

Pre-Physician Assistant

Physician Assistants (PAs) provide physical exams, order and administer tests, make diagnoses, and treat illnesses under the supervision of a licensed physician. Most PA programs require a bachelor's degree with at least two years of college courses in basic and behavioral sciences, a strong GPA, and a significant number of direct patient care experience prior to admission. Some programs also require applicants to complete the Graduate Record Examinations (GRE).

PA programs vary on educational prerequisites, GPA requirements, required number of patient care hours, and testing requirements. It is recommended that students obtain their Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Certification the summer prior to the sophomore year, in order to complete the required number of patient care hours. There may be other certification opportunities (i.e. Cast Technician, Emergency Medical Technician), but CNA is the most common.

Application Process: To apply, students must complete the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) in the spring of the junior year. Prior to the application process, students should research the required prerequisite coursework, residential restrictions, application requirements, and deadlines for each school of interest. If the GRE is required, students should plan to complete the GRE during the spring of their junior year.

	Prerequisite Coursework	Drake Course
FR	Biological Sciences	BIO 012: General/Pre-Professional Biology I & Lab (Fall) BIO 013: General/Pre-Professional Biology II & Lab (Spring)
	Inorganic Chemistry	CHEM 001/003: General Chemistry I & Lab (Fall) CHEM 002/004: General Chemistry II & Lab (Spring)
	Composition	First Year Seminar (Fall) Written Communication AOI (Fall, Spring)
FR or SO	Mathematics	MATH 050: Calculus I (Fall, Spring) STAT 060: Statistics for the Life Sciences (Fall, Spring)
	Speech	SCSR 073: Public Speaking (Fall, Spring)
SO	Organic Chemistry	CHEM 097/098: Organic Chemistry I & Lab (Fall)
JR or SR	Recommended Courses (mostly General Elective & Professional Elective)	BIO 095: Medical Microbiology (S) or HSCI 140: Patient Assessment (F) BIO 103: Microbiology & lab (S) HSCI 141: Anatomy & lab (F) BIO 105: Intro to Genetics (F, S, Su) PHAR 130: Biochemistry (F) CHEM 108/110: Organic II & Lab (S) PHAR 132: Pathophysiology (S) HSCI 095: Medical Terminology (F, S) PSY 001: Intro to Psychology (F, S) HSCI 125: Physiology & Lab (S) PSY 076: Abnormal Psychology (S)

ADDITIONAL PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM RESOURCES

American Academy of Physician Assistants – <http://www.aapa.org>

CASPA – <https://portal.caspaonline.org/>

GRE – <http://www.ets.org/gre>