

SO YOU WANT TO BE A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT?

A physician assistant is a graduate of an accredited PA educational program who is authorized by the state to practice medicine with the supervision of a licensed physician. PAs are invaluable members of the healthcare team and work in concert with physicians to ensure the highest quality of care for patients. The following is a brief guide to the University of Dubuque's Master in Physician Assistant Studies program requirements.

PREREQUISITES: NOTE: THESE ARE GENERAL PREREQUISITE COURSES THAT MOST PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAMS REQUIRE FOR ADMISSION; HOWEVER, THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER COURSES THAT ARE NOT REQUIRED BY PA PROGRAMS BUT ARE HIGHLY RECOMMENDED. PLEASE CHECK THE WEBSITES OF THE SCHOOLS THAT YOU ARE MOST INTERESTED TO OBTAIN A CURRENT LIST OF UNDERGRADUATE REQUIREMENTS.

*Physics	Most physician assistant programs in California do not require applicants to take physics.
Math*	Please review the “Mathematics and Statistics Recommendations for Pre-Health Students” visual online.
Chemistry (Full Year/3 Quarters)	CHEM 1A (3 units)/1BL (2 units): General Chem. And Gen. Chem. Lab CHEM 1B (3 units)/1BL (2 units): General Chem. And Gen. Chem. Lab CHEM 1C (3 units)/1CL (2 units): General Chem. And Gen. Chem. Lab
*Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry Note: Although most PA programs do not require O. Chem., CHEM 109A-B-C is req. to take Biochem., which is required by several CA programs.	CHEM 109A (4 units): Organic Chemistry CHEM 109B (4 units): Organic Chemistry CHEM 109C (4 units): Organic Chemistry CHEM 6AL (3 units): Organic Chemistry Lab (Chemistry 109A or 109AH with a minimum grade of a C-; and Chemistry 109B or 109BH (may be taken concurrently)) CHEM 6BL (3 units): Organic Chemistry Lab (Chemistry 6AL and 109A or 109AH with a minimum grade of C-; and Chemistry 109B or 109BH) MCDB 108A (Prereqs: MCDB 1A, EEMB 2, MCDB 1B; CHEM 1A-B-C; CHEM 109 A-B-C) or MCDB 110
Microbiology (1 Quarter)	MCDB 131/131L (MCDB 101A is a prerequisite) Alternatively, students could take Microbiology (BMS 157 at SBCC)
Genetics (1 Quarter)	MCDB 101A Alternatively, students could take Genetics (no approved SBCC course) at a city college.
Biological Sciences (Full Year/3 Quarters)	MCDB 1A (4 units): Intro. To Biology I MCDB 1B (3 units): Intro. To Biology II--Physiology MCDB 1LL (1.5 units): Intro. To Biology I Lab (May be taken with MCDB 1A.) EEMB 2 (2 units): Intro. To Biology II—Ecology and Evolution EEMB 3 (3 units): Intro. To Biology III EEMB 2LL (1.5 units): Intro. To Biology Lab II
Anatomy & Physiology w/ lab (2 quarters/semesters)	**You will need to take these courses at SBCC as UCSB does not offer them with labs.
English/Writing (2 Courses)	*Typically any courses in the Writing, English, and possibly Comparative Lit. depts.
Social/Behavioral Sciences & Humanities (2 Courses)	PSY 1 and SOC 1 (AP is fine.)
If you choose not to major in one of the natural sciences, you may wish to include one or two additional science electives in your program of study if your schedule permits. *Math requirements may vary by school so be sure to research individual prerequisites.	

Sample Pre-Physician Assistant Required Course Schedule, Years 1 & 2

	Fall Quarter	Winter Quarter	Spring Quarter
Year 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chem 1A + 1AL • Mathematics or Statistics (See above) • GE or Elective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chem 1B + 1BL • Math or Stats (See above) • GE or Elective • GE or Elective (if you feel you can handle another course) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chem 1C + 1CL • Math or • GE or Elective • GE or Elective
Year 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCDB 1A + 1AL* • Chem 109A • GE or Elective • GE or Elective? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCDB 1B • EEMB 2 • MCDB 1LL • Chem 109B • Chem 6AL (May be done later) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EEMB 3 + EEMB 2L • Chem 109C • Chem 6BL (May be done later) • GE or Elective

* Beginning in Summer 2019, the Biology dept has restructured its introductory labs, changing from three, 1 unit labs--MCDB 1AL, MCDB 1BL/EEMB 2L, and EEMB 3L--to two, 1.5 unit labs--MCDB 1LL and EEMB 2LL. Most students will do MCDB 1LL in winter quarter and EEMB 2LL in spring quarter. Although taken over two quarters rather than three, these will count as a full year of introductory biology labs.

EXAM AND GPA:

Most programs require the GRE; however, some may also accept the MCAT. GRE scores of 150 or higher in both the Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning sections and MCAT total scores of 492 or higher will be viewed favorably. Applicants whose GRE scores are more than five years old must retake the exam and submit more recent scores, and applicants whose MCAT scores are more than three years old must retake the exam and submit more recent scores. Official GRE scores should be sent directly by ETS once the application is submitted to CASPA.

Grade Point Average (GPA): Minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 and science prerequisite grade point average of 2.7 on a 4.0 scale. However, a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 and in the science prerequisite courses is typically expected for favorable consideration.

TIMELINE:

Freshman Year:

- Connect with a Pre-Health Staff or Peer Advisor
- Start taking intro sciences (Chem 1A+1AL).
- Think about possible majors (Study what you love).
- Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community).
- Start clinical experience as soon as possible (EMT, Scribe, Shadowing, etc)
- .Look into getting involved in undergraduate research and talk to professors (Can wait a year or so).
- Go to your professors' office hours.
- Explore some student organizations.

Sophomore Year:

- Continue with next sequence of science courses (Fall: MCDB 1A; Winter: MCDB 1B, EEMB 2, MCDB 1LL; Spring: EEMB 3, EEMB 2LL)
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities (Medical, volunteer, etc).
- Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations or explore other leadership opportunities.
- Begin research on professional schools, their requirements, and assess your competitiveness.
- Investigate GRE preparation options.
- **BOTTOM LINE: Keep working on the things you established your first year!!**

Junior Year (If not taking a Gap Year.) ****If taking a Gap Year, then taking the GRE and completing the application can wait until senior year):**

- Talk to your staff pre-health advisor member to narrow program options and assess competitiveness.
- Identify at least 3 individuals to write letters of recommendation.
- Keep working on the things you have established thus far.
- Schedule a mock interview with Career Services.
- ****Register for the GRE.**
- ****Study for GRE and take it.**
- ****Complete Application (CASPA).**

Senior Year (If no Gap Year):

- Submit Application(s) if you haven't already.
- Wait to be contacted for interview from PA schools.
- Continue with activities and professional experiences/shadowing.
- Talk with an advisor about Plan B if necessary.
- Finish degree requirements and GRADUATE!

If Taking 1 or more Gap Years:

- Schedule a mock interview with Career Services.
- ****Register for the GRE.**
- ****Study for GRE and take it.**
- ****Complete Application (CASPA).**

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) [Click Here](#)

Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) [Click Here](#)

GRE Information/Dates [Click Here](#)