

University of Saint Francis | Physician Assistant Program

Excerpts from pages 15-19 of the *PA Student Handbook*

4.2 ADMISSIONS PROCESS & REQUIREMENTS

The USF PA Program has established the following admissions policies and practices:

4.2.1 GENERAL ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Admission to the PA Program is granted through a competitive selection process. All applicants file using the Centralized Application Service for the PA (CASPA) between the dates of May 1 and April 1 for the class beginning the following August. Though students may be accepted into the University of Saint Francis, they are not guaranteed admission into the PA Program.

Faculty score each CASPA-submitted application using a point-based scoring rubric. Points are awarded based on the status and type of college degree(s) pursued / obtained; cumulative overall total GPA and overall science GPA; type of direct patient care experience and hours of experience; shadowing experience; personal statement; letters of recommendation; hours of volunteer experience; and hours of extracurricular activities. All applicants who meet the minimum number of points required for an interview are offered an on-ground interview at the University of Saint Francis Fort Wayne campus.

The interview experience consists of a general program welcome by the program director and principal faculty, as well as an overview of the 27-month curriculum. Interviewees participate in a mock active learning session, attend a Q&A with current students, and participate in both 1:1 multiple-mini-interviews as well as a longer, more personalized 1:1 interview. A student-led campus tour is an optional feature.

Applicants are awarded a cumulative score upon completion of the interview experience that considers their CASPA application scores and scores from the interview (including multiple-mini-interviews and the personalized interview). Scoreable activities are entered into an Excel spreadsheet, along with comments regarding each candidate's strengths and areas for improvement. At the end of each calendar month, candidates are informed of their acceptance status via the email address or phone number provided on the CASPA application. Candidates may be accepted without reservation, accepted with reservations (if there are outstanding pre-requisites), waitlisted, or denied acceptance. Applicants accepted with reservations must complete all outstanding pre-requisites prior to matriculation or will forfeit their spot in the program. Waitlisted students are ranked based on their scoreable activities and the highest scoring applicants are offered acceptance into the program based on availability. Students on the waitlist may be offered a seat in the program at any time prior to the start of classes. This process continues until all 25 seats in the cohort are filled. Accepted applicants are given two weeks to submit a non-refundable \$1,000.00 deposit to secure their seat in the program. Following matriculation, the deposit is applied to the student's tuition. Applicants who choose not to pay the deposit within the two-week period and/or do not communicate with the PA Program during this time are considered to have declined the offer of acceptance.

4.2.2 ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

All accepted applicant to the PA Program must have all entrance requirements fulfilled at the time of matriculation. Successful applicants to the PA Program must meet both general admission criteria for the University of Saint Francis and program-specific requirements (A3.13a-e). The PA program makes student admission decisions in accordance with clearly defined and published practices of the institution and program that are available to prospective students on the program's public facing website (<https://majors.sf.edu/physician-assistant-studies/>) (A3.14).

Minimum requirements for admission to the PA Program include:

- A bachelor's degree from an accredited institution in the United States of America or equivalent verification of foreign credentials provided via WES.
- Completion of the College of Health Science Technical Standards (completed during the interview).
- A minimum overall grade point average (GPA) of 3.0.
- A minimum overall science GPA of 3.0.
- Satisfactory completion of 12 semester credit hours in chemistry with a grade of "C" or better; to include courses in general chemistry, organic chemistry, and biochemistry.
- Satisfactory completion of 15 semester credit hours in biology with a grade of "C" or better; to include courses in human anatomy, physiology (courses can be combined or separate), and microbiology.

- Satisfactory completion of 6 semester credit hours in psychology with a grade of “C” or better.
- Possession of direct patient care experience (DPC). The most direct and responsible forms of patient care in a compensated position are preferred. There is no minimum requirement, but ≥ 1000 DPC hours are preferred.

The courses and credit hours listed above as prerequisites to enrollment do not substitute for more advanced applied content within the professional component of the curriculum (B2.01).

