

**Physician Assistant School Prerequisites**

**Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Major: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_   
ID: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Primary Advisor: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

*In searching for common ground among multiple PA schools’ prerequisite lists, we found an enormous disparity from one school to the next. We also know that students will apply to 5 to 10 schools. This list is comprehensive, and should keep all your doors open. However if you know the specific schools to which you wish to apply, we strongly suggest you compile your own checklist to meet the requirements of those specific schools.*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **COURSE** | **GRADE** | **COURSE** | **GRADE** |
| BIOL 106 Introductory Biology: Organismal |  | BIOL 315 Gross and Microanatomy |  |
| BIOL 107 Introductory Biology: Cell |  | BIOL 353 Advanced Human Physiology |  |
| CHEM 105 Principles of Chemistry I |  | STAT 212 Intro to Statistical Methods |  |
| CHEM 106 Principles of Chemistry II |  | ENGL 101 College Composition |  |
| CHEM 345 Organic Chemistry I |  | ENGL 201, 301 or 402 Prof/Technical Writing |  |
| MBIOS 301 General Genetics\* |  | PSYCH 105 Intro to Psychology |  |
| MBIOS 303 Introductory Biochemistry |  | Additional Psychology/Human Dev/Sociology |  |
| MBIOS 304 General Microbiology Lab\* |  | PHIL 365 Biomedical Ethics |  |
| MBIOS 305 General Microbiology \* |  | Additional Upper Division BIOL/CHEM/MBIOS |  |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Cumulative GPA’s | F 20\_\_ | F 20\_\_ | F 20\_\_ | F 20\_\_ | F 20\_\_ |
|  | S 20\_\_ | S 20\_\_ | S 20\_\_ | S 20\_\_ | S 20\_\_ |

**PA school admissions committees will consider:**

**Completion of pre-requisite courses:** if applying to multiple schools, use the list above.Otherwise, check each school’s websites.

**GPA:** Most want 3.0 to apply, but 3.5 + is average for admission. Check each school’s websites for their minimums.

**GRE Scores:** Some schools require. This test is made up of 3 sections: verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, and analytical writing scored between 130-170 for each of the first two sections. Score 155 in each section to be in the top 60th percentile.

**Letters of Evaluation:** 1-2 from science professors, 1-2 from clinician(s) who can reference your patient skills, and 1 from a person who knows you well (supervisor). Check each school to which you are applying for their requirements.

**Experience**: Evidence of compassion and empathy for the sick, elderly, injured, or disabled, which may include: Between 1,000 – 4,000 **paid hours** of healthcare experience. Check each school for specific requirements. Time spent shadowing physician assistants and physicians vary. Provide evidence of leadership experience and volunteerism.

**Personal statement:** Why are you the best candidate? Incorporate: why you want to be a PA, steps you have taken to accomplish this goal, provide background information, explain special situations, and describe where you see yourself in the future.

**Personal interview:** Evaluation of students may include several 30-60 minute personal interviews used to assess the applicant's maturity, motivation, communication skills, knowledge of the profession, and desire to contribute to society through medicine.

# Timeline/Checklist for Pre-PA

**First Year**

* Explore coursework. You can select any major of study. The prerequisites for PA school may be combined with any academic field. There is no best major.
* Meet with your pre-health specialist, preferably prior to your academic advisor meeting. Do this each semester.
* Work on earning a strong GPA. Shoot for A’s, A-‘s and B+’s. Your cumulative GPA should be 3.2 or higher.
* Gain some experience. Volunteer, shadow, and do research in the field (optional).
* *Work toward paid healthcare experience.* This may include CNA, EMT, phlebotomist, medical assistant or scribe, etc.

**Second Year**

* Continue to volunteer, shadow, research (optional), and increase your activity and responsibility in clubs.
* Meet with your pre-health specialist.
* Continue to work toward *paid healthcare experience*.
* Explore PA schools (mission statements, faculty research projects, pre-requisites, unique requirements, etc.)
* Start to study for the GRE (during summer).

**Fall Semester of Junior Year**

* Continue to volunteer and work toward paid healthcare experience.
* Register for the GRE. Register early; test sites fill up quickly. May is an ideal time to take the test (after finals).
* Faculty Evaluators (letter of evaluation): line up evaluators. Should come from 1-2 science professors, 1-2 physicians (one PA, preferable). *WSU does not write Committee Letters.*
* All evaluators should speak about you as a person, your work ethic, and your integrity. Check with specific schools to which you plan to apply in order to determine their particular requirements.

**Spring Semester of Junior Year**

* Provide info for your evaluators: resume’, CV, personal statement, etc.
* CASPA Applications: Open a current cycle account in mid-April. Look over all you will need to complete application.
* Transcripts: before May you should know how to order transcripts from all institutions you have attended.
* Contact information: use WSU email. You need a stable and professional email address during your application cycle.

**May/Summer between junior and senior year**

* Take the GRE (Graduate Record Exam).
* Before you leave campus for the summer, submit transcript requests to the Registrar to be sent as soon as spring grades are recorded. Do the same for other institutions where you received credit.
* Check to see that your evaluation letters are in the CASPA application system before leaving for the summer.
* Write thank you notes to your evaluators. They have done you a huge favor.
* Submit your application as early as possible. You can submit as early as June. It may take as long as 6 weeks to verify your transcripts. If you are applying to a school that practices ‘rolling admissions’ it’s first come, first served.
* *Secondary/Supplemental Applications*: respond as soon as you get them. Some schools automatically send these to every applicant. Some schools send out to students who meet a minimum set of qualifications, and others send only to students in whom they are interested.

**Fall Semester Senior Year**

* Interviews (fall): Practice and prepare. Plan your wardrobe. We strongly suggest that you attend an *Interview Basics Workshop* and *Small Group Interviews* at HPSC early in the fall semester. If you get an interview before these workshops, let your HPSC specialist know.

**Spring Semester Senior Year**

* Decision Notification:If you are admitted to more than one school, make a deposit at your first choice school. Be sure to also notify the schools that you won’t be attending. Ethically, you should only hold one acceptance at a time.
* Financial Aid: Work with financial aid office of the PA school to submit FAFSA forms. This paperwork must be done between January and April, but again, check with each school.
* If you are on a waitlist, continue to inform the school of your interest. Ask about where you are on the wait list.
* If you have not received an acceptance in this cycle, give yourself a couple of months to let your disappointment subside. Then write to the schools’ admissions director to ask what you could do to improve your chances for admission the following cycle. When they reply, build a plan to make every change they suggest. Meet with the HPSC specialist to learn what might be done to make your future application more competitive. Remember the average age of incoming PA students is 27. Reapply, work on other professional school plans, or continue in preparation for a later application. The HPSC will be here for you throughout the process.  
    
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