PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT EDUCATION PROGRAM

Degree Offered
Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree

Length of Program
The program requires 28 continuous months of instruction divided into two phases.

Phase I, the Didactic Phase, consists of 13 months of basic medical sciences, pre-clinical sciences and professional studies course work. The basic medical and pre-clinical science courses introduce students to the fundamentals of scientific and clinical medicine. The professional studies courses are designed to provide understanding of professionalism, legal aspects of practice, medical ethics, practice-based learning and improvement and systems-based practice.

Phase II, the Clinical Education phase, consists of 10 months of Required clerkships and 5 months of Elective clerkships. The required clerkships are in specific areas of clinical medicine, designed to provide a broad foundation for primary care clinical practice. Elective clerkships may be selected from specialty or primary care areas.

Clerkships are scheduled after mutual collaboration and agreement between the student and the Clinical Coordinator. Assignments to clerkship sites are made after careful consideration of the individual student's educational needs, site availability and the Program's goal for clinical education. These sites are located throughout the state of Nebraska and are known collectively as the Nebraska Clinical Network. All required clerkships and most elective clerkships will be assigned within the Nebraska Clinical Network. Because of the location of clinical education sites, all applicants accepted into the Program must agree to spend at least three, and up to fifteen months in clerkship sites outside the Omaha and Lincoln metropolitan areas if required to do so by the Program.

Degree Requirements
Students must receive a passing grade of “C” or better or “Pass” in all courses and maintain an overall quality grade point average of 2.33 (on a 4.0 scale) or above. Grades of less than “C” are considered as failing within the physician assistant program. Physician assistant education requires the student to demonstrate skills of observation, communication, sensory, intellectual-conceptual, integrative and qualitative abilities, and professionalism. As such, students must successfully meet all of the program's performance standards by passing all laboratory practical examinations and clinical education experiences, in addition to successful completion of didactic work. The standing of a student in any course is determined by the instructor of the course by examinations, laboratory and clinical performance, class participation, written assignments, personal observation, and other methods of evaluation.

Admission to the Program
Admissions Requirements
Enrollment in each program is limited and competitive. Evaluation of the qualifications of each applicant and the final selections for admission are made by the admissions committee of each program, which comprises program faculty and administration.

Admission to the Physician Assistant Program requires the applicant to successfully complete the following prior to matriculation:

Required Undergraduate Prerequisites
A bachelor's degree must be completed by July 15 of the year of intended entry.

The following 50 hours of specific prerequisite course work is also required. These courses may be planned or in progress during the application process. All prerequisite course work must be successfully completed by July 15th of the year of intended entry.

Biological Sciences - (minimum of sixteen semester hours)
- Biology with Lab - 4 sem hrs
- Human Anatomy with Lab - 4 sem hrs
- Human Physiology with Lab - 4 sem hrs

NOTE: Anatomy and Physiology may also be taken in an 8 sem hr combined course.
- Microbiology with Lab - 3 - 4 sem hrs
- Immunology and Genetics are strongly recommended.

Chemistry - (minimum of sixteen semester hours)
- General Chemistry with lab - 8 sem hrs (one year sequence)
- Organic Chemistry with lab - 4 sem hrs (one year sequence recommended)
- Biochemistry (lab recommended) - 4 sem hrs (3 sem hrs acceptable if 16 minimum semester hours will be met)

Psychology - (minimum of nine semester hours)
- General Psychology (or other psychology elective) - 3 sem hrs
- Abnormal Psychology - 3 sem hrs
- Life Span/Developmental Psychology - 3 sem hrs

Mathematics - (minimum of three semester hours)
- Statistics - 3 sem hrs
- Algebra is strongly recommended.

English - (minimum of six semester hours)
- English Composition or Writing Intensive Course - 3 sem hrs
- English Composition or Writing Intensive Course - 3 sem hrs

Medical Terminology - (no minimum credit hour requirement)
- Either a college/university course or certificate program is acceptable.

UNMC offers a medical terminology course, CAHP 310, which meets this requirement. Taking medical terminology at UNMC is not a preference factor for admission.

Required course work graded Pass/Fail or credit obtained by CLEP Examination or Advanced Placement (AP) will not be accepted for any of the 50 hours.

Academic Criteria
1. A minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (A=4.0) is required.
2. Grades below "C" are not accepted in transfer to the University of Nebraska (e.g., C-, D+, D, D-, F).
3. Any repeated course grades (original and repeated) will be averaged in the CASPA GPA calculations and used accordingly in evaluation of the application.

Graduate Record Examination (GRE) (http://www.ets.org/gre)
The General Test of the Graduate Record Examination (verbal, quantitative and analytical writing) is required. Scores must be sent using the UNMC PA Education Program Code 4917, and received by the application materials deadline (http://www.unmc.edu/alliedhealth/education/deadlines.html).

A minimum achievement of the 30th percentile in each section (verbal, quantitative, and analytical writing) is required for admission to the program.

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

Certification & Licensure
Certification
PAs receive their national certification from the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Only graduates of an accredited PA program are eligible to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE). Once a PA is certified, he/she must complete a continuous six-year cycle of continuing medical education (CME) to keep her/his certificate current. Every two years, a PA must earn and log 100 CME hours and reregister her/his certificate with the NCCPA (second and fourth years), and by the end of the sixth year, recertify by successfully completing either the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination (PANRE) or Pathway II study. All states require passage of the PANCE for state licensure. Forty-seven states make provisions to license new physician assistant program graduates prior to availability of PANCE results NCCPA, 770/734-4500

Licensure
Graduation from an accredited physician assistant program and passage of the national certifying exam are required for Nebraska state licensure. For information on other states, contact each state's credentialing office.

