

Physician Assistant Program, Master of Medical Science Degree

*Application deadline is **August 1, 2010** to be considered for the class entering in January 2011.*

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

- Primary application must be submitted online through **CASPA** (www.caspaonline.org). All official transcripts must be submitted to CASPA.
- Supplemental application must be submitted online via the Mercer COPHS website (<http://cophs.mercer.edu/pasuppapp.shtm>).
- 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.
- Preference is given to applicants whose combined GRE scores (verbal and quantitative sections) are 1000 or above. Official scores must be sent directly from ETS to our office using the following codes:
 - School Code: 5623
 - Department Code: 0699
- Clinical Experience demonstrating direct patient care (1,000 hours preferred).
- Completion of a Bachelor's of Science/Arts degree from an accredited college or university.

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

Natural Sciences:

General Biology and Lab (2 courses)	8 semester hours
Microbiology and Lab	4 semester hours
Anatomy with Lab (or A&P 1 with lab)	4 semester hours
Physiology with Lab (or A&P 2 with lab)	4 semester hours
General Chemistry with Lab (2 courses)	8 semester hours
Organic Chemistry with Lab	4 semester hours
General Biochemistry	3-4 semester hours

Additional Course Requirements:

Intro or General Psychology	3 semester hours
Developmental or Abnormal Psychology	3 semester hours
English Composition (2 courses)	6 semester hours
Statistics or Biostatistics	3 semester hours

- Applicants can be conditionally accepted with up to two (2) outstanding prerequisites.
- Anatomy, Physiology, and Microbiology must have been taken within the last 10 years.

What other courses can help to strengthen my Application?

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

Why do you prefer candidates with at least 1000 hours?

Applicants are encouraged 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 last year's admission cycle had direct patient care experience ranging from 1,000 to over 13,000 hours. 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. Patient care experience can be in a paid or volunteer basis.

Some examples of patient care that include direct, hands on activities are nursing care, phlebotomy, patient care technician, emergency medical technician, and medical assistant. 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. The following types of experience also are not credited toward the 1,000 hours of patient care experience: non-clinical research assistant positions, CPR or ACLS instructor, patient transporter, pharmaceutical representative, pharmacy technician, ski patroller, life guard, personal (fitness) trainer, aerobics instructor, unit clerk, insurance clerk, medical secretary or other clerical positions.

What are some examples of acceptable categories for clinical experience?

EMT / Paramedic	Pharmacist	Physical Therapy Assistant
Registered Nurse	X-ray Technician	Emergency Room Technician
Licensed Practical Nurse	Medical Technician	Dietician
Medical Assistant	Surgical Technician	Patient Care Technician
Physical Therapist	Phlebotomist	Psychologist
Occupational Therapist	Nursing Assistant/Aide	Athletic Trainer
Medical Corpsman	Peace Corp Volunteer	Social Worker
Respiratory Therapist	Clinical Health Educator	Hospice Volunteer

What courses do you take in the Physician Assistant Program?

Please see the attached curriculum outline.

How much will the Physician Assistant cost?

Tuition (per semester)*	\$ 8,083
Technology Fee (per semester)	\$ 100
Laptop/PDA (per semester)	\$ 325
Textbooks - Didactic Phase	\$ 2,200
Textbooks - Clinical Phase	\$ 500
Lab/Equipment/Uniform	\$ 1,350
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Total estimated cost for students entering the Physician Assistant Program in January 2010	\$63,606*

** 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:
Student Financial Planning Website:
FAFSA on the Web

(678) 547 – 6444
<http://atlanta.merceraid.com>
www.fafsa.ed.gov

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>).