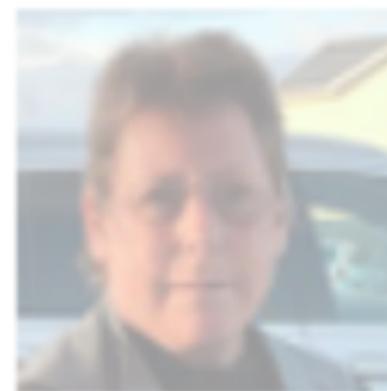




**ATSU**

DOCTOR OF  
MEDICAL SCIENCE

**ATSU DMSC**



# OUR FACULTY



# Meet your Faculty

The DMSc Faculty are dedicated to your success!



**Randy Danielsen, PhD, PA-C Emeritus, DFAAPA**

## **DMSc Director**

Dr. Danielsen is the director of the Doctor of Medical Science (DMS) program. Since graduating from the University of Utah Physician Assistant (PA) Program in 1974, Dr. Danielsen has distinguished himself as a clinician, PA educator, author, and editor. He received his BS in Health Science (cum laude) from the University of Utah in 1978, his Masters in PA Studies (MPAS) from the University of Nebraska with an emphasis on Internal Medicine in 1997, and his Ph.D. from the Union Institute & University in 2003 with an emphasis on Medical Education.

Dr. Danielsen has been with A.T. Still University since 1995 serving as PA academic coordinator (1995-1997), chair of physician assistant studies (1997-2004), dean of the Arizona School of Health Sciences (2004-2010, 2012-2018) and recently stepped down as dean to take on the new role with the DMS. He has served on the board of directors of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and as a board member and chairman for National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. Earlier in his career, he served as president of the Utah Academy of Physician Assistants (UAPA), the Arizona State Association of Physician Assistants (ASAPA), and as chair of the Arizona Regulatory Board for PAs. Retired after 28 years of service in the US Air Force and Army National Guard with the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, Dr. Danielsen also is a former president of the AAPA Veterans Caucus and was honored with the Caucus' Civilian PA of the Year Award in 2003.

Dr. Danielsen was named Outstanding PA of the Year by the AAPA in 1993 and by ASAPA in 2011. In 2012 he was honored by the University of Utah, School of Medicine, Department of Family & Preventive Medicine, Division of Physician Assistant Studies with the "Patron of the Profession" award for "unwavering dedication and service to the Physician Assistant Profession." In May 2015 he received the Eugene A. Stead Award of Achievement by the AAPA. This is the Academy's most prestigious award recognizing an individual for lifetime achievement that has had a broad and significant impact on the profession. He currently serves as PA editor-in-chief for Clinician Reviews.

Dr. Danielsen has published over nineteen peer-reviewed articles, twenty journal editorials, three book chapters, and his first co-authored book, entitled *The Preceptor's Handbook for Supervising Physician Assistants*, published by Jones & Bartlett Learning. He is also a Senior Consultant with the Academy for Academic Leadership and a proud member of Rotary International.

Dr. Danielsen teaches: Medical Writing and Quality Improvement in Healthcare.



**Albert F. Simon, DHSc, PA-C, MEd**  
**DMSc Associate Director**

Dr. Simon is the former Chair and current Professor in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies at A.T. Still University. Previously he served as founding Vice Dean at the School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona, where he was Chief Operating Officer for the School of Medicine. He was an integral part of the leadership team that developed the most innovative medical school in the United States from 2007 to 2012. For 37 years Dr. Simon has served as Chair of Physician Assistant Studies departments at three universities: Saint Francis University, Baylor College of Medicine and, most recently, A.T. Still University. In his years of clinical practice, he has worked in occupational medicine at Volkswagen of America's assembly plant in New Stanton, Pennsylvania and inpatient Internal Medicine at the Van Zant VA Medical Center in Altoona, PA as well as working Family Medicine in the Coalport Area Community Health Center.

