



# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

COLLEGE OF PHARMACY AND HEALTH SCIENCES

M E R C E R U N I V E R S I T Y

The application deadline for January 2013 entering class is **August 1, 2012.**

## ***What materials are required to apply to the Physician Assistant Program?***

- Primary application must be submitted online through **CASPA** ([www.caspaonline.org](http://www.caspaonline.org)). All official transcripts must be submitted to CASPA. Mercer's January 2013 designation will be available on CASPA from December 2011 – March 1, 2012 and April 2012 – August 1, 2012.
- Three letters of reference must be submitted to **CASPA**.  
At least one letter must come from a practicing physician assistant or physician (MD/DO) and one must come from a college professor / instructor. The third letter can come from any non-relative.
- Supplemental application must be submitted online via the Mercer COPHS website (<http://cophs.mercer.edu/pasuppapp.shtm>).
- Supplemental Application fee (\$25) must be submitted to our office prior to the deadline. Check or money order made out to Mercer University can be sent to the address below. Please make sure you include your name and CASPA ID number on your check or money order.

Student Affairs and Admissions  
Mercer University COPHS  
3001 Mercer University Dr., PAC-121  
Atlanta, GA 30341

- Official GRE scores must be sent directly from ETS to our office using the following codes – failure to use these codes will cause a delay in processing your application file. ***Please request your scores be sent prior to the deadline so they will be received in time to be considered. GRE scores received after August 15 will not be considered.***
  - Institution Code: 5623 (Mercer U Coll Pharmacy & Health Sci)
  - Department Code: 0699 (Health and Medical Sciences – Other)
- Clinical Experience demonstrating direct patient care (1,000 hours required). This experience must be included in the CASPA application under the “Patient Contact Experience” section. Additional indirect health care experience should be included in the “Other Health Care Experience” section of the CASPA application. Applicants should be careful not to duplicate information in multiple sections of the CASPA application.

## ***What are the required courses needed for applying to the Physician Assistant Program?***

### **Natural Sciences:**

General Biology	2 courses with labs
Microbiology	1 course with lab
Anatomy (or A&P 1)	1 course with lab
Physiology (or A&P 2)	1 course with lab
General Chemistry	2 courses with labs
Organic Chemistry	1 course with lab
Biochemistry	1 course (lab optional)

### **Additional Course Requirements:**

Introductory or General Psychology	1 course
Abnormal or Developmental Psychology	1 course
English Composition	2 courses
Statistics or Biostatistics	1 course

- Applicants can be conditionally accepted with up to two (2) outstanding prerequisites, which must be completed prior to enrollment in the PA Program.
- Anatomy, Physiology, and Microbiology must have been taken within the last 10 years.
- Survey courses do not meet the prerequisites requirement.
- Online coursework will not satisfy laboratory course requirements.
- Only grades of C or better are acceptable for prerequisite coursework.
- International applicants must also meet additional requirements regarding foreign course evaluations and English proficiency (TOEFL), available on our website:  
<http://cophs.mercer.edu/internationalpaapp.htm>.

Specific questions regarding these prerequisites can be sent to [paprogram@mercer.edu](mailto:paprogram@mercer.edu).

## ***What other courses can help to strengthen my Application?***

Cell Biology	Histology
Embryology	Immunology
Endocrinology	Neuroscience
Ethics	Organic Chemistry II
Genetics	Speech

## ***What are the preferred or competitive stats?***

The Admissions Committee prefers applicants to have an overall undergraduate (and relevant Science related graduate degree) GPA of a 3.0, undergraduate Natural Science GPA of 2.75 or better, and a minimum GRE 1000. January 2012 entering class are 3.47 overall undergraduate GPA, 3.31 Natural Science GPA, 1120 GRE combination score, and over 1,800 hours of direct patient care experience.

## ***Why do you require candidates complete at least 1000 hours of patient care?***

Applicants are required to complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of direct (hands on) patient care experience. Successful applicants often exceed the minimum number of hours. Current students accepted in previous admission cycles had direct patient care experience ranging from 1,000 to over 13,000 hours. Applicants without previous health care experience are often able to acquire acceptable direct patient care experience working as a medical or nursing assistant or aide in settings such as hospitals, clinics, or physicians' private practices where a wide range of patients is seen and there is an opportunity for exposure to numerous types of health care providers. Volunteer patient care experience in a long term care or hospice setting is also acceptable. Applicants are also encouraged to shadow a PA to learn more about the daily routine/role of the PA; however, this experience does not count as "direct" patient care experience.

Below are examples desirable, partially acceptable, and not acceptable examples of direct patient care experience:

Desirable: medical assistant, physical therapist/PT aide/assistant, respiratory therapist, occupational therapist, EMT/paramedic, licensed practical nurse, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, certified nursing assistant, nurse's aide, phlebotomist, medical corpsman, pharmacist, hospital social worker, psychologist, X-ray technician, surgical technician, medical technician, emergency room technician, patient care technician, Peace Corps volunteer, clinical health educator, athletic trainer, hospice volunteer (if experience includes direct patient care), chiropractor, dietician

Partially acceptable if there is direct patient contact (up to 500 hours will count from these categories): medical technologist, audiologist, exercise physiologist, optician, pharmacy technician, child life associate, dental assistant/hygenist

NOT acceptable: shadowing, non-clinical research positions, CPR or ACLS instructor, patient transporter, pharmaceutical representative, ski patroller, massage therapist, life guard, personal (fitness) trainer, aerobics instructor, medical scribe/registrar, laboratory-based researcher, unit or medical secretary, ward/insurance clerk, peer educator, reader or other non-medical work in waiting room or other medical setting, volunteering at marathons, blood donor clinics, fundraising for medical causes, etc.

Although valuable to the practice of medicine, clinical experiences which lack direct patient care responsibilities are not competitive and do not prepare students for successful completion of our Physician Assistant Program.

## ***What courses do you take in the Physician Assistant Program?***

*Please see the attached curriculum outline.*

***How much will the Physician Assistant Program cost?***

Tuition (per semester)*	\$ 8,568
Technology Fee (per semester)	\$ 150
Textbooks - Didactic Phase	\$ 2,500
Textbooks - Clinical Phase	\$ 500
Lab/Equipment/Uniform	\$ 1,500

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Total estimated cost for students entering the Physician Assistant Program in January 2012 **\$65,526\***

*\* Tuition is fixed per cohort of Physician Assistant students while they are in the PA Program. Tuition per cohort and fees are estimated and are subject to change upon the recommendation and approval of the Board of Trustees.*

***Who can I contact for financial aid information?***

Student Financial Planning Office:	(678) 547 – 6444
Student Financial Planning Website:	<a href="http://atlanta.merceraid.com">http://atlanta.merceraid.com</a>
FAFSA on the Web	<a href="http://www.fafsa.ed.gov">www.fafsa.ed.gov</a>

***Can I work while I am in the PA program?***

The intensity and continuity of the Physician Assistant Program requires the full-time attendance and attention of students. The curriculum is demanding and does not allow extra time for employment. The administration, therefore, views outside employment with disfavor as such employment may interfere with the quality of a student’s academic performance.

***Where can I find information about housing for students?***

For information about on and off-campus housing options for Physician Assistant students please visit the homepage for campus life (<http://campuslife.merceratlanta.org>).

