

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

EXPERIENCE

- Medical experience is the most important determinant in being admitted to a Physician Assistant program.
- Schools may require up to **1,000 hours** of direct-patient care. Here are examples of positions that provide quality experience:
 - EMT/Paramedic, Hospice Volunteer, Physical Therapy Assistant, Registered Nurse, Pharmacist, Clinical Health Educator, Licensed Practical Nurse, Medical Technician, Dietician, Medical Assistant, X-ray Technician, Emergency Room Technician, Physical Therapist, Phlebotomist, Psychologist, Occupational Therapist, Surgical Technician, Patient Care Technician, Medical Corpsman, Peace Corps Volunteer, Athletic Trainer, Respiratory Therapist, Nursing Assistant.
- Schools can be picky about what constitutes relevant experience, so check with the website, read the application materials, or call the admissions office to confirm.
 - It is also a good idea to shadow a current Physician's Assistant or another medical professional. However, shadowing may not count towards the hour total for direct patient care.

GRADES

- Schools will often list the minimum GPA and GRE scores required to apply for their PA programs. They will also sometimes list the average GPA and GRE scores of their admitted classes. All of these numbers are important.
- A score above the minimum but below the average will need to be accompanied by impressive letters of recommendation, coursework, and experience; whereas, a relatively high GPA or GRE score may make up for other qualifications that aren't as stellar.

COURSEWORK

- An applicant to a PA program needs to complete core science classes (A&P, Chemistry, Biology, Microbiology, Other Courses in Advanced Biology or Chemistry), humanities classes (Introductory and Developmental Psychology), and other key classes (English Composition, Statistics, Other Advanced Mathematics). Check each school for its specific requirements.
- Schools often want more than just the minimum courseload.
 - Genetics, Neuroscience, Organic Chemistry II, Cell Biology, Immunology, Pharmacology, Embryology, and Histology are good examples of extra science classes to take.
 - Schools may not accept credit from online or survey courses. AP credit may also be unacceptable.

LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION

- Multiple letters of recommendation are required within an application.
- Be sure to include one or two letters from medical professionals (MD, DO, PA, etc.).
- As with everything else, read the school's application material to see if a letter from a particular type of professional is required.

CHECKLIST

- Minimum of 500 to 1,000+ hours of **direct** patient care.
- GPA – 3.00 to 3.50 Science GPA – 3.00 to 3.50 GRE – 1,000 to 1,100
- Coursework including A&P, Chemistry, Biology, Microbiology, Other Courses in Advanced Biology or Chemistry, Statistics, Introductory and Developmental Psychology, Other Advanced Mathematics, English Composition, and more
- Three letters of recommendation (with one or two being from medical professionals)

RESOURCES

- **Learn more from the Academy of Physician Assistants**

www.aapa.org

- **Central Application Service for Physician Assistants**

<https://portal.caspaonline.org>

- **UT Pre-Health Advising – Physician Assistant**

http://www.artsci.utk.edu/advising/deg_prog/prehealth/assistant.asp

- **Bethel University: Physician Assistant Program – Requirements**

<http://www.bethelu.edu/bethelpa/requirements>

- **Treveca Nazarene University: Physician Assistant Program**

<http://www.trevecca.edu/adult-education/graduate-programs/physician-assistant/>

- **South College: Physician Assistant Program – Admission Requirements**

http://www.southcollegetn.edu/physician_assistant/admission_requirements.htm

- **Lincoln Memorial University: Physician Assistant Program – Admission Criteria**

<http://www.lmunet.edu/dcom/pa/criteria.shtml>

- **Mercer University: Physician Assistant Program – Admission Requirements**

<http://cophs.mercer.edu/pdfs/PA.Admissions.Requirements.pdf>