Being politically active in the Physician Assistant profession, he has served in a number of national leadership positions including President and Vice President of the Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP) and author of the Annual Report on Physician Assistant Educational Programs in the United States. During his APAP presidency, he shepherded the development of the Leadership-Training Institute as a vehicle to provide needed education to individuals entering into PA education. He has served as an educational consultant to over twenty-five physician assistant programs across the United States. He has also served as the co-editor of Appleton and Lange's "Q and A for the Physician Assistant", one of the best selling board review books for PAs in the nation.

With an interest in continuous quality improvement, Dr. Simon was trained as a Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award Examiner for the United States Department of Labor. He was also featured in the book "On Q, Causing Quality in Higher Education" by Daniel Seymour for his innovative approaches to quality management in an educational program.

Dr. Simon resides in the picturesque mountain community of Ligonier, Pennsylvania with his wife and two dogs (Ally and Cole).

Dr. Simon teaches: Community Assessment & Health Promotion, Organizational Leadership (Leadership track), and the Clinical Practicum courses (Clinical Track).



**Jeffrey L. Alexander, PhD, FAACVPR, ACSM-CEP**

Dr. Alexander completed his doctor of philosophy degree at Arizona State University (2003) in curriculum and instruction with an emphasis in exercise and wellness. He earned his Master of Science in exercise physiology from Brigham Young University and his bachelor's degree in health promotion.

In addition to his academic preparation, Dr. Alexander holds numerous health and fitness professional certifications; namely, Clinical Exercise Specialist® from the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) and Certified Personal Trainer and Corrective Exercise Specialist from the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM). Consequently, Dr. Alexander has served as a personal and group fitness trainer primarily working closely with the older adult population.

Dr. Alexander teaches the Capstone courses.



**Francis (Frank) Crosby Jr., DHSc, MPAS, PA-C**

Dr. Crosby received his doctorate in health science (DHSc) from Nova Southeastern University (NSU) in 2013, his master's in physician assistant studies from the University of Nebraska Medical Center in 1997, his bachelors as a physician associate from the University of Oklahoma in 1982, and a diploma from the Air War College, Air University in 1996. He retired from the United States Air Force in 2005 at the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Dr. Crosby currently teaches medical ethics in healthcare for NSU. He is a founding member and past-President of PAs for Tomorrow. During his military career, he served in multiple leadership roles including deputy chief of medical staff, commander of a medical operations squadron, and as an AF liaison to the Joint Commission. He brings a wealth of experience in leadership and health policy to the DMSc program.

Dr. Crosby enjoys world travels with his bride of 44 years and has logged nearly 1000 SCUBA dives as a master SCUBA diver. When not underwater, he is often on the ski slopes of Colorado.

Dr. Crosby teaches the Social & Behavioral Determinants of Health course.



**Sondra DePalma, DHSc, PA-C, DFAAPA**

Dr. DePalma graduated summa cum laude with a BA from Mercyhurst University in 1997 and received a post-baccalaureate premedical certificate from Pennsylvania State University in 1999. She graduated with a Master of Health Science degree from Lock Haven University's physician assistant program in 2002. In 2018, she earned a Doctor of Health Sciences degree with a concentration in Leadership and Organizational Behavior from A.T. Still University.

Dr. DePalma works nationally on regulatory, reimbursement, and professional issues of physician assistants. She has experience in healthcare leadership and organizational management, is a published author, and a regular speaker at national conferences. Dr. DePalma is a Distinguished Fellow of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and a licensed physician assistant in Pennsylvania. She continues to practice clinically in cardiology, a field in which she has worked for the past 17 years.

Dr. DePalma teaches Social Determinants of Health (core course); Quality Improvement in Health Care (leadership track); and Organizational Leadership, Management & Behavior (leadership track).



**Alison C. Essary, DHSc, MHPE, PA-C**

Dr. Essary is a graduate of the ATSU Doctor of Health Science Program. She is the Scrivner Family Director, Research, Quality Improvement and Patient Safety (ResQIPS) Program at HonorHealth Academic Affairs in Scottsdale, AZ. She is a Clinical Professor and has been in academics for 20 years. She has maintained a consistent and robust record of research activity, including \$2M+ in research proposals, \$1.4M+ in awards, 70+ refereed manuscripts, and 80+ abstracts and presentations. Her research efforts were nationally recognized as the Physician Assistant Foundation of the American Academy of Physician Assistants Breitman-Dorn Endowed Fellow, 2013.

