Did you know?

- Physician assistants (PAs) can perform physical examinations, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret labs, perform procedures, assist in surgeries, make hospital rounds, and provide patient education and counseling.

- There are over 200 PA programs in the US, with class sizes that range from 25 to 58 students. A PA masters program typically takes 2 years to complete, and total tuition ranges from $50,000 to $104,000.

- PA programs, modeled after medical school curricula, provide students with both classroom and clinical experience at an accelerated pace. After graduating in 24 months, a PA’s scope of practice continues to grow and may shift over time due professional interests.

- PAs practice medicine with physician supervision, but this does not mean a supervising physician must be present with the PA. The level of autonomy a PA has is determined at the practice level.

- PAs have the ability to prescribe medications.

Physician Assistant Application Preparation

- Completing the prerequisite courses is just one aspect of the process. You must also have a well-rounded application consisting of experience (shadowing, volunteer work, undergraduate research, life experience, etc.), letters of recommendation, GRE scores (not all programs require this), and a strong admissions essay.

- One unique requirement of most PA programs is the large number of direct patient care hours required, either paid or volunteer. The typical applicant has anywhere from 2 to 4 years of health care experience. Many PA programs list on their websites approved health care experiences that qualify as direct patient hours.

Online Resources

Health Professions Program Website
American Academy of Physician Assistants
Physician Assistant Education Association
Central Application Service for Physician Assistants
Exploring Health Careers

http://healthprofessions.uoregon.edu
http://aapa.org
http://paeaoonline.org
https://caspa.liaisoncas.com
http://explorehealthcareers.org

Campus Resources

- Student organizations (Pre-PA Club)
- Holden Center
- TLC study support
- Duck Nest
- Global Education Oregon

- Academic departments
- Center for Undergraduate Research and Engagement
- TLC GRE preparation
- HPP workshops
- Career Center

Advising

For more information and individualized academic planning, call or visit the Teaching and Learning Center (541-346-3226, 68 PLC) to schedule an appointment with a health professions advisor.
Sample 4-Year Plan

The chart below illustrates one way physician assistant program prerequisites\(^1\) can fit into a 4-year plan. Keep in mind that a good graduation plan is as unique as the student following it. Math placement, major, transfer credits, application timeline, and other factors will help shape your own decisions, and health professions advisors are here to help along the way!

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<th>First Year</th>
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\(^1\) Prerequisites vary by school. Research specific schools that interest you to be sure you meet any additional requirements. Other required courses could include organic chemistry, physics, genetics, and/or biochemistry.

\(^{ii}\) These courses are prerequisites for UO’s anatomy & physiology sequence. They are not typically prerequisites for PA school.

\(^{iii}\) Required for Pacific University.