

**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES
SCHOOL OF ALLIED HEALTH SCIENCES - UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL
BRANCH
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<http://www.sahs.utmb.edu/pas/>**

UTMB PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

The physician assistant profession is a challenging and rewarding career choice for those who are genuinely interested in medicine and the delivery of patient care. The Department of Physician Assistant Studies at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, established in 1971, offers a 2-year professional curriculum in physician assistant studies that is designed to provide the student the opportunity to gain the competencies and skills necessary to practice as a physician assistant. The training program has been named one of the top ten graduate physician assistant programs in the nation by *U.S. News and World Reports* for the past three consecutive years.

The training program provides experiences in clinical practice, research, and professional services progressing from didactic to clinical courses to clinical rotations. A variety of experiences are offered at university clinics and facilities as well as at off-campus sites during year two that support the program's mission to educate and train students in underserved primary care medicine. Professional and didactic courses total 110 credits. The program is accredited through the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. Graduates of the program are eligible to apply for membership in the American Academy of Physician Assistants and other recognized organizations representing the physician assistant and are eligible to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination for Assistants to the Primary Care Physician. Upon completion of the program, the student is awarded the degree, master of physician assistant studies. For more information about the program, deadlines, and an admission checklist designed to assist prospective students apply to the UTMB program, please visit our website, www.sahs.utmb.edu/programs/pas/.

THE PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

The profession evolved in response to an appeal to extend the delivery of primary medical care, and since its inception in 1965, it has had an impact on improving the quality of health care. The physician assistant has become a valuable and respected member of the health care team, and plays an important role in the delivery of patient care not only in primary care practice, but in other specialties and in settings such as indigent clinics, research facilities, hospitals, and emergency care centers. The American Academy of Physician Assistants' House of Delegates defined the physician assistant as "...health care professionals licensed, or in the case of those employed by the Federal Government, credentialed to practice medicine with physician supervision. Physician assistants are qualified by graduation from an accredited physician assistant educational program and/or certification by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. Within the physician/PA relationship, physician assistants exercise autonomy in medical decision-making and provide a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services. The clinical role of physician assistants includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings in rural and urban areas. Physician assistant practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research, and administrative activities." (1996).

The PA, although functioning in a dependent role, must be capable of complex independent thought, judgment, and action within the framework established by the employing physician. To be successful in these endeavors, the PA must think like a physician; be educated in the same general way as the physician; have a genuine interest in the patient; possess medical curiosity; and be aware of medical and legal limitations. The PA may be delegated duties and responsibilities encompassing a wide range of medical tasks. Responsibilities may include performance of physical examinations and history taking interviews; synthesis of laboratory and case record data; development of a management plan that includes treatment, follow-up care, patient education, and counselling; as well as establish a partnership with other health-related personnel in the medical care and management of patients. Physician assistants are expected to be:

- Compassionate, patient-focused, and service-oriented;
- Sensitive to patient's physical, mental and social well-being in a culturally diverse society;
- Sensitive to patient's rights;
- Capable of providing quality care and of assuming administrative and decision-making positions in the delivery system within managed care;
- Fiscally and socially responsible;
- Lifelong learners and intelligent consumers of medical literature;

- Practitioners with the ability to apply research-based techniques to investigations of clinical problems and practice evidence-based medicine; and able to use electronic (e.g., computer, CD-ROM, and telemedicine) resources to acquire and apply data needed to solve the patient's problems.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Applicants must possess the academic and personal qualities necessary for mastery of the curriculum and future success as a practicing PA. The UTMB Physician Assistant Program participates in the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Applicants should meet the minimal criteria for application and admission listed below.