Dr. Essary was part of a national team invited to write a report on the state of burnout in the PA profession published by the National Academy of Medicine in 2018. The team published "Burnout, job satisfaction, and stress levels of PAs"; receiving the AAPA Research Article of the Year in 2019. Nationally, Dr. Essary serves as a grant reviewer for NIH, PCORI and HRSA.

Dr. Essary teaches the Capstone courses along with Quality Improvement in Health Care (leadership track).



### **Larry Fisher, DHSc, PA-C**

Dr. Larry Fisher was born in Fairbanks, Alaska and is a graduate of the MEDEX PA program, Alaska Class # 1 in 1995. After practicing in Alaska for 17 years, Dr. Fisher relocated to Arizona and entered the APA Program. Following graduation, he entered the DHSc program and graduated in 2017 while continuing to practice Family Medicine, Urgent Care and Pain management. As a clinic preceptor Dr. Fisher enjoys participating in PA education, and in 2017 began teaching bioethics to APA students at ATSU. Dr. Fisher was recently invited and accepted an invitation to teach Ethical & Legal Considerations in Health Administration in the DMSc program.

Dr. Fisher is a member of AAPA, and ASAPA. He volunteers at an inner-city clinic for the underserved and underinsured on a seasonal schedule. He now resides in Phoenix, Arizona with his wife, son, cats and dogs. His hobbies include cycling, supporting renewable energy, and brewing his own mead (honey wine). He plans to eventually return to Alaska to enjoy the wide-open spaces, fresh fish, and pioneer spirit.

Dr. Fisher teaches Ethical & Legal Considerations in Health Administration (leadership track).



### **Michael Halasy, DHSc, MS, PA-C**

Dr. Michael Halasy is a practicing physician assistant at Mayo Clinic in the Spine Center where he manages an independent panel of complex spine patients from all over the world. He is an accomplished researcher and educator and is currently the co-chair of the multidisciplinary spine research committee at Mayo Clinic and is a health services researcher who works on health workforce research with a number of specialties and practices. He is heavily involved in healthcare administration as well. He was one of only 5 US researchers invited to the first international research collaborative on Audit and Feedback research. He has published numerous articles, has a background in health policy and healthcare economics, and has research interests in shared decision making, healthcare workforce studies, health economics, and organizational behavior. He has a Doctor of Health Sciences degree in Organizational Science and Behavior.

Dr. Halasy teaches the Capstone courses.



**Patricia Kelly, EdD, PA-C emeritus, MHS**

Dr. Kelly is an online adjunct faculty member. Dr. Kelly received her bachelor of arts from the State University of New York at Binghamton in 1973, her physician assistant (Primary Care Associate) certificate of clinical proficiency from Stanford University School of Medicine in 1980, her master of health services in primary health care from the University of California at Davis in 1982, and her doctor of education from Nova Southeastern University in 2000.

Dr. Kelly served as the program director/department chair and professor of the Doctor of Health Science Program at Nova Southeastern University, College of Health Care Sciences from 2004 to 2016. She also taught in the ATSU's Doctor of Health Science Program as an adjunct faculty member teaching evidence-based medicine. She has been a regional, national, and international speaker.

Dr. Kelly teaches Adult Learning Theory (Leadership track).



**Kevin R. Kupferer, PA-C, DHSc, MsCI, MPAS**

Dr. Kupferer is a 2005 graduate of the University of Nebraska/USAF Program at Ft. Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas. His clinical background is in family medicine and urgent care. He is a neurosurgical research program manager with the Barrow Institute of Neuro Surgery. Prior to joining ATSU faculty, he spent eight years managing biomedical research and clinical trials for the Department of Defense.

Dr. Kupferer completed a residency in clinical research with a masters in clinical investigations at the University of Texas HSCSA and doctorate in health science through ATSU in 2013. He is a member of the Arizona State Association of Physician Assistants

(ASAPA), American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), Society of Air Force PAs (SAFPA) and the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA).

Dr. Kupferer teaches the Research Methods in Healthcare and Capstone courses.



