included nursing assistants, patient care technicians, emergency management personnel (from EMT to Paramedic level), athletic training, medical scribes, radiology technicians, medical assistants and medical assistant trainers, occupational therapists, phlebotomists, and surgical recovery coordinators

CONNECT (Boldly Elon): Serving (DPAS)

Goal 4: Promote opportunities for community engagement

Community-based learning is an established means of encouraging student academic growth and has been shown to improve understanding communities and their needs.¹ These benefits are augmented when the learning is embedded and integrated into a curriculum in an intentional, meaningful manner.²

Community engagement opportunity examples include integrated co-curricular activities through Start Early in Medicine, voluntary extracurricular activities with the Open Door Clinic of Alamance County and the Dream Center, and optional clinical practicums (an elective) in global or national locations.

Benchmarks/Outcomes

B4.1 Elon PA will provide opportunities for co-curricular and voluntary community engagement during the pre-clinical phase of education

- Outcome 4.1: See table

Table 4.1: Elon PA Community Partnership for Community Engagement				
<i>Ongoing opportunities</i>	c/o 2022	c/o 2023	c/o 2024	c/o 2025
Start Early in Medicine	I	I	I	I
Open Door Clinic of Alamance County	V	V	V	V
Project Access				(instituted, v)
Diabetes Coffee Hour (Dream Center)				(instituted, v)
<i>Other 1-time opportunities</i>	c/o 2022	c/o 2023	c/o 2024	c/o 2025
City Gate Dream Center diaper drive	V	V	V	V
Food Drive for Piedmont Association of Physician Assistants (PAPA)		V	V	V
Habit for Humanity Build	V			
Holiday gift drive for community			V	V
Supply drive and volunteerism for Western NC				V
<i>Glossary: V=voluntary, extracurricular; I=integrated, co-curricular</i>				

B4.2 Elon PA learners in good academic standing will have an opportunity to participate in global or national (“Study USA”) locations for supervised clinical practicum experiences (SCPEs)

- Outcome 4.2: See table.

Table 4.2: Elon PA Students Participating in Global and National (Study USA) Learning Opportunities				
<i>Global opportunities</i>	c/o 2022	c/o 2023	c/o 2024	c/o 2025
Belize	2	3	4	9
<i>Study USA (national) locations</i>	c/o 2022	c/o 2023	c/o 2024	c/o 2025
Indian Health Service (IHS), Arizona	0	1	0*	0*
N. Mariana Islands (Saipan)	n/a	2	0*	0*
<i>*Placement availability is based on site availability. 2023 was the year Saipan’s site was developed. Opportunities at IHS vary annually. In 2024, there were no slots provided.</i>				

Citations:

1. Oliveira AL, Smith CH, Xavier NA. Service-Learning in Physician Assistant Education: A Scoping Review. *J Physician Assist Educ.* 2023;34(1):41-45.
doi:10.1097/JPA.0000000000000481
2. Forest CP, Lie DA. Impact of a Required Service-Learning Curriculum on Preclinical Students. *J Physician Assist Educ.* 2018;29(2):70-76.
doi:10.1097/JPA.0000000000000193