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| **Policy:** Teaching Out Policy | **Applicability:** PA Sciences Program Students |
| **Policy Owner:** PA Sciences Program | **Approved By:** Dean of the School of Graduate Studies and Research |
| **Effective Date:** August 18, 2021 | **Last Reviewed:** August 05, 2026 |
| **Next Review:** August 05, 2027 | **Contact:** (615)321-2933 |

**PURPOSE:** To define the terms and process of teaching out should the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant (PA) Sciences Program not achieve its desired goal of Accreditation - Continued with the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

**POLICY:** The Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant (PA) Sciences program's current programmatic accreditation status is Accreditation-Provisional as issued by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). While all efforts have been put in place to bring the program into Accreditation-Continued status, the program is preparing for all possible alternatives to Accreditation-Continued, including preparing a teaching out policy/plan in the event of receiving Accreditation-Withdrawn status after the ARC-PA Meharry Medical College PA program site visit and commission review in its June 2025 meeting.

Accreditation Standards:

A1.02 The sponsoring institution is responsible for:

H) teaching out currently matriculated students in accordance with the institution's regional accreditor or federal law in the event of program closure and/or loss of accreditation.

The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) good practices regarding closing a program, site, branch or institution are as follows:

A decision to close an educational program, site, branch campus, or the entire institution requires thoughtful planning and careful consultation with all affected constituencies. Every effort should be devoted to informing each constituency as fully as possible about the conditions compelling consideration of a decision of such importance, and all available information should be shared. As much as possible, the determination to close a program, site, branch campus, or the institution should be made through a consultative process and only after alternatives have been considered, but responsibility for the final decision to close rests with the institution's governing board. Because the immediate interests of current students and faculty are most directly affected, their present and future prospects require especially sensitive and timely attention and involvement.

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If an institution decides to close an educational program, site, branch campus, or the entire institution, it must consider the following options:

1. The institution teaches out currently enrolled students; no longer admits students to programs; and terminates the program, the operations of a site or a branch campus, or the operations of an institution after students have graduated. The institution must submit to the Commission a teach-out plan for approval.
2. If the institution enters into a contractual teach-out agreement for another institution to teach out the educational programs or program, the teach-out agreement requires Commission approval in advance.

See Commission policy "Substantive Change for Accredited Institutions of the Commission on Colleges," Procedure Three, for additional information on teach-out plans and agreements.

**Teach-Out Plans and Agreements:**

A teach-out plan is a written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50 percent of at least one program, ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include a teach-out agreement between institutions. In such cases and in accord with Federal regulation 602.24 (c), the institution is required to submit the teach-out plan to the office of the Commission on Colleges for approval prior to its implementation.

The institution may include a teach-out agreement as part of a teach-out plan. A teach-out agreement is a written agreement between institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable opportunity for students to complete their program of study if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 50 percent of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. If an institution includes a teach-out agreement as part of a teach-out plan, the agreement should be submitted to the Commission office for approval prior to its implementation.

**Closing a Program:**

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When the decision is made to close an educational program, the institution must make a good faith effort to assist affected students, faculty, administrative and support staff so that they experience a minimal amount of disruption in the pursuit of their course of study or professional careers. In all cases, individuals should be notified of the decision to close a program as soon as possible so that they can make appropriate plans. Students who have not completed their programs should be advised by faculty or professional counselors regarding suitable options including transfer to comparable programs. Arrangements should be made to reassign faculty and staff or assist them in locating other employment.

The Commission on Colleges will work with the U.S. Department of Education and the appropriate State agency, to the extent feasible, to ensure that students are given reasonable opportunities to complete their education without additional charge.

**The Students:**

Students who have not completed their degrees should be provided for according to their needs. Arrangements for transfer to other institutions will require complete academic records and all other related information gathered in dossiers which can be transmitted promptly to receiving institutions. Arrangements for the teach-out of programs should be in line with the requirements of the Commission's Substantive Change policy.

Agreements made with other institutions to receive transferring students and to accept their records should be in writing and in accord with Commission policy. Where financial aid is concerned, particularly federal or state grants, arrangements should be made with the appropriate agencies to transfer the grants to the receiving institution. Where such arrangements cannot be completed, students should be informed. In cases where students have held institutional scholarships or grants, appropriate agreements should be negotiated if there are available funds which can be legally used to support students while completing degrees at other institutions.

**Academic Records and Financial Aid Transcripts:**

Arrangements should be made with the state board for higher education or another appropriate agency for filing of student records. If there is no state agency which can receive records, arrangements should be made with a state university, with the state archives, or with a

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private organization to preserve the records. Notification should be sent to every current and past student indicating where the records are being stored and what the accessibility to those records will be. Where possible, a copy of a student's record should also be forwarded to the individual student. The institution must notify the Commission regarding the final filing of student records.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Teach Out - The definition provided by the ARC-PA glossary of terms defines teaching out as the following: allowing students already in the program to complete their education or assisting them in enrolling in an ARC-PA accredited program in which they can continue their education.

**PROCEDURE:**

Teach Out Plan:

1. The institution must identify an estimated teach-out period during which time it will complete the teach-out plan and any teach-out agreement(s).

2. The length of the teach-out period may range from 12 to 18 months for a plan based solely on transfers to other institutions to 24 to 36 months for a traditional teach out of closing the PA academic program.

3. Meharry Medical College may request a longer teach-out period as long as the institution provides evidence that an extended period is warranted to equitably allow for all matriculated students to complete their education and provides assurance that the institution will continue to meet Standards for Accreditation, Policies, and federal and state regulations.

4. This plan will be consistent with SACSCOC Standards for Accreditation, Policies, and applicable state and federal regulations.

5. The institution will ensure the necessary experience, resources, and support services to provide an educational program that is of acceptable quality and reasonably similar in content, structure, and scheduling to that promised to the students upon enrollment.

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6. The institution will demonstrate stability and the ability to carry out its mission and meet all obligations to existing students until all matriculants have had the opportunity to complete the program they began.

7. The institution will offer the PA program to students without additional charge over what had been previously in place.

8. Meharry Medical College will continue to pay ARC-PA dues and fees during the teach out period.

9. Meharry Medical College will satisfy all accreditation activities in accordance with its accreditation review cycle or as requested in prior action by the ARC-PA.

10. The ARC-PA will monitor implementation of the teach out plan and will take further action if the institution fails to implement the approved teach out plan an agreement.

11. When another institution is involved in the teach-out, Meharry Medical College will ensure that the receiving institution can provide students access to the program without requiring them to move or travel substantial distances, and attests that written notification has been given to students of additional charges, if any.

12. In such cases that another institution is involved, Meharry Medical College will pay for any differences in tuition for each student, if any.