

Master of Physician Assistant Studies

Program-Specific Admission Requirements

- All required materials are submitted through CASPA.
- Applicants must apply to the Physician Assistant Studies program at UND through CASPA **AND** the School of Graduate Studies online application process. Only online applications completed as part of CASPA and the School of Graduate Studies will be reviewed.
- Complete application instructions can be found on the Physician Assistant website (<https://med.und.edu/physician-assistant/how-to-apply.html>).

Admission Emphasis

Applicants who are seeking admission to School of Graduate Studies must meet all of the minimum general School of Graduate Studies admission requirements identified in the graduate catalog. In addition, the prospective student must fulfill the requirements for admission to the graduate program in the Department of Physician Assistant Studies. Admission to the Physician Assistant Program within the School of Medicine and Health Sciences at the University of North Dakota is a competitive selection process. Each applicant is reviewed individually and evaluated on their own merits.

The admission requirements are consistent with the Program mission to prepare competent PAs to serve as primary care providers in rural areas. Along with the mission, the goal is to improve access to health care, help alleviate shortages of primary care providers and deliver comprehensive, affordable health care services to the people of rural populations. Consequently, acceptance is on a competitive basis with an emphasis on the proven adult learner with recent clinical health care experience and insight and inclination to meet the Program mission.

For complete requirements, please see our website for the most current information regarding prerequisites and application instructions at <http://www.med.UND.edu/physician-assistant/> (<http://www.med.und.edu/physician-assistant/>).

The UND PA Program seeks applicants with:

Academic preparation including:

- solid achievement in undergraduate coursework.
- quality performance in prerequisite coursework (information on prerequisites can be found on the *Prerequisites* tab at the website linked above).
- health-related or science-based degrees and/or advanced degree.
- ability to learn in an adult learner model, or accelerated environment.
- completion of upper level science prerequisite courses within the past 7 years.
- demonstrate recent proficiency in progressively rigorous prerequisite core science coursework.

Dedication and experience with rural populations including:

- prior clinical health care experience with rural populations,
- residence in rural geographic areas,
- North Dakota residents are given highest preference followed by those in bordering states (MN, MT, SD) and the region (IA, NE, WI, WY)

Health care experience including:

- levels of previous clinical health care experience that involves critical thinking and decision making.
- direct patient care exceeding the minimum 1,000 hours requirement.
- evidence of health care team effectiveness.

- strong references from physicians, physician assistants, and other clinical supervisors.

Degree Requirements

- A bachelor's degree or graduate degree at a regionally accredited institution within the United States. Degree must be completed by December 31 of the application year. Additional instruction can be found on the *How to Apply* tab on the website above.
- Health-related or science-based degrees are preferred.
- A minimum undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher (on a 4.0 scale) is required. Consideration is given with more recent transcripts showing significant improvement in science coursework.

Health Care Requirements

A minimum of 1,000 hours of health care experience must be completed within the United States and be related to direct (hands-on), supervised patient care showing commitment to a career in medicine. Experience should involve assessment and treatment relating to Western (allopathic) medicine and medical professional judgment. Hours accrued in a student/learner role are not acceptable. This ensures foundational knowledge and skills needed for successful completion of this program. Direct patient care hours count toward your experience. However, the most competitive candidates are those who demonstrate their commitment to direct patient care through their recent and current work experience. Admission preference is considered for applicants who have prior health care experience in rural populations.

All health care disciplines are certainly valuable to the practice of medicine. The most successful candidates have clinical health care experiences which are rich in high-level, direct patient care and decision-making responsibilities. Clinical health care experiences which lack similar skills do not fully prepare students for successful completion of the accelerated program or the professional board exam. Examples of preferred health care experience can be found on the *Prerequisites* tab on the website above.

Clinical Preceptorships

To maintain compliance with the most recent ARC-PA standards, prospective and enrolled students must not be required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors. Upon acceptance into the program, students will work with the UND DPAS clinical education team for all primary care and specialty rotation placements. Students **may not** contact any known or prospective preceptors, or attempt to establish their own clinical rotations. Clinical rotations may occur in any geographical area that the program deems fit to meet program requirements and national accreditation standards which are of utmost priority. Students should expect to travel outside of their home area and temporarily relocate to complete clinical experiences required for graduation.

Prerequisites

Admission to the Physician Assistant Program within the School of Medicine & Health Sciences at the University of North Dakota is a competitive selection process. Meeting the minimum requirements does not guarantee progression in the application process. The GRE is not required.

All admission requirements must be completed by the September 1 application deadline unless denoted below. No in-progress requirements will be considered. Additional instruction on the application process can be found on the *How to Apply* tab on the website above.

Applications, clinical experience, transcripts, or previous coursework will not be reviewed until they are made available to us as a complete, verified application through CASPA. It is the applicant's responsibility to evaluate if coursework and experience meet the published standards. Also, it is the applicant's responsibility to contact CASPA directly to verify the receipt of all application materials by CASPA and the current status of their application.

