

# PRE-PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Undergraduate Credit Required	Bachelor's degree
Entrance Exam	GRE (some schools) or PA-CAT (some schools)
Professional Schooling Required	26-28 months of professional school; Master of Physician Assistant Studies
Local Professional Schools	West Chester University, Arcadia, DeSales, Drexel, Duquesne University, Lock Haven, Thomas Jefferson University, Penn State, PCOM, Slippery Rock, Temple, University of Pittsburgh, Widener, etc...
Professional Organization Websites	aapa.org (American Academy of Physician Assistants); paeaonline.org (Physician Assistant Education Association)
Major	Students can <b>major in any subject</b> at WCU for Pre-PA. The most common majors that align with Pre-PA school pre-requisites are Biology: Cell and Molecular Biology, Biology: Integrative Concentration, Chemistry: Chem-Bio, or Exercise Science.

## REQUIRED AND/OR SUGGESTED ELECTIVES FOR WCU UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS

The following course recommendations are general requirements for PA programs. For the specific requirements of your school of choice and whether AP/IB credit is accepted, please refer to that school's admissions website.

Biological Sciences with labs (8 credit hrs)		
BIO 110 General Biology I, BIO 111 General Biology II, BIO 211 Cell Biology		
Course	Term	Grade
Genetics (required by some schools)		
Course	Term	Grade
BIO 210 Genetics		
Microbiology (1 course; 4 credit hrs)		
Course	Term	Grade
BIO 214 General Microbiology (Preferred)		
BIO 204 Introductory Microbiology (Accepted)		
General Chemistry with lab (8 credit hrs)		
Course	Term	Grade
CHE 103 & CRL 103		
CHE 104 & CRL 104		
Organic Chemistry (1 course with lab required)		
Course	Term	Grade
CHE 231 & CRL 231		
Biochemistry (recommended)		
Course	Term	Grade
CHE 310 or CHE 476		
Anatomy and Physiology 1 and 2		
Course	Term	Grade
BIO 259		
BIO 269		
Medical Terminology (required by some schools)		
Course	Term	Grade
HEA 370		

English Composition (6 credit hrs)		
Course	Term	Grade
WRT 120 Writing 1		
WRT 2XX Critical Writing		
Calculus and Statistics (please contact school for specific admissions requirement)		
Course	Term	Grade
MAT 121 Statistics (required)		
MAT 145 Calculus (recommended)		
General Physics (recommended)		
Course	Term	Grade
PHY 100 or PHY 130		
Social Sciences including, but not limited to, PSY 100, PSY 210, PSY 375, History, Anthropology, SOC 100, etc... 6 to 9 credit hours (contact school for specific admissions requirement)		
Course	Term	Grade

### Sample Course Plan of Pre-PA Requirements

#### Semester 1

CHE 103  
CRL 103  
BIO 110  
WRT 120  
MAT 121

#### Semester 2

CHE 104  
CRL 104  
BIO 111  
WRT 2XX  
MAT 145

#### Semester 3

CHE 231  
CRL 231  
PHY 100 or 130  
BIO 210  
General/Major Electives

#### Semester 4

BIO 214  
PSY 100  
BIO 211  
General/Major Electives

#### Semester 5

BIO 259  
General/Major Electives

#### Semester 6

BIO 269  
HEA 370  
General/Major Electives

#### Semester 7

General/Major Electives

#### Semester 8

General/Major Electives

### SUGGESTED ELECTIVES

**BIO 357. Comparative Vertebrate Anatomy**  
**BIO 367. Drug Interactions**  
**BIO 440. Human Genetics**  
**BIO 448. Animal Development**  
**BIO 465. Immunology**  
**BIO 468. Comparative Vertebrate Physiology**  
**BIO 469. Human Physiology**  
**CHE 232. Organic Chemistry 2**  
**CSD 101. Introduction to Communicative Disorders**  
**HEA 109. Health Issues of Women**  
**HEA 276. Achieving Health Equity**  
**HEA 210. Introduction to Allied Health**  
**NTD 200. Nutrition and Culture**  
**NTD 303. Introductory Principles Human Nutrition**  
**PHI 371. Medical Ethics**

### BEYOND ACADEMICS

Pre-PA students are encouraged to participate in experiences such as leadership roles, volunteer work, research, and shadowing, which will help prepare them for PA school and the medical profession. Such experiences demonstrate a commitment to and knowledge of the profession. All students are **STRONGLY** encouraged to **shadow medical professionals, volunteering with health providers**, get involved with research and pursue internships. Pre-PA students should obtain **500+ hours of work experience** consisting of direct patient care in a medical setting (total hours vary by school). Additionally, involvement with clubs such as Pre-Med Club, Pre-PA Club, and Minorities in Medicine, will help students to learn more about the medical profession. Activities beyond the classroom play a significant role in a student's application to a professional school program.

### APPLICATION AND ADMISSION

Most physician assistant programs participate in the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Applications can be completed at [caspa.liaisoncas.com](http://caspa.liaisoncas.com). Schools will then contact you to verify receipt of your application and inform you of any additional materials they require to complete your application.

### ENTRANCE EXAMS

The **Graduate Record Exam (GRE)** is required for some programs: [ets.org/gre](http://ets.org/gre). The **Physician Assistant College Admission Test (PA-CAT)** is a specialized test that is designed to measure applicant knowledge and application in key prerequisite science subjects typically required for PA school. <https://www.pa-cat.com/>  
Please review your schools of choice to learn of specific admission test requirements.

### ADDITIONAL APPLICATION INFORMATION

Applications to PA school require a **personal statement** and **letters of recommendation/evaluation**. The number of required letters varies by school, but generally students need at least 3 separate letters. Students will need to collect a minimum of 3 letters of recommendation and have them submitted to the Pre-med office prior to requesting an interview from the Pre-medical committee with the goal of receiving a Committee letter. The Committee letter will only count as one letter for the CASPA application. It will be the student's responsibility to request two additional letters independent of the committee letter.

Edited 1-25-2023