

PREPARATION FOR PROFESSIONAL STUDIES FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Important general information

Students interested in the pre-physician assistant advising track must obtain a bachelor's degree and complete the necessary prerequisites in order to apply for a master's-level physician assistant program. If interested in the field of physician assistant, students should consult with a pre-professional health adviser to learn about requirements that are specific to the program and/or school to which they hope to apply.

Declaration of the pre-physician assistant advising track through the Office of Pre-Professional Health Advising does not constitute admission to any physician assistant program. Students must apply separately to a physician assistant program of their choice at the appropriate time.

If interested in preparing for physician assistant programs, students must declare an academic major and should declare and maintain their pre-physician assistant advising track. Students do not earn a pre-physician assistant degree. Those unsure of their academic majors should initially clarify their academic interests through regular conversations with their advisers. Students in the pre-physician assistant advising track are encouraged to major in fields of greatest interest to them.

Prerequisites for a physician assistant master's program

Students intending to pursue a master's-level physician assistant program must complete a bachelor's degree before entering. It is recommended that applicants select a challenging course load of science and math courses each semester to ensure adequate preparation for the academic rigor of the physician assistant program.

Students must complete their bachelor's degree, the required science prerequisite courses, the Graduate Record Exam and co-curricular requirements before becoming eligible to start a master's-level physician assistant program.

The GRE should be taken prior to applying to physician assistant programs and these scores are weighed heavily in admissions decisions. Students planning to take the GRE are strongly advised to prepare extensively through self-directed study or a prep course.

Science and non-science courses required for a physician assistant master's program

The admissions requirements for the schools and colleges offering graduate-level programs for physician assistant vary at each institution. Students who wish to pursue admissions to these programs should complete two semesters of general biology with laboratories, two semesters of general chemistry with laboratories, a semester of organic chemistry with laboratory and two semesters of human anatomy and physiology with laboratories. The science courses should be pre-professional level courses designed for science majors and offer a laboratory experience.

Other courses such as cell biology, biochemistry, genetics, microbiology and medical terminology are highly recommended, depending on the specific physician assistant program.

Statistics, introduction to psychology and one upper-level psychology (abnormal or developmental are preferred) are non-science prerequisites for the physician assistant program.

Due to the variance in requirements for each program, it is highly recommended that students meet with a pre-professional health adviser early to develop a degree plan.

General prerequisites for physician assistant programs

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 ²	3
HPEX 250	Medical Terminology	1
MATH 151	Precalculus Mathematics	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.

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CHEM 302 is a prerequisite for CHEM 403.

Additional recommended prerequisites for physician assistant programs nationwide

Physician assistant programs across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission into their programs. The list below shows courses required

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by various schools. Students should discuss career plans with their pre-professional health adviser for additional guidance.

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 300	Cellular and Molecular Biology	3
BIOL 303	Microbiology	3
BIOL 310	Genetics	3

Students should also consult with their pre-professional health advisers to discuss an individual plan of study in parallel with their academic majors.