



Boston University School of Medicine
Division of Graduate Medical Sciences



PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT MASTERS DEGREE PROGRAM

MASTER OF SCIENCE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT



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Program Overview

The mission of the Boston University Physician Assistant program is to educate physician assistants (PAs) who will produce exceptional outcomes while caring for diverse populations of patients, including those from vulnerable communities, and to cultivate leaders who will advance the PA profession. The PA program emphasizes the practice of evidence-based, patient-centered medical care in an interprofessional team.

Our innovative training model provides opportunities for team-based learning and practice with a wide variety of healthcare students and providers.

Program Accreditation

In 2013, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the PA Program sponsored by Boston University School of Medicine. The program's provisional monitoring review scheduled in spring of 2016 was successful. The next and last provisional visit is scheduled for late spring 2018. Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resources allocation, if fully implemented as planned, appear to demonstrate the program's ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards. Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class.

Program Highlights

The goals of the Physician Assistant program are to prepare students to:

- Establish a therapeutic rapport with their patient which facilitates an accurate, patient-centered interview and physical examination
- Order appropriate diagnostic studies, interpret the findings, formulate a differential diagnosis, and in collaboration with both the supervising physician and the patient, develop an appropriate treatment plan
- Be effective observers, listeners, communicators, and diagnosticians
- Use cultural sensitivity to maintain empathy when caring for patients
- Develop a trusting relationship with their supervising physician, while adhering to the concept of team-based care
- Identify and respond to medical emergencies
- Advocate for patient safety and develop quality improvement projects
- Practice medicine in an ethical manner
- Care for patients from vulnerable populations in all health care settings, including patient-centered medical homes and accountable care organizations
- Identify gaps in the medical and educational literature by critical analysis and propose a novel research project to address the issues
- Demonstrate leadership by participation in volunteer and professional organizations



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CURRICULUM

The 107-credit, full-time masters degree program is designed to be completed in sequential order over 28 consecutive months, and is divided into two academic phases. The didactic phase, which begins in April of each year is 12 months in length and is delivered over three semesters. The clinical phase is 16 months in length, comprised of 14 one-month clinical clerkships and two months of dedicated thesis preparation. Advanced placement is not given for similar academic work or previous health care experience.

DIDACTIC COURSES

Semester 1

Anatomy (with lab)	5 credits
Basic Medical Sciences	3 credits
Physiology (with lab)	4 credits
Introduction to Research	2 credits
Introduction to Clinical Medicine	2 credits

Semester 2

Disease and Therapy I	4 credits
Disease and Therapy II	4 credits
Disease and Therapy III	4 credits
Clinical Practicum I	2 credits
Preventive Medicine	1 credit

Semester 3

Disease and Therapy IV	4 credits
Disease and Therapy V	4 credits
Disease and Therapy VI	4 credits
Clinical Practicum II	2 credits
Advanced Clinical Medicine	4 credits



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CURRICULUM (CONT.)

CLINICAL CLERKSHIPS

Following the Advanced Clinical Medicine course in the spring semester, students rotate through clerkships in inpatient, outpatient, surgical and emergency settings over the 56 weeks of training in 13 specialty areas.

PA Professional Practice	2 credits
Internal Medicine I	4 credits
Internal Medicine II	4 credits
Family Medicine	6 credits
Emergency Medicine	4 credits
Pediatrics	4 credits
Psychiatrics	4 credits
Obstetrics and Gynecology	4 credits
Neurology	4 credits
General Surgery	4 credits
Elective Clerkships I-V*	4 credits

**Students can choose elective clerkships from a variety of sub-specialties offered in medicine, pediatrics and surgery including opportunities in primary care, emergency medicine, and vascular surgery. International clerkships are also available.*

THESIS REQUIREMENT

Students in the PA Program complete a research thesis proposal to demonstrate competency in interpreting the medical literature, developing a hypothesis-driven project, and analyzing the significance of the project and clinical outcomes. Thesis preparation is undertaken with a mentor from the School of Medicine or Boston University, during a two-month period in the clinical phase dedicated to completion of the project. The manuscript is graded by a thesis committee and there is no oral defense.

GRADUATE OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the BU PA Program curriculum, graduates are eligible to sit for the board exam (PANCE). The official PANCE score report, issued by the NCCPA will be published at <http://www.bu.edu/paprogram/pance-performance>.



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Admissions

Each April, the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) opens its yearly cycle. In order to be considered for Boston University's PA program, your CASPA application must be complete and verified by October 1. It is recommended that all applicants submit materials four weeks in advance of the deadline to allow adequate time for processing.

The Admissions Committee selects a cadre of mature, self-directed candidates to interview each fall. Acceptance offers are extended to candidates who show the greatest promise of delivering patient-centered care to diverse populations in the widest variety of practice settings.

Consistent with standards and practices of the University, admission to the PA Program is governed by the principal of holistic evaluation of the entirety of the applicant's admission file and the formal interview.

Boston University's admission policies and its programs neither favor nor exclude persons of any background, and are conscientiously observed in all respects in admitting individuals to the PA Program.

Academic Prerequisites

In addition to earning a bachelors degree from an accredited college or university, the following prerequisite coursework must be completed in traditional classroom and laboratory settings (online coursework will not be accepted) prior to students beginning the application process:

General Biology or Zoology with lab	One semester
Human or Animal Physiology (300 or 400 level preferred)	One semester
aGeneral Chemistry with lab*	One semester
Organic Chemistry with lab*	One semester
Biochemistry (300 or 400 level preferred)	One semester
Upper level biology courses** at the 300, 400 or higher levels	3 full semester courses

**Chemistry courses cannot be survey or non-degree chemistry courses*

***Physiology and Biochemistry at the 300 and 400 level do NOT fulfill this requirement if they are being used to fulfill the Physiology or Biochemistry requirements*

Admission Requirements

- Verified CASPA Application submitted to the program by the October 1 deadline
- Science grade point average 3.0 or above
- Graduate Record Examination (GRE) - scores must be above the 50th percentile
- 3 letters of recommendation: one from a Professor, an employer, and a PA or MD
- Supplemental Application - once we have received your CASPA application, the program will send instructions via email to complete the required supplemental. The fee is \$45, payable by credit card only
- Applicants must also meet the program's Technical Requirements which are listed in detail at <http://www.bu.edu/paprogram/admissions/prerequisites/technical-standards>

Matriculants will be subject to criminal background checks and drug testing as required by clinical education sites.



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Healthcare Experience:

While there is no minimum hour requirement for health care experience, successful applicants must demonstrate an understanding of the PA profession and its contribution to the delivery of health care in the United States. The Admissions Committee expects that candidates display their commitment to helping others and their suitability for a profession that cares for sick and injured patients.

International Students

- TOEFL Examination scores are required unless you received your undergraduate degree in the United Kingdom or Canada
- All international coursework must be reviewed and verified by the World Educational Services (WES)

Financial Aid and Student Resources

For the most up to date information on tuition and fees, please visit www.bumc.bu.edu/gms/students/financing-options. Merit scholarships are awarded to PA students on an annual basis. Please note that the University assesses all program costs annually so changes, while small, are possible.

The Financial Aid Office at Boston University School of Medicine is available to assist students in identifying sources of financial support and tuition remission, including graduate and research assistantships, fellowships, and federal loans. Due to the intense nature of the education, we do not recommend students work while attending the program.

The BU Office of Housing Resources provides information regarding housing, transportation, and Boston neighborhoods. For more details, visit www.bumc.bu.edu/ohr.

For more information about the Physician Assistant Program please contact:

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