MASTER OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES DAO

A Practical Solution

Because of the advantages of having a master's degree, physician assistants are seeking ways to further their education. Recognizing that returning to a college campus for postgraduate study is impractical for most working physician assistants, the University of Nebraska Medical Center Physician Assistant Program offers a degree advancement option (DAO) to enable practicing PAs to advance from the bachelor's degree to the master's degree. Now in its third decade, this program has provided master's degrees to thousands of practicing PAs.

This program provides an opportunity for practicing physician assistants with a bachelor's degree to obtain a professional postgraduate master's degree in as little as five semesters at a reasonable cost and without any required travel. The program can be completed in 5 semesters. However, students are allowed up to five years to complete the DAO. Upon completion of the program, physician assistants are awarded the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree.

MPAS DAO CME Credit

The Degree Advancement Option curriculum meets the requirements for AAPA category II CME credit on an hour per hour basis.

Features of the Program

Students in the Degree Advancement Option

• Acquire new competencies and skills by completing 800 hours of advanced supervised clinical practice at their place of employment,
• Learn current concepts in the areas of health care policy and medical ethics,
• Improve research skills by investigating a medical topic and presenting the results in a scientific paper.
• Select the option of the education track and study instructional design, education theory and leadership, and complete 320 hours of teaching in a supervised environment

General Information

• Successful candidates earn the professional degree - Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS).
• Accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.
• Approved by the Regents of the University of Nebraska and the Nebraska State Department of Education.
• Approved for military tuition assistance, and VA educational benefits.
• Options for study are available in almost every medical specialty or the education track can open opportunities in academia or community health promotion.

Admission to the Program

Admissions Requirements

• Accredited PA Program graduate with a bachelor's degree from an approved institution of higher learning
• PA student GPA of at least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale
• Current or prior certification by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA)
• Personal professional liability coverage

• Current State PA license (military or federal employees are exempt)
• Must be employed in a clinical or educational role (PA's employed full-time or part-time can qualify)

If you choose the clinical track, you must identify a physician who agrees to be your preceptor for the duration of your clinical practice experience. If you choose the education track, you must identify a mentor for the supervised teaching practice courses.

Applicants will be considered without regard to age, sex, race, color, national origin, religion, political beliefs, or disability.

How to Apply

For information on how to apply to the MPAS DAO Program, visit the "How to Apply (https://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/education/online/padoa/apply.html)" website. For information on application deadlines and interview dates, visit the "Application Deadline (http://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/education/deadlines.html)" website.

Review the Computer Requirements (http://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/_documents/computer-requirements-cahp.pdf).

Academic Progress

Students enrolled in the MPAS Degree Advancement Option are expected to make satisfactory academic progress toward the completion of their Plan of Study and degree requirements. All courses must be passed with a grade of "C" or better and a 2.0 cumulative grade point average (GPA) must be maintained throughout enrollment in the program. Courses may be repeated only once, and a cumulative GPA below 2.0 at the completion of any semester will result in dismissal from the program.

Degree Completion

Upon successful completion of all requirements by the deadline dates set by the Program, graduates of the MPAS DAO are welcome to participate in the graduation ceremonies in Omaha, Nebraska (May and December only). Graduates will be awarded the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree.

Curriculum

MPAS DAO Courses and Practice Concentrations

The MPAS Degree Advancement Option consists of 36 semester credit hours of didactic courses and either educational methodology or clinical experiences intended to be completed in five semesters. Please note, the program cannot be completed any sooner than 5 semesters. Students must choose either the clinical track or the education track for their program of study. In order to complete the program in five semesters, students must complete one didactic course each semester combined with one course from the clinical track or one course from the education track. UNMC has Fall, Spring and Summer semesters. The courses required to complete the program are listed below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credit Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CAHP 626</td>
<td>HEALTH CARE ETHICS AND CRITICAL THINKING</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAHP 631</td>
<td>MANAGEMENT IN HEALTH CARE</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PHAS 680</td>
<td>HEALTH CARE POLICY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>or PHAS 681</td>
<td>CANADIAN HEALTH CARE POLICY</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To complete the clinical track of this program, students are required to complete and document a total of 800 clinical hours (160 hours in each of five semesters) in a specific core area. During your first three semesters of the Advanced Clinical Practice coursework, you will meet objectives for one of our five Core Areas. The five core areas are: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, and surgery. Your core area should be based on the type of clinic/practice in which you are employed. During your final two semesters of the Advanced Clinical Practice coursework, you may meet objectives for a more specialized concentration area if you so choose. A full list of these concentration areas can be found below. The concentration areas available within a specific core area are listed to the right. Note: Each semester is 14-16 weeks in length. Students cannot log more than 160 hours in a semester. (See Core & Concentration options indicated below)

Supervised Teaching Practice: to complete the education track of this program, students are required to complete and document a total of 320 clinical teaching hours (160 hours in each of two semesters) in a supervised situation. This can be associated with a formal institution of higher learning or can be other forms of community education/patient education. Each semester’s log will include involvement in all aspects of instruction, including but not limited to: curriculum design, curriculum promotion, course preparation, instructional delivery (classroom, one-on-one, practicums, experimental training, etc.), evaluation analysis, academic/instructional counseling, strategic planning, and administrative responsibilities related to education. The log time should represent a mix of activities, including: meetings with the student’s mentor, independent student activities (e.g., the study of instructional content, development of instructional strategies, and preparation of materials), actual teaching, and analysis of learning outcomes (for learners, teachers, courses, and programs).

Education goals and objectives have been established for the following practice areas. The student should select the core area that best matches his/her clinical practice, and identify any further focus of concentration if desired. The applicant whose concentration is not listed below should contact the program.

Core Areas and Concentrations (Clinical Track ONLY)
(available concentrations are listed under each core area)