

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (M.S.)

Physician Assistants (PAs) are healthcare professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. As part of their comprehensive responsibilities, PAs conduct physical exams, order and interpret tests, diagnose illnesses, counsel patients on preventive healthcare issues, assist in surgery, and prescribe treatments. Within the physician-PA relationship, PAs exercise autonomy in medical decision-making and provide a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services. A PAs practice may also include education, research and administrative services. PAs can be found in all areas of medicine. They practice in the areas of primary care medicine, family medicine, pediatrics, women's health, internal medicine, emergency medicine, and a variety of medical and surgical sub-specialties.

Goals

The Master of Science - Physician Assistant program is designed to:

- Provide a high-quality, comprehensive didactic education which ensures graduates possess the basic science and clinical knowledge to serve as an effective PA.
- Provide a wide range of clinical experiences to ensure that graduates have the broad patient exposure necessary to develop essential clinical skills.
- Prepare graduates to function as competent entry-level PAs in diverse settings.
- Foster an appreciation for interprofessional patient care.
- Afford students the opportunity to develop a foundation for competence in research.

This 96-credit, three-year professional program includes courses specific to PA practice that are intended not only to provide students with the technical skills necessary to perform as certified practitioners, but also provides the foundation for graduates to become critical thinkers, life-long learners, and empathetic clinicians.

Mission

The mission of the PA Program at Seton Hall University is to prepare primary care PAs who practice in diverse settings. The program provides the foundation for graduates to become critical thinkers who practice evidence-based, patient-centered medicine.

Accreditation

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted **Accreditation- Continued** status to the **Seton Hall University Physician Assistant Program** sponsored by **Seton Hall University**. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be **March 2027**. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.

Admission

The curriculum of the PA program is rigorous, and the admissions process is extremely selective. In reviewing applications, the Admissions Committee considers academic performance, performance on the Graduate Record Examination (GRE), healthcare experience, and letters of recommendation as outlined below. Special admissions consideration is given to students enrolled in the dual degree program at Seton Hall University. Students with incomplete prerequisites may apply; however, they must state how they will satisfy the prerequisites by the June 1st prior to the start of the program.

Academic Requirements for Admission

Application to the program is open to individuals who:

- possess a baccalaureate degree* from an accredited institution and have a cumulative GPA of 3.2 or greater
- have a 3.2 GPA in the following prerequisite courses, with no grade lower than a "C."
 - Chemistry I with Lab (4 credits)
 - Chemistry II with Lab (4 credits)
 - General Biology I with Lab (4 credits)
 - General Biology II with Lab (4 credits)
 - Microbiology with Lab (4 credits)
 - Statistics or Calculus (3 credits)
 - Psychology (3 credits)
 - Anatomy and Physiology I with Lab (4 credits)
 - Anatomy and Physiology II with Lab **or** Human Anatomy with Lab (4 credits)
 - Human Physiology with Lab (4 credits)

As noted above, prerequisite science courses listed above must include a laboratory component and must have been completed within 10 years prior to matriculation. Prerequisite courses must be completed at an accredited institution of higher education. College Level Examination Program (CLEP), Advanced Placement (AP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) credits cannot substitute for prerequisite courses required for admission.

* Individuals who do not possess a baccalaureate degree should consult the Undergraduate Catalogue for the Dual Degree program (BS/MS) with the College of Arts and Sciences - Department of Biological Sciences.

Standardized Testing

The Graduate Record Examination (GRE) is required of all applicants. While the program does not use a strict cutoff score, most competitive applicants will have scores at or above the fiftieth percentile in each test area.

The Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is required of any applicant who is not a native speaker of English. A score report must be forwarded documenting a paper-based score of 550 or above, a computer-based score of 213 or above, or an Internet-based score of 79 or above. All international transcripts must be evaluated by a member agency of the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (NACES).

Letters of Recommendation

Applicants are required to obtain three letters of recommendation from sources able to attest to an applicant's academic ability and character. It is recommended that letters be obtained from course instructors and clinical supervisors. Letters from family members and casual acquaintances are not acceptable.

Healthcare Experience Requirement

Applicants are required to obtain a minimum of 100 hours of healthcare experience. It is recommended that at least 25 of these hours be spent shadowing a PA. A minimum of 100 hours must be documented for an application to be considered complete and ready for review; most competitive applicants have completed substantially more hours. A wide variety of paid and volunteer healthcare experiences will meet the requirement. Priority consideration is given to applicants with direct patient care experience.

Examples of direct patient care experience include but are not limited to: nursing (licensed practical nurse certified nurse's aide, registered nurse, nurse practitioner, certified nursing assistant), physical therapy, occupational therapy, athletic training, emergency medical services (paramedic or emergency medical technician), medical assistant, emergency department technician, medical assistant, patient care assistant, registered pharmacist and registered dietician in a clinical setting.

