

PRE-PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Undergraduate Credit Required	Bachelor's degree
Entrance Exam	GRE (some schools) or PA-CAT (some schools)
Professional Schooling Required	26-28 months of professional school; Master of Physician Assistant Studies
Local Professional Schools	There are 30 Physician Assistant Programs in Pennsylvania including West Chester University, PCOM, Jefferson – Center city, Jefferson – East Falls, Temple, Drexel, Salus, DeSales, Arcadia, Penn State, Saint Joseph, Slippery Rock, University of Pittsburgh, Widener, Thiel College, Seton Hall, Saint Francis, Pennsylvania college of Technology, Misericordia University, Mercyhurst, etc... For a complete list, scan the QR code or click on this website. https://pspa.net/student-affairs/pennsylvania-pa-programs/
Professional Organization Websites	aapa.org (American Academy of Physician Assistants); paeaonline.org (Physician Assistant Education Association)
Major	Students can major in any subject at WCU for Pre-PA. The most common majors that align with Pre-PA school pre-requisites are Biology: Cell and Molecular Biology, Biology: Integrative Concentration, Chemistry: Chem-Bio, Exercise Science, or Sports Medicine



REQUIRED AND/OR SUGGESTED ELECTIVES FOR WCU UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

The following course recommendations are general requirements for PA programs. For the specific requirements of your school of choice and whether AP/IB credit is accepted, please refer to that school's admissions website.

Biological Sciences with labs (8 credit hrs)			
BIO 110 General Biology I, BIO 111 General Biology II, BIO 211 Cell Biology			
Course	Term	Grade	
Genetics (required by some schools)			
Course	Term	Grade	
BIO 210 Genetics			
Microbiology (1 course; 4 credit hrs)			
Course	Term	Grade	
BIO 214: General Microbiology (Preferred)			
BIO 204: Introductory Microbiology (Accepted)			
General Chemistry with lab (8 credit hrs)			
Course	Term	Grade	
CHE 103 & CRL 103			
CHE 104 & CRL 104			
Organic Chemistry (1 course with lab required)			
Course	Term	Grade	
CHE 231 & CRL 231			
Anatomy and Physiology 1 and 2			
Course	Term	Grade	
BIO 259: A & P 1			
BIO 269: A & P 2			
Medical Terminology (required by some schools)			
Course	Term	Grade	
HEA 370			

English Composition (6 credit hrs)			
Course	Term	Grade	
WRT 120 Writing 1			
WRT 2XX Critical Writing			
Calculus and Statistics (please contact school for specific admissions requirement)			
Course	Term	Grade	
MAT 121 Statistics (required)			
MAT 145 Calculus (recommended)			
Social Sciences including, but not limited to, PSY 100, PSY 210, PSY 375, History, Anthropology, SOC 100, etc... 6 to 9 credit hours (contact school for specific admissions requirement)			
Course	Term	Grade	

Sample Course Plan of Pre-PA Requirements

<u>Semester 1</u> CHE 103 CRL 103 BIO 110 WRT 120 MAT 121	<u>Semester 2</u> CHE 104 CRL 104 BIO 111 WRT 2XX General/Major Electives
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<u>Semester 3</u> CHE 231 CRL 231 BIO 210 General/Major Electives	<u>Semester 4</u> BIO 214 PSY 100 HEA 370 General/Major Electives
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<u>Semester 5</u> BIO 259 General/Major Electives	<u>Semester 6</u> BIO 269 General/Major Electives
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<u>Semester 7</u> General/Major Electives	<u>Semester 8</u> General/Major Electives
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SUGGESTED ELECTIVES

BIO 357. Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy
BIO 367. Drug Interactions
BIO 440. Human Genetics
BIO 448. Animal Development
BIO 465. Immunology
BIO 468. Comparative Vertebrate Physiology
BIO 469. Human Physiology
CSD 101. Introduction to Communicative Disorders
HEA 109. Health Issues of Women
HEA 110. Transcultural Health: Principles and Practice
HEA 210. Introduction to Allied Health
NTD 200. Nutrition and Culture
NTD 303. Introductory Principles Human Nutrition
PHI 371. Medical Ethics

! Students who plan to matriculate from WCU directly to a Physician Assistant Program will need to apply in the summer between their 3rd and 4th year.

BEYOND ACADEMICS

Pre-PA students are encouraged to participate in experiences such as leadership roles, volunteer work, research, and shadowing, which will help prepare them for PA school and the medical profession. Such experiences demonstrate a commitment to and knowledge of the profession. All students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to **shadow medical professionals, volunteering with health providers**, get involved with research and pursue internships. Pre-PA students should obtain **500 to 1000+ hours of work experience** consisting of direct patient care in a medical setting (total hours vary by school). Additionally, involvement with clubs such as Pre-Medical Student Association, Pre-PA Club, and Minorities in Medicine, will help students to learn more about the medical profession.

APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Most physician assistant programs participate in the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Applications can be completed at caspa.liaisoncas.com.

ENTRANCE EXAMS

The **Graduate Record Exam (GRE)** is required for some programs: ets.org/gre. The **Physician Assistant College Admission Test (PA-CAT)** is a specialized test that is designed to measure applicant knowledge and application in key prerequisite science subjects typically required for PA school. <https://www.pa-cat.com/> Please review your schools of choice to learn of specific admission test requirements.

ADDITIONAL APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applications to PA school require a **personal statement** and **letters of recommendation/evaluation**. The number of required letters varies by school, but generally students need at least 3 separate letters and at least 1 from a PA. Pre-PA students are eligible to sit for a committee interview and to qualify they will need to collect a minimum of 3 letters of recommendation and have them submitted to the Pre-med office. The Committee letter will only count as one letter for the CASPA application. It is the student's responsibility to request two additional letters independent of the committee letter.

Edited 11-13-2024