

Physician Assistant

Nature of the Work	<p>For descriptions of this profession see:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Admissions</i> section of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) website (www.paeaonline.org) • www.explorehealthcareers.org
Course Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements vary by school • Check the <i>Physician Assistant Programs Directory</i> (www.paeaonline.org) • Generally, course work should include general biology, general chemistry and sometimes organic chemistry, human anatomy and physiology, microbiology, statistics, social sciences, and humanities
Application Timeline	<p>Physician assistant school directly after Gettysburg College:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Required courses completed by end of senior year (although preference may be given to applicants that complete the required courses sooner) • Apply summer between junior and senior years
Standardized Test	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually Graduate Record Exam (GRE) revised General Test (www.ets.org/gre) • Given year-round at computer-based test centers • Length ~ 4 hours • 3 sections : Verbal Reasoning (score 130-170), Quantitative Reasoning (score 130-170), Analytical Writing (score 0-6) • Register on-line (www.ets.org/gre) • Free and low-cost preparation materials (www.ets.org/gre) • Unofficial scores on test day, official scores in 10-15 days
Application Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most physician assistant programs participate in the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) (www.caspaonline.org) • Available ~ mid-April • Each school selects an application deadline • For physician assistant programs that do not participate in CASPA, apply directly to the school • APPLY EARLY!!! Do not wait until application deadlines!

Admissions Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GPA (check the <i>Physician Assistant Programs Directory</i> for #'s) • GRE scores (check the <i>Physician Assistant Programs Directory</i> for #'s) • Written statement • Letters of evaluation • Health-related experience (type and amount varies greatly by school; check the <i>Physician Assistant Programs Directory</i>) • Interview
Length of Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies by school (check the <i>Physician Assistant Programs Directory</i>) • Typically ~ 2 years
Degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most award a master's degree
Additional Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician Assistant Education Association (www.paeonline.org) • American Academy of Physician Assistants (www.aapa.org) • PA Shadow On-line (www.pashadowonline.com)