

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

Master of Science in Health Science, Physician Assistant Studies - Philadelphia and Georgia Campuses

PCOM's Physician Assistant Studies (PA) program is designed to prepare the student for comprehensive practice in a variety of clinical settings following completion of the second year of the program. The goals and objectives of the program are guided by the criteria set forth by the Standards and Guidelines for an Accredited Education Program for the Physician Assistant. The program has received full accreditation from the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), and graduates are eligible to sit for the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) examination for national certification and regional, local and national licensure.

CASPA

PCOM participates in the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). You may obtain additional information about CASPA and apply online at caspa.liaisoncas.com (<https://caspa.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login>). CASPA applications became available for Summer 2026 enrollment in April 2025. All applications must be e-submitted, completed, and verified by CASPA no later than December 1, 2025, for both PCOM and PCOM Georgia (separate application per campus). When applying to PCOM through CASPA, you will be required to complete PCOM specific questions before submitting.

All required application materials, including the \$75 PCOM institutional application fee (one fee per campus) must be received by the Office of Admissions **no later than** December 15, 2025, for PCOM and PCOM Georgia in order to be considered for admission for the Summer 2026 term. Note that the fee can only be paid online through the PCOM application portal. The link to the portal is sent via email at receipt of a verified and completed CASPA application.

The Faculty Committee on Admissions recommends you submit a completed and verified CASPA application, which includes a PCOM specific question series, as soon as possible as PCOM operates using a rolling admissions process.

Assessing Applicants for Interview Consideration

Completed and verified CASPA applications and supporting documents will be reviewed by the Faculty Committee on Admissions. Interviews will be offered to those who qualify and who are deemed competitive against the larger applicant pool for the Physician Assistant Studies program, taking into consideration the following:

- Baccalaureate or Masters degree
- Overall Undergraduate GPA
- Overall Undergraduate Science GPA
- Number of science credits
- Prerequisite coursework
- Letters of recommendation
- Personal Statement

- TOEFL, if required
- Patient Care Experience
- Healthcare Experience
- PA Shadowing Experience
- Licenses and Certifications
- Volunteer Experience
- Leadership Experience
- Low SES (Socio-Economic Status)
- 1st generation to attend college
- Military (Member of Reserve or National Guard, On Active Duty, Veteran)
- Medically underserved area
- Educationally disadvantaged background
- Problem-Solving Ability/Decision-Making Skills
- Communication/Interpersonal Skills
- Level of Commitment/Personal Preparedness
- Congruence with program philosophy and mission
- Maturity/Potential for Professional Comportment

When considering academic performance, including coursework, credits, GPAs, and degrees, higher achievement is considered more favorable.

Both the amount and type of experiences, including patient care experience, healthcare experience, shadowing experience, volunteer experience, and leadership experience are also considered. Selection for the PA Studies program at PCOM is very competitive. The requirements represent the minimum criteria for consideration for admission. Successful applicants will generally exceed the minimum criteria.

Baccalaureate Degree

All applicants must complete a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university in the United States, Canada or the United Kingdom prior to matriculation. The PA Studies program will accept courses and labs completed online or on campus. All prerequisite coursework must be completed prior to enrollment with a grade of at least a "C" or 2.0 on a 4.0 scale with the exception of coursework completed during the spring and summer 2020 terms which may be listed as Pass in a pass/fail grading scale. Applicants must send official transcripts from all colleges and/or universities attended directly to CASPA. Once enrolled at PCOM, candidates must submit official copies of all college transcripts directly to the PCOM Office of Admissions.

Letters of Recommendation

Applicants must also submit three letters of recommendation directly to CASPA. Others may be sent in .pdf format to PCOM's Office of Admissions at recommend@pcom.edu. One recommendation **must** be from a physician (MD or DO), physician assistant or nurse practitioner in order to be considered for admission.

Prerequisite Coursework

* "General" coursework denotes the first two courses in the subject sequence for science majors.

- All prerequisite coursework listed above must be completed prior to enrollment with a grade of at least a "C" or 2.0 on a 4.0 scale with the exception of coursework completed during the spring and summer 2020 terms which may be listed as Pass in a pass/fail grading scale. Coursework completed in fall 2020 and onward may not be pass/fail. Coursework completed fall 2020 onward must have a grade of a "C" or better or 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- All science and math prerequisites must be completed within 10 years prior to June enrollment. (e.g., June 2016 or later)
- Applicants must obtain an undergraduate science and cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale (as calculated by CASPA).
- One course cannot be used to satisfy multiple prerequisite courses.
- AP or IB coursework will be accepted provided the course and credits appear on your college transcript.
- All courses must be completed at a regionally accredited institution. Foreign coursework will not count toward meeting any of the prerequisites.
- The program will accept credits completed at a community college.
- The program will accept courses completed online or on campus.
- The program will not accept prerequisite coursework completed as an audit or graded pass/fail with the exception of coursework completed during the spring and summer 2020 terms which may be listed as Pass in a pass/fail grading scale.
- The program will not accept credits completed as CLEP courses.
- At the time of application, candidates must have the prerequisite coursework completed or be able to provide a plan in writing that demonstrates the completion of the prerequisites prior to enrollment in the program (this can be achieved by completing the "Planned or In Progress Coursework" section of CASPA). Two science/math prerequisite courses may be "Planned or In Progress" at the time of application. All prerequisites must be completed by the end of May 2026 for June 2026 enrollment.

Healthcare Experience

To be considered for an interview for the Physician Assistant Studies program, applicants must have a minimum of 200 hours of direct patient contact experience in volunteerism or employment in the healthcare industry, as documented through CASPA at the time of application. Candidates complete the requirement in a variety of ways, some of which include: working as a certified nursing assistant, pharmacy technician, phlebotomist, LPN, EMT, paramedic, scribe, medical translator, physical therapy aide, patient navigator, mental health aide, behavioral health aide, overseas medical mission trip volunteer, etc. Veterinary medicine hours *will not be accepted* towards the requirement.

Any volunteer work or paid work in a clinical setting wherein candidates are either providing hands-on care or witnessing care first hand can be acceptable, depending on the nature of the role. In-person health care shadowing experiences are counted and highly recommended.

Notification of Acceptance or Alternate Status

Following completion of the admissions process, applicants will be notified of the Admissions Committee's decision in writing using the PCOM Admissions portal, including any conditions that must be satisfied

prior to or following enrollment. Once admitted, candidates who wish to enroll are asked to review and acknowledge PCOM's Technical Standards for Admission and Matriculation and submit a \$1000 non-refundable tuition prepayment online. The acceptance packet will contain all materials required for enrollment.

Applicants may be placed on the waitlist after completion of the interview process. The wait list is not ranked or ordered. Typically, candidates are selected as seats become available from February until classes begin in June. After all expected candidates arrive for orientation in June, those not selected will be sent a final decision letter on their PCOM Admissions portal.

Policy on Advanced Standing, Transfer of Credits and Experiential Learning and Graduates of Medical Schools

The Physician Assistant Studies program does not offer advanced placement based upon transfer of credits for academic work completed at other institutions of higher learning or upon credit from experiential learning. Applications are not accepted from graduates of medical schools.