Western Carolina University | Pre-professional Pathways

Pre-Physician Assistant

In order to become a physician assistant, you must:

- complete a bachelor's degree (in any major) *WCU Undergraduate Major Options*
- take the appropriate prerequisite coursework *(see list of programs for specifics)*
- take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) *Examprep.wcu.edu*
- obtain required, paid clinical experience hours *(see list of programs for specifics)*
- apply through CASPA, some colleges may require additional applications *Application Log-in*
- complete the course of study in a PA program (~2 years) *List of programs*
- pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) *PANCE testing information*
- obtain license from state where practice is located

What should I major in?

While there is no prescribed major for admission into a physician assistant program, it is imperative that students complete all required courses for admission. PA programs vary significantly in their requirements, and it is important for you to learn what coursework the schools that interest you require. Students should choose their major according to their strengths, interests and alternative career choices. The Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants is used by the majority of PA schools but individual schools may also require a separate application to their institution as well.

Minimally, a student should complete these courses at WCU for entrance into many physician assistant programs:

BIOL 150, BIOL 240, BIOL 291, BIOL 292, BIOL 313 or BIOL 413/414
General Bio. I, Introduction to Genetics, Human Anat. & Phys. I, Human Anat. & Phys. II, Microbiology in Health and Nutrition OR Principles of General Microbiology/Methods of General Microbiology

CHEM 139, CHEM 140, CHEM 241, CHEM 242, BIOL 361 OR CHEM 361
General Chemistry I, General Chemistry II, Organic Chemistry I, Organic Chemistry II, Principles of Biochemistry

MATH 170
Applied Statistics

HSCC 322
Medical Terminology

PSY 150
General Psychology

WHO CAN HELP ME AT WCU?

For information on undergraduate program options and admission requirements for Physician Assistant schools, contact pre-professional advisors:

Pre-Professional Students:
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