

# Physician Assistant (PA) School: Prerequisite Coursework

## MAPPING YOUR COURSEWORK AND PREPARATION

We recommend that you first go to your college's advisement center for an outline of classes required for your major. The Preprofessional Advisement Center will then be able to assist you in planning out specific prerequisite courses and other pre-PA preparation in conjunction with your required classes.

Below is a sample of BYU coursework that could potentially fulfill prerequisites for PA schools; however, prerequisites vary dramatically between schools. To ensure you are planning the correct pre-requisites, consider selecting 10-15 tentative schools and follow their prerequisites lists, normally found on each school's website. Also, talk to the pre-PA advisor in the Preprofessional Advisement Center who can help you make sure you are on the right track.

## SAMPLE COURSES THAT OFTEN FULFILL PREREQUISITE COURSEWORK

\*Remember, this list is a sample and may not be adequate for every school. Go to the websites of your selected schools for actual requirements and better accuracy. Pay **close** attention to lab requirements and specific credit hours required.

\*Note: Many PA programs want a General Biology 1 and 2 class w/lab. BYU's equivalent for General Biology 1 w/lab would be MMBIO 121 + 122, CELL 120 + MMBIO 122 or BIO 130. General Biology 2 w/lab would be MMBIO 240/241.

### CHEMISTRY

|                                                                                                   |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| CHEM 105: General College Chemistry I                                                             | 4.0 hrs     |
| CHEM 106 & 107: General College Chemistry II<br>(CHEM 111, 112, & 113, if required by your major) | 3.0/1.0 hrs |
| CHEM 351: Organic Chemistry I                                                                     | 3.0 hrs     |
| CHEM 352 & 353: Organic Chemistry II & Lab<br>(CHEM 354, if required by your major)               | 3.0/1.0 hrs |
| CHEM 481: Biochemistry                                                                            | 3.0 hrs     |

### BIOLOGY:

|                                                                                                                           |             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>General Biology</b>                                                                                                    |             |
| CELL 120: Science of Biology                                                                                              | 3.0 hrs     |
| <b>or</b>                                                                                                                 |             |
| MMBIO 121 & 122: General Biology (only take MMBio 122 if need lab credit)<br>(BIO 130, if required by your major)         | 3.0/1.0 hrs |
| <b>Additional Biology</b>                                                                                                 |             |
| MMBIO 221 & 222: General Microbiology & Lab                                                                               | 3.0/1.0 hrs |
| MMBIO 240 & 241: Molecular Biology & Lab                                                                                  | 3.0/1.0 hrs |
| <b>Anatomy &amp; Physiology</b>                                                                                           |             |
| CELL 220: Human Anatomy                                                                                                   | 4.0 hrs     |
| CELL 305: Physiology (pre-req is PDBIO 220)<br>(PDBIO 362,363, if required by your major or need a physiology lab credit) | 4.0 hrs     |
| <b>Upper Level Biology</b>                                                                                                |             |
| PWS 340: Genetics (Pre-req is MMBio 240 or Chem 481)                                                                      | 3.0 hrs     |
| CELL360: Cell Biology                                                                                                     | 3.0 hrs     |

## **PSYCHOLOGY** (Schools that require psychology typically want 1-3 courses)

|                                        |         |
|----------------------------------------|---------|
| PSYCH 111: General Psychology          | 3.0 hrs |
| PSYCH 220: Human Development: Lifespan | 3.0 hrs |
| PSYCH 342: Psychopathology             | 3.0 hrs |

## **MEDICAL TERMINOLOGY**

|                                           |         |
|-------------------------------------------|---------|
| LAT 123: Premedical Latin and Greek       | 2.0 hrs |
| <b>or</b>                                 | 2.0 hrs |
| NURS 102: Nursing and Medical Terminology |         |

## **STATISTICS**

|                      |         |
|----------------------|---------|
| STAT 121: Statistics | 3.0 hrs |
|----------------------|---------|

## **HELPFUL PRE-PA CLASSES**

|                                                                                                                                                                |        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------|
| STDEV 170: Intro to Health Professions                                                                                                                         | 1.0 hr |
| Seminar style overview of health careers with a variety of guest lectures (medical doctor, dentist, physician assistant, pharmacist, physical therapist, etc.) |        |
| STDEV 274: Preview to Physician Assistant (Winter only)                                                                                                        |        |
| Preview of the physician assistant profession and PA school application process. Guest presentations by practicing PAs,                                        | 1.0 hr |
| STDEV 470: Health Professions Applications (Winter only)                                                                                                       | 2.0 hr |
| Preparation for health professional school applications. Entire application process, including school identification and submission.                           |        |

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## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

A strong majority of PA schools utilize CASPA, a centralized application service. Through CASPA, you can apply to any number of participating PA programs by completing a single application. After you complete this one application, CASPA will verify your application for accuracy, calculate your GPA, and send your materials to the programs you designate.

CASPA opens mid to late April. Because most schools utilize rolling admissions (which means they interview and select qualified students as soon as students submit their applications), it is helpful to apply in April or May to increase your statistical probability of admission. It is not helpful, however, to submit your application before you have a well-written personal statement and application. Be sure you are fully ready to apply before submitting your application.

Often, schools will accept some unfinished prerequisite coursework if you will complete it before you matriculate. Consult with schools directly to understand their policy on when prerequisites must be completed.

## **RESOURCES**

- Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) Program Directory – <https://paeonline.org/our-programs>
- American Academy of Physician Assistants – [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org)
- CASPA online application – [portal.caspaonline.org](http://portal.caspaonline.org)
- Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. – <http://arc-pa.org/>
- BYU Allied Health Club (Pre-PA Club) – <http://alliedhealthclub.byu.edu>