Prerequisite Coursework Requirements

- Grade of B or higher (3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale) unless denoted below.
- Completed at a regionally accredited institution within the United States (regional accreditation by HLC MSCHE, NECHE, NWCCU, SACSCOC, WSCUC).

- CLEP (College Level Examination Programs) or "test out" courses are not accepted.
- **Upper-level university science coursework is preferred.** Upper-level coursework is non-introductory, typically with course numbers indicating at least junior or senior status.
- Preference is given to candidates whose core science coursework has been completed within 7 years of the application deadline. The most competitive applicants are those who demonstrate recent proficiency in progressively rigorous prerequisite core science coursework.

5. Complete a health screening and a criminal background check prior to matriculation.

Please note that decisions of the Admission Committee are not appealable and acceptance into the UND PA Program and successful completion of the program does not imply or guarantee that the student will be able to pass the national certification exam or obtain state licensure upon graduation.

Prerequisite Coursework

- **Human Anatomy** (At least 3 semester credits). Lab preferred
- **Human Physiology** (At least 3 semester credits). Lab preferred
 - *Note: If a combined course such as anatomy and physiology (i.e. A&P I and II) is taken, 2 courses of at least 3 semester credits each are required.*
- **Microbiology** (At least 2 semester credits). Lab preferred
- **Statistics** (At least 3 semester credits). Preferably statistics for psychology, sociology, or biology
- **At least 6 semester credits of additional upper-level University science** chosen from the following courses. Taking these courses with their respective labs (if offered) is preferred. Clinical courses taken toward health care certification do not meet this requirement.
 - Biochemistry
 - Biochemistry of Proteins and Information Flow
 - Genetics
 - Cell Biology
 - Developmental Biology
 - Endocrinology
 - Systems Biology
 - Physiology of Organs and Systems
 - Molecular Genetics
 - Molecular Biology of the Cell
 - Organic Chemistry I (*)
 - Organic Chemistry II (*)
 - Introduction to Immunology

* Courses denoted with an asterisk (*) a grade of C is acceptable

Other Recommended Coursework

- Medical Terminology
- Pharmacology
- Psychology
- Additional upper level science coursework (with labs)

Additional coursework beyond the minimum academic preparation requirements will strengthen an application, especially if the courses are highly correlated with medicine such as immunology, pathophysiology, gerontology, epidemiology, human nutrition, and additional courses in anatomy, physiology, chemistry, and psychology.

Note: The University of North Dakota Physician Assistant Program does not accept transfer students from other PA programs. Advanced placement and transfer of credits is not allowed.

Additional Requirements

1. Complete applications to CASPA and the UND School of Graduate Studies along with all supporting materials as explained on the *How to Apply* tab on the website above.
2. Complete a successful interview.
3. Satisfy the School of Graduate Studies English Language Proficiency requirements as published in the graduate catalog.
4. Comply with the *Academic and Technical Standards* (defined on the website above) for matriculation, promotion, and graduation.

Degree Requirements

Students seeking the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree at the University of North Dakota must satisfy all general requirements set forth by the School of Graduate Studies as well as particular requirements set forth by the Physician Assistant Program.

1. Successfully complete all graded courses with a grade of at least a B.
2. Satisfactorily complete all required clinical rotations as defined by the DPAS.
3. Successfully complete a scholarly project approved by the academic advisor.
4. Fulfill expectations of professional behavior.
5. Pass clinical testing administered during the clinical medicine courses and at the program's conclusion.
6. Pass the cumulative objective exam administered at the program's conclusion.

Required Courses:

Code	Title	Credits
PA 507	Medical Human Anatomy Radiology I	3
PA 508	Medical Human Anatomy Radiology II	3
PA 510	Human Physiology Pathophysiology I	4
PA 511	Human Physiology Pathophysiology II	4
PA 516	EKG Interpretation	1
PA 517	Pharmacology I	2
PA 518	Pharmacology II	2
PA 521	Diagnostic Studies I	2
PA 522	Diagnostic Studies II	2
PA 523	Diagnostic Studies III	2
PA 525	Scholarly Project Development I	2
PA 540	Clinical Medicine: Primary Care I - Didactic	5
PA 541	Clinical Medicine: Primary Care I Clinical	4
PA 550	Clinical Medicine: Primary Care II - Didactic	5
PA 551	Clinical Medicine: Primary Care II - Clinical	4
PA 560	Clinical Medicine: Primary Care III - Didactic	3
PA 561	Clinical Medicine: Primary Care III - Clinical	4
PA 566	Professional Practice I	2
PA 567	Professional Practice II	1
PA 568	Professional Issues Role Development III	1
PA 569	Professional Issues Role Development IV	1
PA 580	Specialty Clerkship	6
PA 581	Emergency Department Clerkship	4
PA 582	General Surgery Clerkship	4
PA 995	Scholarly Project	3
PA 512	History and Physical Exam I	2
PA 513	History and Physical Exam II	2
PA 570	Clinical Medicine - Primary Care Clinical Continuation	7
PA 571	Rural/Underserved Primary Care Clinical	3

Total Credits **88**