

Physician Assistant Studies - M.S.P.A.S.

The Physician Assistant Program at Johnson and Wales University is a 24-month, 104-credit, full-time course of study. The program is offered at the university's Providence, Rhode Island, campus. One new class is enrolled each year which begins in the summer graduate term. Upon successful completion, a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies is awarded.

The first 12 months of the program are devoted to preclinical studies, and the remaining 12 months to clinical experiences in primary care and medical and surgical specialties.

The summer semester provides a foundation upon which the following fall and spring body system modules are constructed. In Applied Anatomy, small groups of students dissect cadavers, view dissections and utilize virtual anatomy software to learn gross anatomic structures that are essential to the understanding of medicine and the practice of general surgery. Applied Anatomy is integrated with Patient Care I where techniques specific to the adult history and physical examination are taught; the anatomy of a body system immediately precedes the lectures and practice labs where students learn the physical examination skills required to examine that same area of the body.

In Foundations of Medicine, students are introduced to the basics of cell physiology and genetics that are essential to the understanding of pathophysiologic mechanisms of disease and clinical medicine. A primer in microbiology prepares students for the study of infectious disease and the basics of pharmacology are a prelude to courses in pharmacotherapeutics.

Three semesters of Professional and Health Policy Issues commences in the summer with discussions ranging from the history of the PA profession, types of healthcare settings, healthcare and public health policy to the expectations of a medical workplace relative to ethical and professional behavior.

Fall and spring courses in Clinical Medicine, Diagnostic Skills and Pharmacotherapeutics are integrated and presented in a modular format. Students work sequentially through each body system module, one at a time, learning the physiology, pathophysiology, evidence-based medicine, diagnostic skills and treatment specific to that system. In Patient Care, students learn the history and physical examination skills specific to the body system being studied in that module. In weekly small-group meetings, they develop the critical thinking skills necessary to synthesize and apply the module content to real patient cases. Seminars in the practice of humanistic medicine will begin a life-long journey as a self-reflective and empathetic, patient-centered healthcare provider.

The second 12 months of the program commences with a two-week Introduction to Clinical Practice. Students learn skills they will apply during their clinical rotations; they are taught phlebotomy and injection skills and how to suture, knot-tie, perform surgical scrubbing and gowning and apply splints. Students then begin the first of their nine clinical rotations. Each rotation is five weeks in length. These rotations occur at off-campus clinical sites (hospitals, community health centers, medical offices, etc.) to be developed by program faculty and administrators. The seven required rotations include Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatric Medicine, Women's Health, Behavioral and Mental Health, Emergency Medicine, and Surgery. There are two five-week electives that allow students to further develop skills in the area in which they plan to practice.

The Master's Course runs the length of the clinical year. It includes lectures and discussions that prepare students for the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination, job searches and clinical practice. In the spring semester, this Master's Course culminates with the summative evaluation that ensures the student possesses the knowledge, interpersonal skills, patient care skills and professionalism required for entry into the profession.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are expected to:

- Develop rapport and an atmosphere of trust with patients and families while providing patient centered humanistic care.
- Recommend and perform clinical procedures for common medical disorders.
- Utilize and apply evidence-based medicine principles and skills to guide decision making in clinical practice.
- Engage and employ lifelong learning skills through ongoing self-reflection, active engagement, and professional development.

- Utilize effective interpersonal skills in oral and written communication with patients and families and work collaboratively with members of the healthcare team.
- Accurately elicit a medical history, perform a physical examination, formulate a differential diagnosis, and appropriately select and interpret diagnostic studies to diagnose medical conditions.
- Develop and manage appropriate treatment plans for preventative, acute, chronic and emergent disorders of patients across the lifespan
- Conduct oneself in a professional and ethical manner consistent with the role and responsibilities of a physician assistant.

Physician Assistant Studies

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies

Year 1: Didactic Year		
PAS5100	Applied Anatomy	3
PAS5200	Foundations of Medicine	4
PAS5325	Patient Care I	4
PAS5344	Professional and Health Policy Issues I	2.5
PAS5425	Patient Care II	3
PAS5454	Professional and Health Policy Issues II	2
PAS5464	Professional and Health Policy Issues III	2.5
PAS5523	Clinical Medicine I	4
PAS5533	Clinical Medicine II	4
PAS5560	Pharmacotherapeutics I	3
PAS5570	Pharmacotherapeutics II	4
PAS5620	Diagnostic Skills I	4.5
PAS5632	Diagnostic Skills II	3
PAS5643	Clinical Medicine III	5
PAS5653	Clinical Medicine IV	5
PAS5735	Patient Care III	7
Year 2: Clinical Year		
PAS6100	Introduction to Clinical Practice Course	2
PAS6200	Family Medicine Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6250	Internal Medicine Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6300	Pediatric Medicine Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6350	Women's Health Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6400	Emergency Medicine Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6450	Behavioral and Mental Health Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6500	Surgery Clinical Course	4.5
PAS6600	Clinical Elective Course I	4.5
PAS6700	Clinical Elective Course II	4.5
PAS6800	Master's Course *	1
Total Credits		104.0

* This course spans the clinical year; credit is awarded only in the spring semester.