

WHAT IS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA)?

A physician assistant is a graduate of an accredited PA educational program who is authorized by the state to practice medicine with the supervision of a licensed physician. PAs are invaluable members of the healthcare team and work in concert with physicians to ensure the highest quality of care for patients. The following is a brief guide to the University of Dubuque's Master in Physician Assistant Studies program requirements.

PREREQUISITES:

NOTE: EACH PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT SCHOOL ESTABLISHES ITS OWN SET OF PREREQUISITES. CHECK THE WEBSITES OF THE SCHOOLS IN WHICH YOU ARE MOST INTERESTED TO OBTAIN A CURRENT LIST OF UNDERGRADUATE REQUIREMENTS.

The courses below are specific to the University of Dubuque's undergraduate course offerings and the UD Master in Physician Assistant Studies Program requirements.	
Math (6 credits)	MATH 150: Analysis of Functions and Trigonometry (Prerequisite: MATH 112) MATH 230: Introduction to Statistics
English	ENG 101: Composition & Rhetoric RES 104: Introduction to Research Writing
General Chemistry including laboratory (8 credits)	CHM 111: General Chemistry I and Lab CHM 112: General Chemistry II and Lab
Organic Chemistry w/lab (8 credits)	CHM 221: Organic Chemistry I CHM 222: Organic Chemistry II, OR Biochemistry
General Biology w/ lab OR Zoology w/ lab (4 credits)	BIO 135: General Zoology and Lab
Microbiology (4 credits)	BIO 314: Microbiology
Human Anatomy & Physiology w/ lab (8 credits)	BIO 211: Anatomy & Physiology I BIO 212: Anatomy & Physiology II
Genetics (4 credits)	BIO 236: Genetics and Lab
Highly Recommended	CHM 331: Biochemistry I, BIO 150: Medical Terminology
<i>If you choose not to major in one of the natural sciences, you may wish to include one or two additional science electives in your program of study if your schedule permits.</i>	

EXAM AND GPA:

The GRE or MCAT is required. GRE scores of 150 or higher in both the Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning sections and MCAT total scores of 492 or higher will be viewed favorably. Applicants whose GRE scores are more than five years old must retake the exam and submit more recent scores, and applicants whose MCAT scores are more than three years old must retake the exam and submit more recent scores. Official GRE scores should be sent directly by ETS once the application is submitted to CASPA, using our CASPA GRE code 1620. Applicants taking the MCAT will need to print their score report and email it to MPAS@dbq.edu or mail it to the Physician Assistant Studies Program, University of Dubuque.

Grade Point Average (GPA): Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 and science prerequisite grade point average of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale. However, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and in the science prerequisite courses is typically expected for favorable consideration.

Additional Information:

Bachelor's Degree or its equivalent from a regionally accredited college or university.

Applicants must be able to meet the technical standards.

Previous experience in the medical field is not mandatory, but having medical experience (volunteer hours, shadowing a healthcare professional, etc.) and/or community service will enhance an application.

Students with prior military service and/or UD graduates will be looked at favorably, particularly in the areas of leadership and/or community service that reflect the Mission and commitment of the program to the Dubuque area and UD. However, automatic advance standing is not given.

Three letters of recommendation should be submitted to CASPA with application. Letters should be from physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners, professors, or any individual who has worked with the applicant in a professional or educational environment. Strong, unequivocal letters attesting to the applicant's educational background, motivation, analytical skills, and promise as a future medical practitioner are important considerations.

TIMELINE

Freshman Year:

- Become familiar with UD's Health Professions Advising Website.
- Start taking basic sciences (See chart above).
- Think about possible majors.
- Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community).
- Start medical experience (EMT, CNA, Shadowing).
- Join some student organizations.

Sophomore Year:

- Continue with next sequence of courses.
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities (Medical, volunteer, etc).
- Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations.
- Visit your faculty advisor to begin to assess competitiveness.
- **BOTTOM LINE:** Keep working on the things you established your first year!!

Junior Year:

- Identify PA programs you are interested in (Fall semester).
- Continue to seek faculty input regarding competitiveness (Fall semester).
- Register for the GRE (Fall Semester).
- Study for GRE and take GRE (Spring Semester).
- Identify 3 individuals to write letters of recommendation (Spring Semester).
- Complete Application (CASPA) (Spring Semester-Summer).
- Keep working on the things you have established thus far.

Senior Year:

- Submit Application (CASPA) if you haven't already (Fall semester).
- Wait to be contacted for interview.
- Finish degree requirements.
- Continue with activities.
- Talk with an advisor about Plan B if necessary.
- Graduate.

RESOURCES:

University of Dubuque's Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program [Click Here](#)

Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) [Click Here](#)

Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) [Click Here](#)

GRE Information/Dates [Click Here](#)