4.2.3 ARTICULATION AGREEMENTS

The USF PA Program currently maintains articulation agreements with Indiana Wesleyan University, Indiana Tech, and Manchester University. Under the terms of the agreements, two seats are reserved for students from each institution per admission cycle. Interested students must let the PA program know of their intent to apply by September 1 (by emailing the chair of ACOM, Kayla Wolf, at kwolf@sf.edu) and submit a completed CASPA application by December 1 to be eligible under the terms of the agreements. Applicants who do not adhere to this timeline may still apply to the program for consideration. All applicants admitted under articulation agreements are expected to meet the course and credit hour prerequisites noted above.

The most recent copy of each agreement is shown on the program’s public facing website (<https://majors.sf.edu/physician-assistant-studies/>). New agreements may be established at the discretion of the Admissions Committee and COHS dean.

4.2.4 STATEMENT OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

In its employment practices, selection of students, and administration of all programs, the University of Saint Francis maintains a policy of non-discrimination regarding race, national origin, religion, sex, disability, genetics, and veteran status.

4.2.5 NON-ACADEMIC EXCLUSION

Any individual may be denied admission to the USF PA Program and any student may be dismissed or excluded from the program if it is determined by the responsible administrator that the individual or student does not possess the likely capabilities required of a practicing health care professional or practitioner in the field of that student’s training. This may be based upon the individual’s knowledge, conduct, character, or mental or physical fitness.

4.3 COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES TECHNICAL STANDARDS (COHS POLICY 5.0)

The University of Saint Francis has identified technical standards that must be met by students to successfully progress in and graduate from its health science programs. These standards establish performance standards that will enable students to become competent practitioners who are able to provide safe care for their patients (persons, families and/or communities) with critical judgment, broadly based knowledge, and well-honed technical skills (A3.13e).

Technical standards (see below) outline skills, abilities and behavioral characteristics required to successfully complete health science programs at the university. Key areas include having abilities and skills in the areas of: (1) acquiring fundamental knowledge; (2) developing communication skills; (3) interpreting data; (4) integrating knowledge to establish clinical judgment; and, (5) incorporating professional attitudes and behaviors into practice.

The university provides reasonable accommodations to all students on a nondiscriminatory basis and consistent with legal requirements as outlined in the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008. A reasonable accommodation is a modification or adjustment to an instructional activity, equipment, facility, program or service that enables a qualified student with a disability to have an equal opportunity to fulfill the requirements necessary for graduation from the program. To be eligible for accommodations, a student must have a documented disability of (a) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities of such individual; (b) a record of such impairment; or, (c) be regarded as having such a condition.

- **Acquiring Fundamental Knowledge:** Students must be able to learn in classroom and other educational settings via lectures, demonstrations, review of research and patient care situations. Students must have the ability to find sources of knowledge, acquire the knowledge, be a life-long learner and demonstrate adaptive thinking.
- **Developing Communication Skills:** Students must have the ability to effectively communicate verbally, nonverbally, in writing, with groups and using information technology. Students must be able to interact appropriately with patients (persons, families and/or communities), peers, and with all members of the health care team. Students must be able to interpret and convey information gathered from communications. They must be able to speak, read and write in English.
- **Interpreting Data:** Students must have the ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize data in a timely manner. They must successfully fulfill examination requirements of the program, including written and practical

examinations. Students must have the ability to (1) observe patient conditions and responses to health and illness, (2) assess and monitor health needs, (3) translate data into abstract concepts, and (4) understand evidence-based reasoning.

- **Integrating Knowledge to Establish Clinical Judgment:** Students must demonstrate critical thinking, problem-solving and decision making ability needed to care for individuals, families and/or communities across the health continuum. They must demonstrate clinical competency and the ability to participate in clinical experiences. Students must possess sensory capacity and motor function to gather patient data, perform patient assessment and implement therapeutic interventions.
- **Incorporating Professional Attitudes and Behaviors into Practice:** Students must demonstrate cross cultural competency, integrity, moral reasoning, ethical behaviors and concern for others. They must have the ability to acquire interpersonal skills for professional interactions with diverse individuals, families and/or communities. They must be able to work cooperatively with intra and inter professional teams, adapt to changing environments inherent in clinical practice, and function effectively under stress.