About the Profession
PAs practice medicine. PAs are medical providers licensed to diagnose and treat illness and disease.

PAs work collaboratively with physicians to provide care in a variety of settings, including physician offices, hospitals, nursing homes, and schools. After completing an intensive training program modeled after physician education, PAs can treat patients with significant autonomy.

PAs work together with physicians as part of an integrated medical team. PAs provide almost all the clinical services that physicians provide, including making clinical decisions and providing a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive, and health maintenance services, including prescribing medications. The physician-PA team relationship is fundamental to the PA profession and enhances the delivery of high-quality health care.

PAs are qualified to practice by graduation from an accredited PA educational program and passing the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (http://www.nccpa.net) (NCCPA). Only those passing the examination can use the title "Physician Assistant-Certified (PA-C)." PAs keep up with medical advances through continuing medical education requirements.

Brief History of the PA Profession
The PA profession began in the 1960s during a period of primary care shortages. The profession's roots are in the military. The first PA class, in 1965, was composed of Navy corpsmen who had served during the Vietnam War who wanted to use their medical knowledge and experience in civilian life.

Additional information about the profession may be obtained from:
PA Focus: http://pafocus.org/what-is-a-pa/
AAPA - American Academy of Physician Assistants: https://www.aapa.org/

Career Outlook
According to the U.S. Bureau of Statistics' Occupational Outlook Handbook (2017 Edition), the PA profession has the following outlook:

- Expected to grow much faster than average for all occupations.
- Opportunities should be good, particularly in rural and inner-city healthcare facilities.
- Employment to grow by 30 percent from 2014 to 2024.
- Scope of practice will continue to expand as States allow PAs to perform more procedures.
- The median annual wage for physician assistants was $101,480 in May 2016.

PAs are cost-effective and productive members of the healthcare team and are employed by Physicians and institutions to provide primary care and assist with medical and surgical procedures.

Curriculum
Phase I - Academic
First Year
Fall
Credit Hours
GCBA 571 STRUCTURE OF HUMAN BODY 9
CIP 606 INTERMEDIATE PHYSIOLOGY 6
PHAS 620 PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROFESSIONAL ISSUES 1
PAMM 690 BIOLOGY OF DISEASE 5

Credit Hours 21

Spring
MLS 500 APPLICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF CLINICAL LABORATORY DATA 2
PHAR 507 PHARMACOLOGY 5
PHAS 630 CLINICAL SKILLS I 3
PHAS 632 COMMUNICATION IN MEDICINE I 2
PHAS 650 ADULT AND PEDIATRIC MEDICINE I 8

Credit Hours 20
Summer
PHAS 635  CLINICAL SKILLS II  3
PHAS 637  COMMUNICATION MEDICINE II  1
PHAS 645  BEHAVIORAL MEDICINE  3
PHAS 655  ADULT AND PEDIATRIC MEDICINE II  9
PHAS 670  RESEARCH APPLICATIONS IN MEDICINE  1
Credit Hours  17

Second Year
Fall
PHAS 656  ADULT AND PEDIATRIC MEDICINE III  3
PHAS 660  MEDICAL ETHICS  1
PHAS 665  SYSTEMS IN HEALTH CARE AND MANAGEMENT  1
Credit Hours  5

Total Credit Hours  63

Phase II - Clinical
Second Year
Fall
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION (see course offerings below)  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
Credit Hours  12
Spring
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION (see course offerings below)  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
Credit Hours  24

Third Year
Fall
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION (see course offerings below)  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
PHAS 700  CLINICAL EDUCATION  4
Credit Hours  24
Total Credit Hours  60

Required Clerkships
Code  Title  Credit Hours
PHAS 702  PSYCHIATRY CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 703  INTERNAL MEDICINE CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 704  PEDIATRIC CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 705  WOMAN'S HEALTH CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 706  SURGERY CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 707A  FAMILY MEDICINE A CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 707B  FAMILY MEDICINE B CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 707C  FAMILY MEDICINE C CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 708  EMERGENCY MEDICINE CLERKSHIP  4

Elective Clerkships
Code  Title  Credit Hours
PHAS 709  GERIATRIC CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 721  CARDIOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 722  ENDOCRINOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 723  GASTROENTEROLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 724  INFECTIOUS DISEASE ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 725  Nephrology ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 726  ONCOLOGY / HEMATOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 727  PULMONARY MEDICINE ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 728  RHEUMATOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 729  CARDIOVASCULAR SURGERY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 733  ORTHOPEDIC SPORTS MEDICINE ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 734  SURGERY SUBSPECIALTY CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 735  ORTHOPEDIC SPINE SURGERY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 739  ALLERGY/IMMUNOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 740  PAIN MANAGEMENT ELECTIVE CLERKSHIP  4
PHAS 741  COMPLEMENTARY & ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 743  INFERTILITY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 745  NEONATAL ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 746  NEUROLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 751  REHABILITATION ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 754  RADIOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 731  NEUROSURGERY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 732  ORTHOPEDIC SURGERY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 736  PLASTIC SURGERY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 737  UROLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 742  DERMATOLOGY ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 744  INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ELECTIVE  4
PHAS 749  OTOLARYNGOLOGY ELECTIVE  4

This is not an inclusive list. Clerkships in other specialties are available to meet student needs.)

Total Program Semester Hours - 123
Total Number of Months - 28