



# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

## COUNSELING DIVISION

Physician Assistants (PAs) are health professionals licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. PAs are qualified by graduation from an accredited physician assistant education program and certification by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). As members of the health care team, PAs provide a broad range of medical services that would otherwise be provided by physicians, including, but not limited to, performing physical examinations, ordering and interpreting laboratory tests, diagnosing problems and determining treatments. In many states PAs can write prescriptions. The scope of practice varies according to state laws, the medical setting and the training of the PA. Like physicians, PAs often work in specialty fields such as surgery, psychiatry, cardiology, and emergency medicine. However, largest portion of PAs work in primary care specialty such as family medicine, internal medicine, and pediatrics.

**Education:** Classroom instruction typically includes biochemistry, nutrition, human anatomy, physiology, microbiology, pharmacology, disease prevention, clinical medicine, geriatric and home health care, and medical ethics. In addition, students obtain supervised clinical training in areas such as primary care, inpatient medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynecology geriatrics, psychiatry, and pediatrics. PA's will also be asked to do recertification training per the guidelines of the American Academy of Physician Assistants. **Admission to all PA programs is highly competitive (Students should check the website of the university to view the actual GPA of students admitted, it can vary from year to year).**

**Patient Care:** Admission into the PA program will require a specific amount of hours of direct patient care. Examples of experiences would be Military medic, Paramedic, Physical Therapy Aide or Therapist, Radiological technician, Nurse (LVN, RN), Respiratory Therapist, Occupational Therapist or Aide, and Athletic Training.

**Application:** Most students will need to apply to the PA programs through the Central Application for Physician Assistants (CASPA) application service. It allows students to apply to several programs using one application. Some universities and colleges may not use CASPA so please check the website of the specific program you are applying to. For additional information on the CASPA, refer to the website: <https://caspa.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login> \*\*\***Application deadlines and requirements are subject to change without notice; please check the individual college's website for the most up to date information.**

### **UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA**

The university offers a master's degree program.

**Entrance Requirements:** Applicants must have a bachelor's degree (in any field) from a regionally accredited university or equivalent with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0. Admission to the program is for the fall semester only. Applicants who submit complete applications by stated deadline and complete all PA pre-requisite course work and bachelor degree requirements by June 30<sup>th</sup> will be considered for fall admission. All science pre-requisites must be completed with a minimum GPA of 2.75 and have been taken within the past 10 years. Additionally, all science prerequisites must be completed by the end of the fall semester, in the year prior to matriculation. Applicants are required to take the GRE or MCAT. It is important that PA applicants be familiar with medical care environments and experience working with patients (recommended 1000 hours of hands on patient care). Community service activities/projects are required of all applicants. Three letters of recommendation.

**Required courses:** Biology 101 and 102; Chemistry 1A and 1B; Anatomy 32 and Physiology 31 or Anatomy and Physiology 34A and 34B; Microbiology 33; Psychology 5; one year of Spanish language; Math 150 or Psychology 9A or Sociology 109; six units of English Composition. Recommended: Medical Terminology 1

\*For additional admissions information please review the following website:

[HTTPS://KECK.USC.EDU/PHYSICIAN-ASSISTANT-PROGRAM/ADMISSION/](https://keck.usc.edu/physician-assistant-program/admission/)

### **STANFORD UNIVERSITY**

The university offer as a master's degree program. The Master of Science (M.S.) Degree in Physician Assistant Studies is a 9-quarter program (with one summer break) that includes streamlined courses with innovative content delivery, a state-of-the-art simulation lab, and world-class clinical anatomy experiences as well as early exposure to patient care.

