

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

## Curriculum

The Physician Assistant Program at Johnson & 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 courses are constructed. In Applied Anatomy, small groups of students dissect cadavers, view prosections 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 and immunology 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. Students explore the role that diet has on health and wellness across the lifespan in the Food is Medicine course series, including practical application of the principles in culinary labs.

Fall and spring courses in Clinical Medicine are body-system based encompassing all aspects of clinical medicine, diagnostic skills and pharmacotherapeutics for the particular body-system. Students work sequentially through each body system course, one at a time, learning the physiology, pathophysiology, clinical medicine, 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 course. In weekly small-group meetings, they develop the critical thinking skills necessary to synthesize and apply the course content to real patient cases. Seminars in the practice of humanistic medicine will begin a lifelong journey as a self-reflective and empathetic, patient-centered healthcare provider. The final systems course is Emergency Medicine which includes an 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.

The second 12 months of the program provides the experiential learning in 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 life span.
- 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

PAS5110	Applied Anatomy	4
PAS5200	Foundations of Medicine	4
PAS5325	Patient Care I	4
PAS5345	Professional and Health Policy Issues I	2
PAS5425	Patient Care II	3
PAS5456	Professional and Health Policy Issues II	1.5
PAS5470	Introduction to Evidence-Based Practice	1
PAS5480	Food is Medicine I	1
PAS5515	Clinical Hematology	1
PAS5525	Clinical EENT	2
PAS5540	Clinical Pulmonology	3
PAS5565	Clinical Dermatology	1
PAS5575	Clinical Behavioral Medicine	1
PAS5580	Clinical Cardiology	4
PAS5736	Patient Care III	3
PAS5767	Professional and Health Policy Issues III	1.5
PAS5782	Food is Medicine II	1
PAS5810	Clinical Nephrology and Urology	3
PAS5825	Clinical Orthopedics and Rheumatology	3
PAS5830	Clinical Gastroenterology	2
PAS5845	Clinical Neurology	2
PAS5860	Clinical Endocrinology	2
PAS5870	Clinical Infectious Disease	1
PAS5880	Clinical Gynecology and Obstetrics	3
PAS5891	Clinical Pediatrics	2
PAS5910	Emergency Medicine	2
PAS5930	Problem-Based Learning	2.5
PAS5950	Clinical Geriatrics	1
PAS5960	Surgical Principles	1

#### Year 2: Clinical Year

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

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

# Admissions Requirements

## Admissions Criteria

- Total number of students accepted per year: 36
- Bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. institution before matriculation into this program (We do not currently accept applications from international students.)

## Prerequisites

The M.S.P.A.S. program does not accept advanced placement or transfer credit for required curricular components. No credit will be awarded to students for prior work experience. We do not accept CLEP or Advanced Placement (AP) credits to fulfill prerequisite courses.

A minimum 35 of the required 39 prerequisite credits (including associated labs) must be completed by the end of December in order to be considered for the following June start. All prerequisites must be completed by the end of May. An official transcript reflecting a grade of "C" or better must be provided before classes start the first week of June. Students accepted before all prerequisite coursework has been completed will be accepted on a provisional basis.

- Minimum overall GPA of 3.2 (as calculated by CASPA)\*
- Minimum overall BCP (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) GPA of 3.2 (as calculated by CASPA)\*
- 2 Biology classes with labs\*\*
- Microbiology
- Genetics
- 2 Chemistry classes with labs\*\*
- 2 Anatomy & Physiology classes with labs (coursework expires after 7 years)
- 1 class Psychology; Intro to Psychology or Abnormal Psychology. If AP credit has been awarded for Intro to Psychology, an upper-level Psychology course will be acceptable.
- 1 college-level math class; Statistics preferred
- Minimum 250 hours of direct, hands-on patient care experience. (See FAQs for more detail on acceptable forms of patient care experience.)
- PA shadowing is required (no minimum total of hours)
- Three letters of recommendation

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All CASPA calculations are considered final. Admission to M.S.P.A.S. programs is highly competitive and a much higher GPA than the minimum is normally required for admission.

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Upper-level (300/3000 level or above) Biology and Chemistry coursework is preferred. Stronger candidates will have more than the minimum prerequisite science courses. Some examples are Cell Biology, Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry, Immunology and Pathophysiology.

Online courses for prerequisites are accepted provided the courses still meet any laboratory requirements above and are offered by a regionally accredited U.S. institution.

Note: Johnson & Wales University has temporarily revised its prerequisite policy in response to the many institutions that have instituted non-traditional grading during the Spring 2020 semester. This temporary policy allows the acceptance of prerequisite courses with non-letter grades (P/F, S/U) earned during the Spring 2020 semester.

## How to Apply

- All applications must be submitted directly to CASPA.
- Our program operates on a rolling admissions basis, so applying early is recommended. Our application opens with CASPA in late April; we continue to accept applications through our October 1 deadline with CASPA "Completed" status.
- We do not require a supplemental application.
- GREs are not required.

## Admissions Process

- The Physician Assistant Program Admissions Committee reviews applications. Preference for interview invitation is given to students

with higher GPAs (cumulative, BCP), rigorous science curriculum (upper level courses exceeding the minimum prerequisites), more patient care hours, quality of the patient care hours (more clinical decision making), more PA shadowing hours, higher quality personal statements, stronger references, stronger mission match, and for applicants that qualify for a guaranteed interview through our articulation agreements. Qualified candidates are offered an on-campus interview to assess interpersonal and communication skills, as well as overall commitment to a career as a PA.

- After each interview day, qualified candidates will be offered acceptance into JWU's PA program. Preference for admission to the program is given to interviewed applicants that best demonstrate knowledge of the PA profession, strong communication and interpersonal skills, and a strong commitment to the mission of the PA program. Candidates that are not offered admission after the interview may be placed on a wait list. Students that are selected from the wait list will be notified immediately of their acceptance.
- In order to accept an offer for admission, an applicant must make a \$1,000 non-refundable tuition deposit to JWU. This deposit will hold the applicant's place in the class. The total deposit fee will be applied to the cost of tuition once the student matriculates.

## Matriculation

Before matriculation, accepted applicants must:

- Obtain a physical exam and provide documented proof of program- and university-required immunizations as listed in our Accepted Student Guide, which is emailed to all accepted students. Program immunization requirements are based on current Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommendations for health professionals.
- Students may also be required to meet the physical examination requirements of the facility or facilities providing clinical education in connection with the program. These facilities may have specific requirements in addition to JWU's requirements.
- Provide proof of a negative national criminal background check performed by the program-approved agency. These are required by clinical training sites and state licensing boards. Students will be subject to drug screens as required by clinical training sites. These are both costs to the student and paid directly to the screening agency.
- Provide documented proof of a current American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) for Health Care Providers certification.

This information must be presented prior to registration. Matriculation is subject to completion of these requirements and submission of appropriate documentation.

Note: To participate JWU's PA program, each student — with or without reasonable accommodations — must be able to safely and effectively meet the following technical standards.

Technical standards, as distinguished from academic standards, refer to those physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities that a student must be able to perform in order to be admitted, to progress satisfactorily, and to graduate from the program and subsequently enter clinical practice.