

Physician Assistant School Admission

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS

The following courses meet admission requirements for most PA schools, though individual school requirements vary considerably. We recommend consulting with schools that interest you regarding additional requirements. Take all required courses during the fall and/or spring semesters at URI (not summer or on-line).

CHEMISTRY

General Chemistry, two semesters with lab:

- CHM 101 & 102 Lab (3+1 credits)
- CHM 112 & 114 Lab (3+1 credits)

Organic Chemistry, at least one semester:

- CHM 124 & 126 Lab (3+1 credits) or CHM 227 (3 credits)

CHM191/192/291 will satisfy this requirement for chemistry majors

BIOLOGY

Three semesters are required. ***Additional upper-level coursework in biology is often required.*** The minimum recommendation is:

- BIO 101 Principles of Biology & BIO 103 Lab (3+1 credits). Non-CELS majors: take BIO 110 & 103.
- BIO 102 Principles of Biology II & 104 Lab (3+1 credits)
- *Strongly recommended:* BIO/CMB 352, Genetics (4 credits)

STATISTICS & MATH

- STA 307, 308, 409, or 411

And

- MTH 103 or higher

SOCIAL SCIENCES

6 credits—one from each group below is recommended:

- PSY 113, 232, 254, or 255

And

- SOC 100 or 224

ANATOMY AND PHYSIOLOGY

- BIO 220 & 221 Lab (3+1 credits)
- BIO 222 & 223 Lab (3+1 credits)

(BIO121 + BIO 242 & 244 Lab also satisfy this requirement)

BIOCHEMISTRY AND MICROBIOLOGY

- CMB 311 Introductory Biochemistry (3 credits)
Pre-req: CHM 124 or equivalent
- CMB 211 Microbiology for CELS and Nutrition Majors only OR CMB 201 Medical Microbiology for all other majors (both courses are 4 credits). *Pre-reqs for both: one semester of biology & one year of chemistry*

Other Academic Considerations

AP Credits. Students with AP credit equivalent to required courses should take upper-level courses in the same subject. Consult with a pre-health advisor before taking upper-level courses.

Major. “Pre-Health/Pre-PA” is not a major at URI, and PA schools do not require or prefer any particular major. Students from any major can pursue the pre-PA curriculum in conjunction with their major and general education requirements.

Test scores. Some PA programs require the GRE; those that do prefer scores in the 50th percentile or better. A small number of schools require the PA-CAT.

Grades. Schools will expect a minimum GPA of around 3.0 with all required courses completed with a C or better. However, successful applicants achieve at levels well above the minimum. For example median GPA for matriculating students in 2021 was 3.70.

EXPECTATIONS FOR PATIENT CARE EXPERIENCE

AMOUNT OF EXPERIENCE

PA schools require hands-on clinical experience in health care prior to application. Schools vary in the minimum number of hours of experience required to apply; however, successful applicants have gained patient care experience well above the minimum required for admission. **We recommend having 1,000 or more hours of patient care experience at the time of your application for admission.**

Students matriculating to PA school in 2021 reported having a median of 3,120 hours of direct patient care experience.

TYPES OF EXPERIENCE

Programs also vary in the *kinds* of direct patient care experience they accept in fulfillment of their clinical requirement. We recommend that you consult with Pre-Health Advising and PA programs about accepted forms of experience as well as required number of hours. Every PA program will list the minimum number of required patient care hours along with the types of experiences they will accept.

According to the PAEA 2021 Matriculating Student Survey, new PA students most frequently reported having the following work experiences prior to PA school:

- Nursing assistant
- Medical assistant
- Scribe
- Emergency medical technician/paramedic
- Emergency room technician
- Home health aide
- Phlebotomist

PA SHADOWING

To learn about the PA profession, you should plan to spend additional time beyond your clinical work shadowing PAs. Note that many PA school required some shadowing experience as well as direct patient care experience.

WHEN TO GET EXPERIENCE

We recommend starting as early as possible to gain patient care experience and PA shadowing. However, to be a competitive applicant, you should plan to take 1-2 years after college to gain experience after college before applying for admission to PA school.

In 2020, according the PAEA Matriculating Student Survey, approximately 75% of new PA students started PA school one or more years after completing their most recent degree. The median age of new PA students in 2021 was 25.

MORE INFORMATION

- PAEA Program Directory
<http://directory.paeonline.org/>
- PA Matriculating Student Survey
https://paeonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/FINAL_student-report-5-20230628.pdf