

## PREPARING FOR PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT (PA) TRAINING

Most PA programs require applicants to earn a bachelor's degree prior to matriculation.

### **ADMISSION CRITERIA**

Particular coursework in sciences and social sciences  
GPA, typically 3.0 average with no pre-requisite course lower than C.  
GRE (General) Test scores  
Direct Patient Care Experience, 1000 hours minimum  
3 letters of recommendation, ideally one from a health care supervisor  
Ability to meet technical standards

A *competitive* applicant for PA programs will have taken the recommended coursework (see below), have a GPA of 3.3-3.5, taken the GRE, have good references, and a history of community service/volunteerism. You should ideally have about 2 years of direct patient care experience (shadowing usually does not count) such as:

Medical assistant	Phlebotomist
Emergency medical technician (EMT)	Registered nurse
Paramedic	Emergency room technician
Medic or medical corpsman	Home health aid
Peace Corps volunteer	Certified nursing assistant (CNA)

There is some variation in the pre-requisite undergraduate coursework. Below is a listing of the undergraduate coursework required by most programs as well as some additional coursework that may be required by some programs.

#### **Minimum Pre-Requisites, C or better:**

Biol 130 – Cells to Organisms  
Biol 150 – Organisms to Ecosystems  
Biol 260 - Microbiology  
Biol 300 - Human anatomy  
BIOL 370 - Human physiology  
Chem 116 – Energetics and Dynamics  
(may need 115 Structure and Reactivity)  
Chem 250 – Organic I  
Chem 340 – Biochemistry I  
Psyc 100 or 250 or 260

Statistics (Math 107 or Biol 170)

#### **Additional courses for some programs:**

Another biology course  
Comp phys, vert morph, genetics, immunology  
Another one or two psychology courses  
Medical terminology  
Medical ethics (Phil 120)  
Humanities courses

Usually a biology or biochemistry major works well for preparing for PA school.

### **PROGRAM COST and LENGTH**

The length of professional physical assistant programs is typically 24-33 months and the average cost per year for programs in 2019 were: \$35,500/yr tuition for state residents to \$72,100/yr for non-residents at state institutions. Private schools range from \$90,000 to \$165,000 total cost for the degree program.

### **LICENSING**

You must earn a PA degree from an accredited program and pass the PANCE licensure exam.

### **PROGRAMS attended by LU ALUMS**

University of Wisconsin, George Washington, Duke, Marquette, Northwestern, Rosalind Franklin.