**Mary Kimmitt Laxton, DHSc, PA-C**

Dr. Laxton received her BA in botany from Duke University in 1976 and her MPA in management from the Indiana University Northwest in 1980. She received her certificate in physician assistant studies from the Philadelphia University in 1997 and her doctor of health science from Nova Southeastern University in 2016. She is a distinguished fellow of the American Academy of Physician Assistant and a member of the Alpha Eta Honor Society at Nova Southeastern University.

Dr. Laxton held academic appointments in physician assistant programs at Arcadia University in Newark, Delaware and the Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania from 2012 - 2018. Dr. Laxton's clinical experience is in internal, family, geriatric, and emergency medicine.

Dr. Laxton teaches Curriculum Design & Delivery (Education track).



**Eric Matthews, PhD, MEd, RT**

Dr. Matthews completed his PhD in education at Southern Illinois University with an emphasis in adult and vocational/technical education (workforce education and development). He also holds graduate degrees in education (administration and supervision) and museum studies. His professional medical preparation is in the field of diagnostic imaging. Dr. Matthews is certified in diagnostic radiography, cardiovascular-interventional technology, and magnetic resonance imaging by the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists. Prior to coming to ATSU, he was the program director of the radiography program at Southern Illinois University.

Dr. Matthews has taught numerous courses on medical and educational history, his primary research interest. He enjoys qualitative-historical research and has served as a subject matter expert for several state and national organizations and museums on the topic of 19th century American medicine.

Dr. Matthews teaches the Capstone courses.



**Bob McMullen, EdD, PA-C**

Dr. Bob McMullen is a 1988 graduate of the UTMB PA program in Galveston, TX. He spent his first 20 years practicing clinically in remote clinics and EDs in West Texas, Arizona and Maine. He joined the PA faculty at ATSU in Arizona in 2007 and was full-time until 2017. He has extensive experience in curriculum and assessment, as well as online teaching. He currently lives in New Mexico, where he is working remotely to help create the developing ATSU Physician Assistant Program in Santa Maria, CA. Dr. McMullen also teaches online in ATSU's Advanced PA Program along with the Doctor of Medical Science Program.

Dr. McMullen teaches Educational Technology & Simulation and Assessment & Evaluation (Education track).



**Leon Moak, DMSc, PA-C**

Dr. Moak received his Doctor of Medical Science degree from the University of Lynchburg in 2020. He is an alum of the ATSU-ASHS master of science in physician assistant studies program in 2001 and also holds a certificate of advanced clinical studies in family and emergency medicine from ATSU. Dr. Moak started his academic career as a PA faculty member with ATSU from 2001 to 2009; serving as the director of the Advanced PA degree program from 2006 to 2009. The DMSc program is very excited to have Dr. Moak return to ATSU and for his passion for teaching. In addition to his clinical duties in the emergency department at Chandler Regional Hospital/Mercy Gilbert Medical Center in Chandler, Arizona, Dr. Moak serves as the Advanced Practice Provider Site Director.

Dr. Moak is a member of the Society of Emergency Medicine PAs, AAPA, and ASAPA. He has served as director-at-large for the Arizona State Association of Physician Assistants (ASAPA), director of online affairs for the Student Academy of AAPA, and volunteers in his community as an Assistant Scoutmaster for the Boy Scouts of America.

Dr. Moak teaches the Capstone courses.



**Joseph G. Weber, DHSc, MBA, MPAS, PA-C, Sr. Chaplain**

Dr. Weber holds several degrees, including an associate in applied business, a bachelor of science in management science, a master of business administration, a master's in physician assistant studies, and a doctorate in health sciences. He is also a licensed PA in the state of South Carolina with clinical experience in both emergency and psychiatric medicine.

Dr. Weber will be teaching Research Methods (Core Course) and Health Economics (Leadership Track). Dr. Weber has previously taught graduate level courses in research methods, biomedical ethics, and many other classes. He is extremely familiar with adult learning, course development, and assessment methods. Before becoming a PA, Dr. Weber was a computer engineer and has an extensive background in technology and medical simulation tools.

Dr. Weber teaches the Research Methods in Healthcare, Health Economics (Leadership track), and Capstone courses.