

Physician Assistant (PA)

Q. What is a Physician Assistant (PA)?

A. Physician assistants are health care professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. PAs employed by the federal government are credentialed to practice. As part of their comprehensive responsibilities, PAs conduct physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventive health care, assist in surgery, and in virtually all states can write prescriptions. Within the physician-PA relationship, physician assistants exercise autonomy in medical decision making and provide a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services.

Q. What are the prerequisites for applying to a PA program?

A. PA programs look for students who have a desire to study, work hard, and to be of service to their community. Most physician assistant programs require applicants to have previous health care experience and some college education. Commonly nurses, EMTs, and paramedics apply to PA programs. Listed below are the recommended prerequisite admission requirements for most Physician Assistant programs:

Fullerton College courses:

One semester of Human Anatomy	ANAT 231 F
One semester of Human Physiology	ANAT 240 F
One semester of Microbiology	MICR 262 F
Two semesters of General Biology with lab	BIOL 170 F & BIOL 272 F
Two semesters of General Chemistry	CHEM 111AF & CHEM 111BF
One semester of English Composition	ENGL 100 F or ENGL 100HF

Recommended (required at some schools):

One course in Genetics	BIOL 276 F or BIOL 109 F
One semester of General Physics	PHYS 205 F
One semester of College Algebra or higher	MATH 141 F or MATH 141HF
One course in Statistics	MATH 120 F or 120HF or MATH 121 F or PSY 161 F or PSY 161HF
One or more courses in Psychology	PSY 101 F or PSY 101HF
One semester of Sociology	SOC 101 F or SOC 101HF or ANTH 102 F or ANTH 102HF
One semester of English Literature	ENGL 102 F or ENGL 102HF or ENGL 103 F or ENGL 103HF or ENGL 104 F
One year of Conversational Spanish	SPAN [101 F or 101HF] & SPAN [102 F or 102HF]

* Each accredited physician assistant program has its own application process and set of admission requirements. Please contact the programs you are interested in directly.

For additional information, check the following websites:

American Academy of Physician Assistants	www.aapa.org
Charles R. Drew University (Provisional)	www.cdrewu.edu
Western University	www.westernu.edu
University of Southern California	www.usc.edu
Loma Linda University	www.llu.edu
Touro University	www.tu.edu

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