

Pre-Physician Assistant (PA)

Course Reference Guide

Required Pre-Physician Assistant Course Work

All prerequisite courses must be taken for a grade, rather than *pass/no pass*. The courses required for admission to most physician assistant programs are listed below. **Consult the web sites or catalogs of the schools to which you plan to apply to determine each school's specific requirements.**

Biology

Course Description		Hours	Semester
BIO 207/277	Introduction to Molecular and Cellular Biology	4 (w/ lab)	
BIO 208/278	Introduction to Evolution and Ecology	4 (w/lab)	
BIO 305/365	Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4 (w/ lab)	
BIO 306/366	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4 (w/ lab)	
BIO 301/361	Microbiology	4 (w/ lab)	

Note: OHSU requires A&P I & II to be taken within 5 years of matriculation to their PA program

Pacific University requires A&P I & II to be taken within 7 years of matriculation to their PA program

Chemistry

Course Description		Hours	Semester
CHM 207/277	General Chemistry I	4 (w/ lab)	
CHM 208/278	General Chemistry II	4 (w/ lab)	

Other Recommended Chemistry Courses*:

Course Description		Hours	Semester
CHM 325/375	Organic Chemistry I	4 (w/ lab)	
CHM 326/376	Organic Chemistry II	4 (w/ lab)	

**Pacific University requires at least one semester of Organic Chemistry*

Overall, a minimum of 30 semester hours in Biology, Chemistry and/or Physics are required by OHSU's PA program. These hours may include the courses listed above. *These courses must be medically, human and/or animal science related. Plant, marine, environmental, exercise science/kinesiology, nutrition, etc. will not be counted.*

Mathematics

Course Description		Hours	Semester
MTH 161	Elementary Statistics	3	

Psychology

Course Description		Hours	Semester
PSY 101	Psychological Sciences	3	

Highly Recommended Coursework*

Course Description		Hours	Semester
BIO 330	Genetics	3	
BIO 400	Immunology	3	
BIO 354	Cell and Molecular Biology	3	
CHM 453/454	Biochemistry	3-6	
CST XXX	Communication Courses	3 each	
ENG 107	College Writing	3	
PSY 361	Life Span Development	3	
PSY 381	Abnormal Psychology	3	
SPN XXX	Spanish Language Courses	3 each	
SOC 101	Intro Sociology	3	

**Recommended courses are based on local program recommendations*

PLEASE NOTE: The AAPA is in the process of implementing a new entrance exam for PA programs called the PA-CAT. This test will mimic the MCAT in many ways with slight variations. This test covers Anatomy, Physiology, General Biology, Microbiology, Genetics, General Chemistry, Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry, Behavioral Sciences, and Statistics. This guide will be updated to reflect PA-CAT content as the exam becomes standardized.

Health Care Experience

A unique component of the PA school pre-requisites is the requirement of direct patient care experience. OHSU requires 2,000 hours minimum prior to application and Pacific requires 1,000 hours minimum at the time of application to their PA program. There are many ways to gain this experience and both OHSU and Pacific list examples through their PA program webpages. If you are ever unsure if an experience will count towards these hours, contact the schools you are interested in as soon as possible to get approval. Please note that many applicants have well over the minimum hours required when applying to PA programs.

Additional Information

The sample course requirements above are directed towards the OHSU and Pacific PA programs but fulfill most PA program pre-requisite requirements. More information on PA schools can be found at the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) and at the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Students are encouraged to consult these resources early in their pre-PA preparation. Information may also be obtained from the Health Professions Advisors.

Pre-Health Professions Advising Office
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