- Applicant must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college.
- Applicant must have completed the CASPA application including all official transcripts and supporting documents. Applications must be marked by CASPA that they were submitted and completed on or before the October 1 deadline (midnight EST). Also, if UTMB does not receive the application from CASPA by December 1, the application will not be accepted. Applicants must also complete the UTMB supplemental application the specific deadline.
- Applicant must have completed the UTMB supplemental application. Once UTMB receives the CASPA application, the registrar's office will correspond with the applicant and give him or her instructions on locating and completing the supplemental application as well as a deadline for this application.
- Applicant must have paid appropriate application fees to CASPA (varies depending on number of program applications) and a supplemental application fee to UTMB
- Applicant must submit results of the Graduate Record Examination (verbal and quantitative scores). GRE institution code is 6887; departmental code is 0601. Results must be received by UTMB Enrollment Services by October 1 annually.
- Application deadline is posted at www.sahs.utmb.edu/programs/pas/.
- International students must submit and/or complete the following: 1) take and score satisfactorily on the test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) if the native language is not English; 2) submit an acceptable English translation with the transcripts if the transcripts are not in English, and 3) submit a professional evaluation of foreign credentials. The official evaluation must be sent directly from the evaluation service to the UTMB Office of Enrollment Services. A list of acceptable evaluation services is available from the Office of Enrollment Services.
- Regardless of the applicant's prior degree(s) or experience, all prerequisite credits and awarding of the bachelor's degree must be completed no later than the spring semester of the year of matriculation.
- Interviews and written essay be must completed. Topic is announced and written on interview day.
- Areas for supporting statement on your application should include but are not limited to: experiences (medical and otherwise), special and unique talents, honors and accomplishments, work history, community service, extracurricular activities, geographic representation, social and economic background, special personal circumstances (poor grades, etc.), and leadership potential. It is always helpful to include a one to two page resume that highlights your educational, work, and community service experiences with your application.
- Current Basic Cardiac Life Support (BLS or BCLS) Certification from the American Heart Association is required upon enrollment in the program and must be maintained throughout matriculation.

LIST OF PREREQUISITE COURSES

Prerequisite Course	Credits
Biological Sciences for science majors (with lab)	8
Microbiology/bacteriology (with lab)	4 (or 3*)
Immunology/Virology (with lab) You may substitute genetics, nutrition, molecular biology, embryology, or ecology though immunology or virology are preferred. Nutrition is highly recommended.	4 (or 3*)
Anatomy with lab (strongly prefer vertebrae comparative anatomy) Kinesiology courses do not count toward this requirement.	4
Physiology with lab (strongly prefer vertebrae comparative physiology) Kinesiology courses do not count toward this requirement.	4 (or 3*)
Chemistry for science majors (with lab)	8
Organic Chemistry/Biochemistry (with lab)	4 (or 3*)
Behavioral Sciences (sociology, psychology)	6
Statistics (with analysis of variance)	3
College Algebra or higher	3

*3 credits acceptable when university does not offer lab with course. All science courses must be for science majors.

Grade Point Averages Calculations

- Only official transcripts from approved institutions of higher education are accepted for evaluation and grade point calculation.
- All academic work undertaken and grades or symbols assigned at each institution are indicated on the official transcript(s).
- All grades assigned for academic course work are used in calculating the grade-point average except for physical education or military science.
- When a course is repeated, both grades are included in the calculation.
- A four-point scale is used in computing the grade-point average (.e.g., "A" 4.0 points per semester hours; "B" 3.0; "C" 2.0; "D" 1.0; "F" 0.0).
- A grade or symbol indicating failure, e.g., F, WF, NC, or a Pass/Fail system failure) is counted as hours undertaken, but no grade points are earned.
- Excluded from the grade-point calculation are any credits by examination (CR); Quit (Q); Withdrew (W); Withdrew Passing (WP); Incomplete (I or X); and a Pass grade within a Pass/Fail system.
- The grade-point average is computed by multiplying each grade point (see 4 and 5 above) by the semester or quarter hours earned per course and totalling the products. The semester or quarter hours of courses undertaken are then totalled. The total of quality points earned is divided by the total semester or quarter hours. The result is calculated to the hundredth place, giving the official cumulative grade-point average.
- Academic work at foreign colleges, universities, or preparatory schools shall be excluded from the calculations. Transfer credit appearing on US institution transcripts, student copies of an evaluation, other foreign evaluations will not be accepted. Evaluation services accepted are noted in the instructions on the CASPA website under "Other Foreign Transcripts".
- Students approved for Academic Fresh Start cannot have courses taken 10 or more years ago prior to their semester of enrolment in the PA program computed in their admissions GPA.
- Applicants are strongly encouraged to request to have their transcripts sent electronically to UTMB whenever possible. This greatly expedites processing and improves the accuracy of the transcript evaluation. The accepted standard for this process in Texas goes by name, SPEEDE.

