

Pre-Physician Assistant Requirements

Introduction: This information is based on the general requirements of (>50%) PA programs across the nation. It will be up to each student to research schools of interest and to finalize any remaining requirements.

- PA programs do not require any particular major. Students should select a major based on academic strengths and interests. Common majors for our Pre-PA students are Biology, Kinesiology, Health Professions, and Psychology. Many other majors, however, are possible.
- A draft of your academic plan needs to be reviewed with your advisor from your major.
- Each student should develop an academic plan based on their investigation of PA program requirements and the requirements for their degree.
- PA programs can require a very specific number of healthcare-related or patient-contact, volunteering hours. These can range from 200 to 2,000 hours depending on the program.

Required by MOST PA Programs

Chemistry: 2 Semesters
CHEM 1031 + CHEM 1033
CHEM 1032 + CHEM 1034

Biology: 3 Semesters
Most PA programs require only General Biology. Taking BIOL 1111/2112 (or 1112) will allow the completion of upper-level sciences like Genetics.
BIOL 1111 or BIOL 1011
BIOL 1112 or 2112 or BIOL 1012
BIOL 2001 or BIOL 3317

Anatomy & Physiology: 2 Semesters
KINS 1223 (or BIOL 2233)
KINS 1224 (or BIOL 3334)

Medical Terminology: 1 Semester
HIM 1101

Math: 1 Semester
Check if schools of interest have a preference on what type of statistics course. Options listed below:
MATH 1044, PSY 1003, SOC 1167,
BIOL 3312, PSY 1167 or EPBI 2219

To look up courses please navigate the [bulletin](#).

Required by SOME PA Programs

English: 1 Semester
Some schools consider any writing intensive course.
IH may not necessarily count as an English course for all programs. Please contact schools of interest for more information.

Social Sciences: 1-2 Semesters
PSY 1001
SOC 1176 (or 1576)

Additional Sciences:
Refer to schools of interest to determine if any additional sciences are required. Recommended courses below:
Organic Chemistry I: CHEM 2201 + CHEM 2203
Biochemistry: BIOL 4375, CHEM 4401 or 3401
Genetics: BIOL 2296 or BIOL 2207+2297
Physics I: PHYS 2021 (or 1061 or 1021)

ePortfolio

ePortfolio is a tool that will help students stay organized for a professional school application. Through the ePortfolio process, students will set up a ‘mock application’ that includes GPAs and professional development experiences. **ePortfolio drafts are due to PPHA June 30th two years before students plan to enter professional school.**

The circle to the right represents four areas that are important for admission to professional school. As you embark on your journey to your Physician Assistant program, think about ways to enhance each of these four sections.



Applying to PA Programs

Application Process: A centralized application service is available through the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants ([CASPA](#)) which is administered by the Physician Assistant Education Association ([PAEA](#)). Applications are submitted one year before students expect to enter professional school and are available for submission in late April. Schools view applicants on a rolling basis– apply early when the application opens!

Undergraduate Major: There is no preferred major for PA programs. Students should select a major that they find interesting and consider a strength.

GPA: PA programs will consider both a student’s overall and math/science GPA. Math/science GPA is calculated using scores from any course taken in the departments of Biology, Chemistry, Physics, and Math. **An overall and math/science GPA of 3.5 or above is preferred. GPAs below 3.0 will need to consider Post-Baccalaureate coursework / programs before applying.**

Graduate Record Examination ([GRE](#)): Most PA programs require that students complete the GRE which is administered through the Education Testing Service (ETS). This test is often taken the same summer in which the student applies to professional school (one year before walking through the doors of a PA program). Remember, take time to prepare for the exam.

Professional Development: An important component to your application to PA programs will also be your patient-contact or healthcare-related volunteer hours. Many schools have a minimum number of hours that they will prefer. Research schools of interest to determine what activities will count as well as a good number to aim for. Demonstrated experiences in healthcare, clinical health settings in particular, working directly with patients need to be a part of your profile for future admission.

Letters of Recommendation: Letters for PA programs will be sent directly through CASPA at the time a student applies. Schools generally like to see 2-3 letters of recommendation with at least 1-2 from science faculty. Look into schools of interest for more specifics on what might be preferred.

Additional Resources:

Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA): www.paeonline.org

Please join the [PPHA Canvas page](#) for more information.