Did You Know?

- The American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) have announced that the official title of the PA profession is "Physician Associate". Transitioning to this new title will take time. You may see programs that use the titles interchangeably. Visit AAPA for more information: https://www.aapa.org/title-change/

- PA’s can perform physical examinations, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret labs, perform procedures, assist in surgeries, make hospital rounds, and provide patient education and counseling.

- PA programs, modeled after medical school curricula, provide students with both classroom and clinical experience at an accelerated pace. PA’s are trained to be versatile and collaborative and a PA’s scope of practice will continue to grow and may shift over time due professional interests.

- PA’s practice medicine with physician supervision, but this does not mean a supervising physician must be present with the PA. The level of autonomy a PA has is determined at the practice level.

- There are 254 Accredited PA programs in the US with many new programs opening up every year, and class sizes that range from 25 to 100 students. A PA master’s program typically takes 2 years to complete. Certified PA program in Oregon include: Oregon Health and Science University, George Fox University, Pacific University.

Physician Assistant Application Preparation

- Completing the prerequisite courses is just one aspect of the process. You must also have a well-rounded application consisting of experience (shadowing, volunteer work, undergraduate research, life experience, etc.), letters of recommendation, GRE scores (not all programs require this), and a strong admissions essay.

- One unique requirement of most PA programs is the large number of direct patient care hours required, either paid or volunteer. The typical applicant has anywhere from 2 to 4 years of health care experience, equivalent to a minimum of 1000-2000 cumulated hours. Many PA programs list on their websites approved health care experiences that qualify as direct patient hours.

- Be sure to research individual programs about any COVID-19 related changes (Pre-rec and GRE exceptions, Pass/Fail Policy, etc).

Online Resources

- UO Pre-Health Advising Website: healthprofessions.uoregon.edu
- American Academy of Physician Assistants: aapa.org
- Physician Assistant Education Association: paeaonline.org
- Central Application Service for Physician Assistants: caspa.liaisoncas.com
- Exploring Health Careers: explorehealthcareers.org

Campus Resources

- Student Organizations
- Undergrad Research & Distinguished Scholars
- Tykeson College and Career Advising
- Global Education Oregon
- TAEC Study Support
- Holden Center
- UO Pre-Health workshops
- University Career Center
Advising
Schedule an appointment with a Pre-Health Advisor by following one of the options listed here:
https://healthprofessions.uoregon.edu/contact/

Sample 4-Year Plan
The chart below illustrates one way a PA program’s prerequisites can fit into a 4-year plan. Keep in mind a graduation plan is as unique as the student following it. Math placement, major, transfer credits, application timeline, and other factors will help shape your graduation plan and timeline. Pre-Health Advisors are here to help you create a graduation plan that works best for you!

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<th>First Year</th>
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Prerequisites vary substantially by school. While some schools may require this course, others may not. Other required courses that vary include speech, organic chemistry lab, physics, and/or biochemistry.

These courses are prerequisites for UO’s anatomy & physiology sequence. They are not typically prerequisites for PA school.

Required for Pacific University or OHSU.

Note: This advising handout lists all the common prerequisites for programs. Please research programs to identify additional courses you may need to include and work with your pre-health advisors for any alternate course options.

Questions? Email Pre-Health Advisors at health@uoregon.edu.