PROFESSIONAL COURSE OF STUDY

YEAR ONE: DIDACTIC			
Course		Credits Hrs	Semester Hrs
Semester: Fall (16weeks Didactic)			
HUBS 5503	Human Anatomy	5	18 credits
PHAS 5301	Pathophysiology I	3	
PHAS 5203	Clinical Medicine I	2	
PHAS 5302	Health Promotion and Disease Prevention	3	
PHAS 5310	Physical Diagnosis	3	
CLLS 5227	Clinical Laboratory Methods	2	
Semester: Spring (16 Weeks Didactic)			
PHAS 5304	Patient Assessment	3	18 credits
PHAS 5402	Clinical Pharmacology	4	
PHAS 5202	Diagnostic Methods	2	
PHAS 5307	Clinical Medicine II	3	
PHAS 5205	Clinical Medicine III	2	
PHAS 5206	Pathophysiology II	2	
PHAS 5201	Clinical Psychiatry	2	
Semester: Summer I (6 Weeks Didactic)			
PHAS 5210	Skills Practicum	2	7 credits
PHAS 5305	Research	3	
PHAS 5207	Professional Practice Issues I	2	
YEAR TWO: CLINICAL			
Block D (48 Weeks Clinical)			
PHAS 6401	Emergency Medicine	4	48 credits
PHAS 6402	Surgery	4	
PHAS 6404	Surgery Elective	4	
PHAS 6403	Community/Underserved Medicine	4	
PHAS 6601	General Pediatrics	6	
PHAS 6602	Obstetrics and Gynecology	6	
PHAS 6407	Medicine I	4	
PHAS 6408	Medicine II	4	
PHAS 6802	Primary Care Rotation I	8	
PHAS 6406	Primary Care Rotation II	4	
Semester: Summer II			
INDS 5001	Interdisciplinary Studies	1	9 credits
PHAS 6805	Independent Investigative Study	8	
Semester: Fall			
PHAS 6604	Professional Practice Issues II	6	9 credits
PHAS 6301	Professional Practice Issues III	3	
	Year One: Didactic Year Totals	43	109 credits
	Year Two: Clinical Year Totals	66	

TUITION, FEES AND EXPENSES
MASTER DEGREE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

Tuition and Fees				
		Amount	Frequency	Applies to
1.	Student Service Fee	\$10.99	per credit hour	All students
2.	Resident Tuition (legislated)	\$50	per credit hour	Texas residents
3.	Non-resident Tuition (legislated)	\$325	per credit hour	Non-Texas residents
4.	Designated Tuition	\$70 (2006/07) \$100 (2007/08)	per credit hour	All students
5.	Differential Tuition	\$10 (2006/07) \$20 (2007/08)	per credit hour	All students
6.	Lab Fees	Variable	per course	All Students
7.	Supplemental Fees	\$5	per credit hour	All students
8.	ID Badge	\$5	paid once – new students	All students
9.	Medical Service Fees	\$55	per semester	UTMB campus students
10.	Liability Insurance	\$61	per academic year	All students
11.	Yearbook	\$17	per academic year	All students
12.	Lab Safety Kit	\$10	paid once – new students	All students
13.	Library Acquisition	\$50	per semester	All students
14.	Graduation Fee	\$100	paid once	Graduating students
Other Expenses				
15.	Student Parking	\$30-\$140	per year	All students
16.	Medical Instruments	\$1750	paid once	All students
17.	White Coat	\$20-\$75	paid once	All students
18.	Books and Supplies (didactic)	\$1500	paid once	All students
19.	Books and Supplies (clinical)	\$750	paid once	All students
20.	Background Checks	\$36.50	as required	All students
21.	Laptop Computer	\$1,000	paid once	All students

1. Student Service Fees cover the cost of multitude of services offered to the UTMB campus student by a variety of offices, including Student Services, Student Wellness, the UTMB Field House, Office of Student Affairs, and others. This fee will not exceed a maximum of \$150.
2. Resident Tuition (legislated) applies to students who are Texas residents for tuition purposes.
3. Non-resident Tuition (legislated) applies to students who are non-Texas residents for tuition purposes.
4. Designated Tuition applies to all students. Designated tuition is a general use fee authorized the Texas Education Code that most universities employ as part of a student's total tuition costs. These funds are used to enhance students' educational experience, and the amount is proportional to the number of semester hours for which the student registers.
5. Differential Tuition applies to all students. Differential tuition is a general use fee authorized the Texas Education Code that most universities employ as part of a student's total tuition costs. These funds are used to enhance students' educational experience, and the amount is proportional to the number of semester hours for which the student registers.
6. Lab Fees:
 - HUBS 5530 - Human Anatomy- \$255 (defray costs of supplies and services of anatomy assistant to care for lab facilities)
 - PHAS 5210 - Skills Practicum - \$42 (defray costs for national PA competency exam)
 - PHAS 5310 - Physical Diagnosis - \$77.50 (defray costs of gynecology and urological teaching associated fees)
 - PHAS 6401 - Emergency Medicine - \$32 (defray costs of software service)
7. Supplemental Fees defray the cost and preparation of educational materials provided to students.
8. The ID badge fee is paid once per student career (excludes replacements).
9. Medical Service Fees cover health services provided by the Office of Student Wellness for UTMB campus students. This fee is not a substitute for health insurance that is requires for all UTMB students.
10. Liability Insurance in required for all physician assistant students.
11. The yearbook is a required fee. Each student receives a copy of the syndrome.
12. The lab safety kit fee covers safety materials for students during lab sessions.

