



MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

University Profile

The University of Saint Francis was founded in 1890 and has a rich heritage of offering quality education. Rooted in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions of Faith and Reason, the University of Saint Francis engages a diverse community in learning, leadership and service. Personal attention to students is what makes a USF education so meaningful and enriching to its approximately 2,100 students. The campus has 108 acres of rolling lawns and trees with 19 buildings and four residence halls that surround beautiful Mirror Lake.

What is a Physician Assistant?

A graduate Physician Assistant (PA) provides a broad spectrum of healthcare services to patients under the supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. Among these services are the performance of history and physical assessments, the development and implementation of appropriate therapeutic interventions, patient education and counseling, and establishing appropriate referrals. These highly skilled practitioners also provide numerous preventative and health maintenance functions that are characteristic of the practice of medicine. Physician Assistants are educated in basic science, patient assessment and clinical medicine in programs that are nationally accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

What are the job opportunities?

Physician Assistants are employed by hospitals, physician groups or solo practices, outpatient clinics, health maintenance organizations, teaching hospitals, the armed services, and federal, state, and local governments. Salaries vary depending on an individual's experience, the region of the country, the nature of the practice and the level of job responsibilities. Entry-level salaries for new Physician Assistant

graduates average \$73,000. The demand for Physician Assistants is strong, and is expected to increase in the coming decade.

What is the Physician Assistant Studies program?

The Physician Assistant Studies program is an intense, full-time, 27-month curriculum with a total of 98 credit hours. A Master of Science Degree in Physician Assistant Studies is awarded upon completion of the curriculum and fulfillment of University of Saint Francis Graduate School requirements. Students will spend the first 15 months primarily in the classroom obtaining a foundation of medical knowledge in the areas of basic biomedical science and clinical skills.

Problem-based learning techniques are used extensively throughout the program and in medical diagnosis and therapeutics courses. During the last 12 months of the program, students will be assigned to clinical rotations, spending a minimum of 40 hours per week working with a physician preceptor on a one-to-one basis in settings such as physician offices, clinics, extended care facilities, and hospitals. All students will complete a core of rotations in areas of family medicine, emergency medicine, internal medicine, general surgery, and an elective. Students also choose from a series of rotations in the areas of hospital inpatient care, family practice, internal medicine, or trauma/surgical subspecialties.

What kind of classes will I take?

May-August	Credits
Biomedical Sciences	6
- Gross Anatomy Topics for PAs	
- Medical Microbiology/Genetics	
- Physiologic Control Systems	
Foundations of PA Studies	4
- Essentials of Patient Assessment	
- Introduction to Medical Procedures	
Pharmacology for PAs	2

Fall	
Pharmacology II	2
Clinical Medicine for PAs	2
Pathophysiology	2
Clinical Problem Solving	6

Courses in Clinical Problem Solving, Medical Diagnostics and Medical Therapeutics use problem-based (PBL) learning methods.

Spring	
Medical Diagnostics I	6
Medical Therapeutics I	6
Research Methods for PAs	1

Summer	
Medical Diagnostics II	5
Medical Therapeutics II	5
Medical Ethics	1
Master's Project I	1

Fall	
Clinical Experience I, II, III	15
Clinical Year Seminar	2
Master's Project II	1

Spring	
Clinical Experience IV, V, VI	15

Summer	
Clinical Experience VII, VIII, IX	15
Master's Project III	1

What kind of clinical experiences will I have?

The core rotations for all students are:

- Family Medicine (5 weeks)
- Internal Medicine (5 weeks)
- General Surgery (5 weeks)
- Emergency Medicine (5 weeks)
- Elective (5 weeks)

In addition to the core rotations, all students will obtain experience in: Pediatrics, Obstetrics & Gynecology, Long Term Care, and Mental Health.

The students will choose one of the following tracks: Family Practice, Hospital Inpatient Care, Internal Medicine, or Trauma/Surgery Subspecialty.

