



Pre-Physician Assistant Program

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“What is a Physician Assistant?”

A physician assistant (PA) is a graduate of an accredited PA educational program who is authorized by all 50 states to practice medicine with the supervision of a licensed physician. A PA is authorized to prescribe medicine in all states except Indiana. PAs are widespread in all aspects of medical care delivery. In 2005, PAs accounted for at least 10% of all outpatient contact. The majority of PAs work in primary care and perform duties including performing physical examinations, diagnosing and treating illnesses, ordering and interpreting lab tests, providing patient education and counseling, and making rounds in nursing homes and hospitals.

Some PAs are also employed in medical and surgical subspecialties and can perform suturing wounds and/or assisting in surgery. Interest in this profession has increased in efforts to strengthen the U.S. primary care workforce, which is declining due to a continuing underproduction of primary care physicians. PA training programs are developed to train medical generalists to assist physicians in a relatively short time period (typically 26 months).

Pre-Physician Assistant

While there are currently about 60,000 PAs working in clinical practice, the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics predicts a 50% increase in the number of PAs needed between 2004 and 2014 making it one of the fastest growing professions in the country. Average income for PAs in 2005 was \$81,129.

In 2005, there were 134 PA education programs that graduated 4,600 individuals annually. Currently, over 90 PA programs award masters degrees or provide a graduate degree option. **As of 2008, almost all PA programs are at the graduate (masters) level.** Greater than 80% of all PA enrollees have a baccalaureate degree or higher.

In Ohio, there are now five PA programs. These include:

- Cuyahoga Community College
- Kettering College of Medical Arts
- Marietta College
- Mount Union College
- University of Findlay
- University of Toledo

Wright State University offers all the courses necessary for an individual to meet the prerequisites required for applying to PA programs. In addition, most of the required courses are offered two to three times, per year. A prehealth advisor is also available to assist students with individual program requirements and application processing (CASPA). Because every school has its own prerequisites, its important to research programs individually. Below is a list of core prerequisites required by most schools:

CORE Pre-Requisites

Chemistry: CHM 121/125, 122/126, 123/127

Organic Chem: CHM 211/215, 212/216, 213/217

Biochemistry: BMB 421, BMB 423

**Anatomy &
Physiology:** ANT 310, 311, 312

Microbiology: M&I 220 or BIO 310/311

Biology: BIO 111, 112, 115

**Growth &
Development:** PSY 341

Nutrition: BMB 250

**Other courses such as English, Sociology and Psychology*

In addition to the above pre-requisites, students will need to obtain health care experience with direct patient contact; maintain cumulative science GPAs above a 3.0; submit an application through CASPA no later than Oct. 1st of the preceding year; and complete their bachelor's degrees before acceptance.

Like other health professions, acceptance into a PA program is competitive. A few programs require the GRE, but most do not have an admissions test requirement. *PA program requirements vary, so it is in your best interest to check what the PA schools you intend to apply to require as soon as possible.*

Ohio Physician Assistant Programs

“Why do students choose physician assistant as a career?”

Excellent income: according to the BLS, in 2004 the annual earnings for a PA in general medical and surgical hospitals was \$69,410; in offices of physicians \$64,170. The average salary of all full-time PAs today is approximately \$78,257.

Satisfying professional career: increased flexibility; most PAs work in physicians' offices, clinics, and hospitals.

Career outlook is good: one of the fastest-growing occupations of the decade.

Fewer years of education: PA programs are currently transitioning to the master's level and require 24-26 months of post-baccalaureate training in an accredited PA program.

Predominantly female: the proportion of enrollees who are female continues to rise, a continuous trend over the past decade

Essential partners in America's health care workforce: with a shortage in health care providers, health care services are being provided by physicians, PAs and other providers in a teamwork effort

Anticipated additional responsibilities: medical professionals are anticipating future opportunities for PAs, such as clinical trial researchers, educators of PAs, business partners or practice co-owners, epidemiologists, health care advisors, PA executives or administrators, or public health directors.



Physician Assistant Education Association
(PAEA)

<http://www.PAEAonline.org>

Central Application Service for Physicians Assistant
(CASPA)

<http://www.caspaonline.org>

Physician Assistant Programs: National Statistics (2005-2007 application cycles)

National Statistics	Total Applicants	Total Matriculants	Male/ Female (%)	Matriculants: Mean Age	Matriculants: Science GPA	Matriculants: Cumulative GPA
2005	7,088	2,576	25.4/ 74.2	26.7	3.29	3.39
2006	9,031	3,715	26.4/71.1	27.1	3.29	3.39
2007	10,100	TBD	26.9/73.1	26.1	3.38	3.43

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For additional information please visit our website: www.wright.edu/cosm/premed
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