Tuition and Fees continued:

13. The library acquisition fee supports the maintenance and improvement of the medical library's print and electronic resources.
14. Graduation fee supports costs of commencement activities and diplomas.
15. Required to support and complete activities in the training program.
16. Required to support and complete activities in the training program.
17. Required to support and complete activities in the training program.
18. Required to support and complete activities in the training program.
20. Background checks may be required for matriculation and at various clinical sites.
Program students must successfully complete a security background check that will be performed prior to enrollment through a UTMB contractor as well as complete a TDC background check during new student orientation. A negative clearance will not necessarily preclude matriculation; however, a conviction of a felony offense may result in ineligibility to receive licensure in Texas. Cases are considered on an individual basis by the state licensing agency.
21. A laptop computer is required for use during matriculation in the PA Program. Refer to the UTMB laptop guidelines for more information. This fee will vary depending upon the hardware and software configuration purchased.

Other Expenses:

- During year two (clinicals), the student must plan for the expense of rotations away from campus (e.g., living expenses, transportation, etc.).
- Employment during enrollment is strongly discouraged. Tuition/fees and other costs are subject to change without notice.
- All enrolled UTMB students are required to have and to maintain health insurance. Health insurance is available for purchase or students may use current policies.

FINANCIAL AID

The Office of Student Fiscal Planning and Management are responsible for the administration of financial aid programs, fiscal counselling for students, and the collection of loan repayments. Counselors in the financial aid office are available to help you estimate your expenses and understand the sources of financial aid available to you once you are accepted for admission into the UTMB program. Please visit the web site, www.utmb.edu/enrollmentservices.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Dr. Daniel Allensworth Scholarship Endowment

Edith & Emanuel Cohen/Evelyn A. Gerstein Memorial Scholarship

Departmental Competitive Academic Scholarship

Edgar & Grace Gnitzinger Scholarship

Thomas & Gleaves James Scholarship Endowment

Dr. Eugene Kindley Memorial Scholarship

Dr. Diane Lisa Sunshine Leonard Scholarship

Minnie & Ward Savage Presidential Endowment

Peyton & Lydia Schapper Endowed Scholarship Fund

Arthur V. Simmang Endowment

SAHS Silver Anniversary Scholarship Endowment

Texas Society of Allied Health Professions

University Federal Credit Union

Brigadier General & Mrs. Donald B. Wagner Endowed Scholarship

UTMB Retirees Association Scholarship

The scholarships listed above are available to physician assistant students, and applications for scholarships are accepted annually. New students are eligible to apply for scholarships after acceptance into the program. Non-resident students may qualify for exemption from paying out-of-state tuition rates if awarded a competitive scholarship in the amount of \$1,000 or more for the academic year, by an official scholarship committee or committees of the public institution of higher education attending. If non-resident or foreign students in competition with other students, including Texas residents, obtain these competitive scholarships, the students may pay the same tuition as a resident of Texas during the registration period in which the competitive scholarship is in effect. A competitive scholarship that qualifies the holder for waiver of the difference between the tuition charged to resident and non-resident students shall be awarded for the purpose of encouraging excellence in the academic program in which the student is enrolled. An institution shall not waive non-resident tuition on the basis of competitive scholarships for more than five percent of its total enrollment in the corresponding previous academic year.

For more information about competitive Scholarship qualifications, please contact Debra Munsell, PAS Student Scholarship Coordinator (dsmunsel@utmb.edu)

ACADEMIC ADVISEMENT

Admissions advisement is available for prospective students to the UTMB Department of Physician Assistant Studies by telephone or email, and we strongly encourage interested persons to attend one of our monthly open houses. Office or walk-in appointments are not available at this time due to schedule constraints.

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