

PRE-PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT, MINOR IN

The pre-physician assistant minor provides foundational courses for students that are preparing to be competitive applicants for Master of Physician Assistant (M.P.A.) programs after completing their bachelor's degree at VCU. The pre-physician assistant minor can be completed as a part of any undergraduate degree. Completing this minor does not guarantee admission into any physician assistant program. This minor is structured to academically prepare students to apply for physician assistant programs broadly. Clinical and non-clinical experiences are a requirement of application to most physician assistant programs. In addition to this minor, students should participate in clinical and non-clinical experiences to develop a competitive application for physician assistant school. Visit the VCU Career Services - Pre-Professional Health Career Advising (<https://careers.vcu.edu/majors-and-careers/career-pathways/health-care/>) website for more information and to schedule an appointment with a pre-professional health and STEM career counselor.

Physician assistant programs across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission. The list below shows courses that may be required by various physician assistant programs. It is always recommended that you check with each physician assistant program which you are interested in applying to because requirements can and do change. Students are encouraged to meet with their academic adviser to integrate these courses into their academic plan. In addition, students are encouraged to discuss career plans with their pre-professional health academic minor adviser and career counselor for additional guidance.

For the pre-physician assistant minor, a minimum of nine credits in upper-level science (300-level or higher) courses must be taken at VCU. All upper-level science courses at a 300-level or higher listed in this minor are strongly recommended to be completed at VCU. It is encouraged to demonstrate future academic success in physician assistant programs through a rigorous course schedule. Physician assistant programs may prefer students complete these courses at a four-year institution in order to demonstrate future academic success in physician assistant program coursework.

Declaring the pre-physician assistant minor

To declare the pre-physician assistant minor:

- Students must complete a minimum of 12 credit hours to be eligible to declare the minor
- Students must obtain a minimum cumulative VCU GPA of 3.0
- Students must complete BIOL 151 and BIOZ 151 with minimum grades of C

Maintaining the pre-physician assistant minor (progression policy)

- Students must maintain a minimum 3.0 VCU cumulative GPA.
- If a student's VCU cumulative GPA drops below 3.0, they will be placed on probation in the minor and allowed one semester to raise their cumulative GPA to 3.0 — provided it is mathematically possible to do so. If it is not mathematically possible to do so, or if the student fails to raise their minimum cumulative GPA to 3.0 during their probationary semester, they will be removed from

the pre-physician assistant minor and can re-declare the minor once eligible. Students are strongly encouraged to meet with their minor adviser to discuss their academic plans/progress.

- Students cannot exceed more than three attempts of any course within the minor including withdrawals and historical repeat attempts. If a student exceeds three attempts for any course within the minor, they will not be eligible to maintain and graduate with the minor.

Required courses

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 151 & BIOZ 151	Introduction to Biological Sciences I and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory I	4
BIOL 152 & BIOZ 152	Introduction to Biological Sciences II and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory II	4
BIOL 205	Basic Human Anatomy	4
BIOL 209 & BIOZ 209 or BIOL 303 & BIOZ 303	Medical Microbiology and Medical Microbiology Laboratory ¹ Microbiology and Microbiology Laboratory	4-5
CHEM 101 & CHEZ 101	General Chemistry I and General Chemistry Laboratory I	4
CHEM 102 & CHEZ 102	General Chemistry II and General Chemistry Laboratory II	4
CHEM 301 & CHEZ 302	Organic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry Laboratory II	5
CHEM 302 & CHEZ 302	Organic Chemistry and Organic Chemistry Laboratory II	5
CHEM 403	Biochemistry I	3
HPEX 250	Medical Terminology	1
MATH 151 or MATH 200	Precalculus Mathematics Calculus with Analytic Geometry I	4
PHIS 206 & PHIZ 206	Human Physiology and Human Physiology Laboratory	4
PSYC 101 Play course video for Introduction to Psychology	Introduction to Psychology	4
PSYC 304 or PSYC 407	Life Span Developmental Psychology Psychology of the Abnormal	3
STAT 210	Basic Practice of Statistics	3
Total Hours		56-57

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BIOL 300 is a prerequisite for BIOL 303.

Additional recommended prerequisites for physician assistant programs nationwide

Physician assistant programs across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission. Students should discuss career plans with a pre-professional health career counselor for additional guidance. If the 300-level science course requirements have been completed, students are encouraged to continue taking upper-level science courses to

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demonstrate academic rigor and success. The list below shows courses required by various physician assistant programs beyond the courses listed above for the pre-physician assistant minor. Completing courses from the list below will not contribute to the pre-physician assistant minor requirements.

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 300	Cellular and Molecular Biology	3
BIOL 303	Microbiology	3
BIOL 310	Genetics	3
UNIV 191	Student Success Special Topics	1-3