Choice of Trauma/Surgery Subspecialty Track Rotations (5 weeks each) may include:

- Outpatient Clinic/Occupational Medicine
- Surgery Subspecialties
- Trauma Emergency Medicine
- Medical Office Orthopedics
- Radiology

Choice of Family Practice Track Rotations (5 weeks each) may include:

- Pediatrics
- Geriatrics
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Mental Health
- Urgent Care

Choice of Hospital Inpatient Care Track Rotations (5 weeks each) may include:

- Cardiology
- Pulmonology
- Oncology
- Intensive Critical Care Unit
- Neurology
- Gastroenterology

Choice of Internal Medicine Track Rotations (5 weeks each) may include:

- Cardiology
- Pulmonology
- Neurology
- Nephrology
- Gastroenterology
- Endocrinology
- Rheumatology

When are applications accepted?

Applications are accepted from June 1 through December 1 for classes beginning the following May. All applicants are encouraged to apply as early as possible.

Who should apply?

Admission to the Department of Physician Assistant Studies is granted through a competitive selection process. Classes begin each May. Anyone who is interested in admission to the next class and who anticipates fulfilling all of the entrance requirements by that time may apply.

Applicants will file using the Centralized Application Service for the PA (CASPA). Visit www.caspaonline.org.

Will there be interviews?

The most qualified applicants are offered interviews on the University of Saint Francis

campus. Each applicant will be given a brief orientation to the USF campus and Department of Physician Assistant Studies and will have interviews with admission committee members. At the interview, applicants will be expected to provide a written plan to fulfill all entrance requirements that have not been completed to that point.

How is the acceptance decision made?

After the interview, the admissions committee will review all of the application data and materials including evaluations from the interview. If the applicant is accepted into the Department of Physician Assistant Studies program, it may be without reservation, or it may be contingent upon completion of all entrance requirements. It will be the responsibility of the applicant to fulfill the requirements according to the agreed upon plan. An \$800 nonrefundable reservation fee is required. This fee will be applied to tuition.

What are the entrance requirements?

The applicant who has been interviewed and accepted into the department must have all entrance requirements fulfilled at the time of enrollment in May.

- Hold a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution in the United States of America or submit equivalency verification for foreign credentials.
- Satisfactorily complete and submit scores from the Graduate Record Exam, GRE code 1693.
- Satisfactorily complete 12 semester hours credit in chemistry including courses in general chemistry, organic chemistry and biochemistry.
- Satisfactorily complete 15 semester hours of credit in biology courses including human anatomy/physiology and microbiology.
- Satisfactorily complete 6 semester hours of credit in the area of psychology.
- Possess direct patient care experience.
 - The most direct and responsible forms of patient care experience in a compensated position are preferred.

- Clinical components of the educational experience required for other healthcare professions are considered, but will not totally fulfill this requirement.
- Volunteer activity and/or appropriate life experience will be considered, but will not totally fulfill this requirement.
- In order to participate in clinical experiences, clinical requirements as set by the Physician Assistant Studies Program and clinical agencies must be met including, but not limited to, criminal background checks and drug testing.

Note: The personal computer (PC) is used extensively throughout the program for communication, instruction and assessment. It is advisable for students to own a home computer with hardware and software compatible with that of the university. Being online with an Internet Service Provider (ISP) is also recommended. The university does provide these services on campus for students during normal business hours.

What about certification?

Graduates of an accredited program are eligible to take the certification examination offered by the National Commission on Certification for Physician Assistants. Successful completion of the examination allows the individual to use the title "Physician Assistant-Certified" or PA-C.

Accreditation

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA).

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available in the form of loans, discounts and scholarships. All students are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). University alumni are eligible for a tuition discount.

How do I find out more?

Contact the Office of Admissions at 260-399-8000 or 1-800-729-4732 or visit our website at www.sf.edu.

