Advisor: Dr. Luis Matos

Physician Assistants are health care professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. Common duties are taking medical histories and performing physical examinations; ordering and interpreting lab tests; diagnosing and treating illnesses; assisting in surgery; prescribing medication; and counseling patients about preventative care. Upon graduation, PAs take a national certification examination administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. PAs work in all areas of medicine, with most working in general or family practice.

Physician assistant program admission requirements vary, and students are encouraged to do their own research using www.aapa.org and www.paeaonline.org. Most programs offer a master’s degree and require a bachelor’s degree for admission. Common prerequisites include a year of general biology, a year of human anatomy and physiology, microbiology, and a year of general chemistry, with some requiring organic chemistry and biochemistry. Most require statistics and psychology, and some require physics. Nearly all PA programs also require applicants to have previous experience in health care, especially in direct patient care. Most programs require at least 1000 hours and some as many as 2500 hours or more of experience.

**Required Biology Core Courses: 28 credits**

- BIOL 171 Biology I (5)
- BIOL 172 Biology II (5)
- BIOL 173 Biology III (5)
- BIOL 270 Biological Investigation (3)
- BIOL 310 Fundamentals of Genetics (5)
- BIOL 490 Department Senior Capstone (5)

**Select one of the following courses: 5 credits**

- BIOL 301 Microbiology (required by most PA programs) (5)
- BIOL 302 Botany (5)
- BIOL 303 Invertebrate Zoology (5)
- BIOL 304 Vertebrate Zoology (5)

**Select one of the following courses: 4-5 credits**

- BIOL 423 Evolution (recommended) (5)
- BIOL 440 Ecology (4)

**Select one of the following courses: 5 credits**

- BIOL 436 Cell Biology (recommended) (5)
- BIOL 438 Molecular Biology (5)
Select one of the following courses (4-5 credits)

- BIOL 334 Human Anatomy & Physiology III (recommended) (5)
- BIOL 351 Principles of Animal Physiology (4)
- BIOL 352 Principles of Plant Physiology (4)
- BIOL 353 Principles of Microbial Physiology (4)

Required Supporting Courses: 20 credits

- CHEM 151 General Chemistry (5)
- CHEM 152 General Chemistry (5)
- CHEM 153 General Chemistry (5)
- MATH 161 Calculus I or
  - MATH 380 Elementary Probability and Statistics or
  - BIOL 380 Data Analysis for Biologists (5)

Elective Courses: 36 credits may come from the following list or may be approved by your advisor. At least 21 of these credits MUST be biology.

- BIOL 304 Vertebrate Zoology (5)
- BIOL 332 Human Anatomy & Physiology I for Biology Majors (5)
- BIOL 333 Human Anatomy & Physiology II for Biology Majors (5)
- BIOL 318 Biology of Women (3)
- BIOL 343 Biology of Aging (3)
- BIOL 420 Epidemiology (5)
- BIOL 421 Medical Bacteriology (5)
- BIOL 430 Immunology (5)
- BIOL 432 Virology (5)
- BIOL 460 Hematology (5)
- BIOL 473 Neurobiology (5)
- BIOL 477 Embryology (5)
- CHEM 351 Organic Chemistry (4)
- CHEM 352 Organic Chemistry (4)
- CHEM 372 Organic Chemistry lab (3)
- CHEM 480 Biochemistry (5)

It is strongly recommended that you take the 300-level A&P series, and the four upper division CHEM courses. Most PA programs require upper division A&P and most programs require OR recommend the chemistry coursework. Additionally, this approach will cover your physiology requirement and will net you 26 credits of upper division electives (10 from A&P and 16 from Chem). Beyond the required courses above, (and A&P), you will then need an additional 11 credits of upper division Biology courses (above list or others; for a total of 21 upper division Bio credits). If you decide to not take the Chem coursework, you will need to take more upper division biology courses or other advisor-approved upper division coursework (e.g. Psychology).
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( ) - average of accepted students
* - UW requires a 2.7 or better in each of the pre-requisite courses. Most other schools require a “C” minimum on all pre-requisite courses.

A - abnormal psychology
Ca - statistics or pre-calculus or calculus
C - two quarters of Ochem and one of Biochem
D - developmental psychology
E - additionally, two English courses required with one being a composition course
L - 200-level A&P accepted
M - Medical terminology course ALSO required
NR - not required
O - organic OR Biochem
P - percentiles NOT raw scores
R - recommended
Th - three psychology courses required: general, abnormal, developmental or other.
T - two psychology courses required: general, abnormal or developmental

NOTE: the information in this table is offered as a point of information only. It is YOUR responsibility to ascertain the necessary pre-reqs for each program to which you decide to apply well in advance of applying. The table was constructed in 2016.