The University of Saint Francis is committed to providing equal access to all students, including those students with disabilities. Once students are admitted to a health sciences program, they should contact Academic and Career Development Center at (260) 399-7700 x6075 if they believe that they may require reasonable accommodation to fulfill the Health Science Technical Standards. A copy of this form in its entirety is readily accessible on the College of Health Sciences SharePoint site and will additionally be made available upon request to the director of didactic education.

4.4 ENROLLMENT

To be qualified for enrollment in the USF PA Program, candidates must be able to meet the COHS Technical Standards (A3.13e), with or without reasonable accommodations.

4.4.1 ENROLLMENT PROCESS

Students admitted to the USF PA Program are responsible for following appropriate enrollment procedures and deadlines. The program's administrative assistant and director of didactic education handle student registration and provide oversight for the enrollment process, ensuring compliance with requirements and maintenance of accurate and complete student records and files.

4.4.2 ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS

All students admitted to the USF PA Program must complete a series of steps to finish the enrollment process. These steps are detailed on the Enrollment Packet Checklist and Programmatic Expectations document that is emailed to all admitted students in the semester preceding matriculation. As stated on the checklist, students are required to complete the following:

1. Read the *PA Student Handbook* in its entirety and return the Acknowledgement of the PA Student Handbook Form (see section 9.0).
2. Order and submit a background check.
 - The USF PA Program requires individuals who have been accepted to the program to complete a background check prior to programmatic enrollment to meet requirements of clinical training affiliates. Evidence of positive drug screens; DUIs or driving violations/penalties; crimes including battery, assault, theft, or embezzlement; and drug or other substance abuse related crimes may make students ineligible to participate in clinical experiences. The background check includes a required driving history check.
 - All students who have held a driver's license must include their driver's license information in the online background check application. Generally minor traffic violations will not typically prevent clinical participation. However, individuals who have been convicted of misdemeanors within the past 3-5 years and/or felony convictions within 7-10 years are typically excluded from clinical participation and cannot be admitted until the specified time has passed and the individual has been reviewed and approved for clinical participation by university clinical affiliates.
 - Individuals who have been convicted of crimes of abuse, sexual assault, dishonesty (any theft), crimes against a person (e.g., assault, battery, kidnapping, manslaughter, murder), or are a registered sex-offender will never be eligible for clinical participation and will not be admitted to the USF PA Program.
 - If infringements exclude an individual from clinical experiences, the student may not enroll in or continue with the USF PA Program. If infringements are revealed by the background check and were not listed on the COHS Clinical, Field, and Internship Requirements and Technical Standards Disclosure Form, this lack of disclosure may be considered a breach of academic honesty and professionalism and may exclude a student from enrollment.
3. Complete the signed health form required by the COHS and return it in a sealed, separate envelope.
4. Sign and return the Clinical, Field, and Internship Requirements and Technical Standards Disclosure Form.

5. Sign and return the Consent to Release Information Form.
6. Sign and return the Verification of Health Insurance Form.
7. Sign and return the Honor Code statement.
8. Sign and return the Technology Honor Code statement.
9. Sign and return the Informed Consent Form.
10. Sign and return the Confidentiality and Informed Consent for Participation in Educational Activities Form.
11. Sign and return the COHS Student Confidentiality Form.
12. Sign and return the HIPAA Regulations Summary for PA Students document.
13. Review the Financial Aid Information for PA Students document.
14. Review and share the Family and Friends Letter with loved ones.
15. Review the Textbooks and Materials List.
16. Provide a professional photo/headshot.
17. Provide official transcripts from all institutions attended.

4.4.3 ENROLLMENT FEES

Upon acceptance to the USF PA Program, each successful candidate is required to remit a \$1,000.00 deposit to secure their place in the incoming class. This fee is non-refundable. However, the fee is applied to the student's tuition and is not in addition to the tuition due.

All expenses incurred as part of the enrollment process are the responsibility of the student. These include but are not limited to:

- Obtaining a physical exam
- Necessary laboratory tests and / or immunizations
- Other health requirements
- Background check