**Entrance Requirements:** A bachelor's degree (in any field) from a regionally accredited university and completion of the Computer-Based Assessment for Sampling Personal Characteristics (CASPer) assessment. CASPer is an online test that assesses non-cognitive skills and interpersonal characteristics. *\*All other application elements are highly recommended but not required.*

### **Recommendations:**

**Recommended courses:** Anatomy 32 and Physiology 31 or Anatomy and Physiology 34A and 34B; Chemistry (this should include at least one semester of General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, or Biochemistry); Math 150; Psychology 5; Medical Terminology 1; 3 upper-division Bioscience courses, Common examples of upper-division bioscience courses include, but are not limited to: Biochemistry, Cell Biology, Embryology, Endocrinology, Genetics, Histology, Immunology, Microbiology, Molecular Biology, Neuroscience, Organic Chemistry, Pharmacology, and Virology. *All courses must be completed within the last 10 years to be considered for the application.*

**Additional recommendations:** Completion of the GRE, MCAT or PA-CAT; at least 500 hours preparatory experience, 3 letters of reference and 2 application essays.

\*For additional admissions information please review the following website: <http://pcap.stanford.edu>

### **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS**

This university offers a master's degree program.

**Entrance Requirements:** A bachelor's degree (in any field), minimum bachelor's degree grade point average of 3.0 and minimum 2.7 grade point average in all science prerequisite coursework. Applicants are required to complete a minimum 1,000 hours of paid or volunteer experience in a clinical environment with direct patient care exposure. Additionally, applicants are required to submit a statement of purpose through Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) and 3 letters of recommendation. An essay is required for the UC Davis Graduate studies application and an interview maybe required.

**Required Courses:** English 1A; Microbiology 33; two courses from: Sociology 101 or Anthropology 2 or Psychology 5; Chemistry with a lab; Anatomy 32 and Physiology 31 or Anatomy and Physiology 34A and 34B (strongly recommended to have been taken within 5 years).

\*For additional admissions information please review the following website:

<https://health.ucdavis.edu/nursing/admissions/programs/mhs-pa.html>

### **WESTERN UNIVERSITY OF HEALTH SCIENCE, POMONA, CA**

This university offers a master's degree program.

**Entrance Requirements:** Applicants must have earned bachelor's degree (in any field) from a regionally accredited college or university by the time the student matriculates to the PA Program. The minimum overall, science and pre-requisite grade point average is a 3.0. Grades of C- or lower in any of the pre-requisites are not accepted.

**Required Courses:** English 1A and 1B or 1C; Math 130 or 170 or 180 or 190 and 150; Anatomy 32; Physiology 31; Microbiology 33; Chemistry 1A and 1B; Psychology 5; Sociology 101; nine units of Humanities (i.e. Art, Music, Philosophy, Ethics, Religion, Foreign Language); one course in human or general genetics;(Strongly recommended but not required: course in Spanish).

\*For additional admissions information please review the following website:

<http://prospective.westernu.edu/physician-assistant/welcome>

### **LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY**

The university offers a master's degree program.

**Entrance Requirements:** Students must have a bachelor's degree (in any field), an overall cumulative grade point average of 3.00 or higher and a science grade point average of 3.00. A minimum of 2000 hours of recent direct hands-on paid patient care experience must be completed prior to enrollment. 3 letters of recommendation are required. One must be from a practicing MD, DO, or PA. MD/DO/PA letter cannot be from a friend or relative. MD/DO/PA letter must be from a person who has worked with you in your paid patient care role, not shadowing experience. Loma Linda University (LLU) will grant preference to; Seventh-day Adventists, graduates of Loma Linda University, applicants from under-represented populations and applicants with a history of meaningful, continuous involvement in community service consistent with the mission and values of LLU.

**Required Courses:** Anatomy 32 and Physiology 31 or Anatomy and Physiology 34A and 34B; Chemistry 21A and 21B or 1A and 1B; Microbiology 33; Math 130; Psychology 5; Sociology 101 or Anthropology 2; English 1A and 1B or 1C. Recommended: Math 150, Medical Terminology 1, conversational Spanish, and computer literacy.

\*For additional admissions information please review the following website:

<http://www.llu.edu/llu/sahp/pa/>

### **Other Programs in California:**

Touro University at Mare Island College of Health: (707) 638-5200 – <http://www.tu.edu>

### **Additional Information for Physician Assistants:**

American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org)

National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistant (NCCPA) <http://www.nccpa.net>

Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) <http://www.paeonline.org>