Other acceptable healthcare experience include but are not limited to: shadowing a PA, physician or nurse practitioner, pharmacy technician, medical mission trip volunteer, pharmacy technician, medical scribe. Unacceptable experiences include but are not limited to: coaching, serving as a camp counselor, science tutoring, laboratory-based research, veterinary medicine, babysitting and lifeguarding.**

Interviews

All applicants considered for admission will be invited to campus for an interview. The interview is used to assess an applicant's knowledge of the PA profession, their motivation for becoming a PA and communication and interpersonal skills. Meeting the minimum standards for admission does not guarantee that an applicant will be invited for an interview.

Advanced Standing and Transfer Students

Regardless of previous educational or work experience, all students are required to complete the entire PA curriculum. No advanced placement, transfer credit, or credit for experiential learning will be granted.

Application Deadlines

Applicants may apply online (<https://www.shu.edu/physician-assistant/admission-requirements.html>) at the Seton Hall University website. Seton Hall University does not participate in CASPA. Seats fill quickly, and applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

General Admission: Applications for general admission are accepted from June 1 through a deadline of December 1. Students with incomplete prerequisites may apply; however, they must state how they will satisfy the prerequisites by June 1st prior to the start of the program. Applicants may be asked to provide proof of enrollment in any outstanding prerequisite courses. Information regarding application procedures and deadlines may be obtained from the School of Health and Medical Sciences, (973) 275-2596.

Employment During the Academic Year

Training to become a PA demands a full-time commitment. Due to the rigorous nature of the curriculum, it is recommended that students not engage in outside employment. If a student chooses to work during the academic year, the work schedule must not interfere with class performance or clinical rotation schedules.

Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences (Clinical Rotations)

Students shall not be permitted to begin supervised clinical practice experiences until they have successfully completed all preceding didactic coursework. Students are required to complete clinical experiences in the following: family medicine, outpatient medicine, internal medicine, surgery, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology, behavioral/mental health, emergency medicine, and two elective rotations.

Graduation Requirements

Students will not be eligible for graduation until all didactic coursework and required supervised clinical practice experiences have been successfully completed. Successful completion of clinical rotations requires that students document exposure to patients across the lifespan and across a variety of clinical settings. Specific documentation requirements may be found in the Program Handbook. Students who fail to meet documentation requirements may be required to register for additional supervised clinical practice experience blocks at the current graduate tuition schedule. Students who are required to complete additional rotation blocks may experience a loss of vacation time and/or delayed graduation.

As required by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, the Department conducts summative assessments during the final semester of the program. A variety of measures are used to assess clinical knowledge, patient skills and professional development. No student will be eligible for graduation until all summative assessments have been successfully completed.

Curriculum Requirements

Course	Title	Hours
First Year		
First Semester		
GMPA 6001	Human Anatomy	4
GMPA 6104	Psychiatry	2
GMPA 6105	Professional Seminar I	2
GMPA 6111	Human Physiology	3
GMPA 6114	Pharmacology I	2
GMPA 6203	Intro Clinical Medicine I	4
Hours		17
Second Semester		
GMPA 6107	Pathophysiology	3
GMPA 6113	Neuroscience	3
GMPA 6115	Pharmacology II	2
GMPA 6205	Intro to Clinical Medicine II	4
GMPA 6106	Electrocardiography	2
GMPA 6208	Laboratory Diagnostics	2
Hours		16
Summer		
GMPA 6209	Diagnostic Imaging	2
GMPA 6305	Professional Seminar 2	2
Hours		4

Second Year**First Semester**

GMPA 7305	Professional Seminar 3	2
GMPA 7312	Fundamentals Clinical Medicine	8
GMPA 7314	Intro Clinical Medicine III	4
GMPA 7404	Research Methods I	2
Hours		16

Second Semester

GMPA 7405	Professional Seminar 4	2
GMPA 8510	Biostatistics	2
Six supervised clinical practice experience blocks *		8
Hours		12

Summer

One or two supervised clinical practice experience blocks *		2
Hours		2

Third Year**First Semester**

GMPA 8604	Biomedical Ethics	2
GMPA 8605	Epidemiology	2
GMPA 8509	Research Methods II	1
GMPA 8515	Professional Seminar 5	2
Four supervised clinical practice experience blocks *		8
Hours		15

Second Semester

GMPA 8512	Research Methods III	2
GMPA 8615	Professional Seminar 6	2
GMPA 8603	Health Care Policy	2
Four supervised clinical practice experience blocks *		8
Hours		14
Total Hours		96

* The number of supervised clinical practice experience blocks indicated for each semester is an approximation. Student rotation schedules will vary based upon clinical site availability.