

Pathway to Physician Assistant

What is a Physician Assistant? What's the job outlook?

Physician assistants, also referred to as PAs, are licensed to practice medicine under the supervision of a physician. Their specific duties and the extent to which they are supervised by physicians differ from state to state and depend on the practice setting and the specialty of the supervising physician.

Employment for PAs is expected to grow 31 percent from 2020 to 2030. PAs are expected to continue to have a growing role in healthcare because they can be trained more quickly than physicians and team-based treatment models continue to become more commonly used. The annual mean wage for PAs in the Denver Metro area is \$110,170.*



*U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor, *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, Physician assistants, on the Internet at <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistants.htm#tab-1>

How do I become a Physician Assistant?

PAs receive a Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) which is typically a 2-3 year post-baccalaureate program. Each program will have their own course prerequisite and GPA requirements, as well as preferred entrance exams (CASPer, GRE or PA-CAT). Depending on the program, applicants may also be required to have a minimum number of hours of paid healthcare experience prior to applying. PA's are required to be licensed in every state; candidates must pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) upon completion of their graduate program. A PA who passes this exam may then use the credential PA-C, Physician Assistant-Certified.

PA programs in Colorado can currently be found at four institutions: University of Colorado Health Sciences Center (UCHSC), Red Rocks Community College, Rocky Vista University, and Colorado Mesa University. For more information on the admissions process for each of these programs, please refer to the following websites.

- University of Colorado Health Sciences Center - <https://medschool.cuanschutz.edu/physician-assistant-program/>
- Red Rocks Community College - <https://www.rrcc.edu/physician-assistant>
- Rocky Vista University - <https://www.rvu.edu/admissions/mpas/>
- Colorado Mesa University - <https://www.coloradomesa.edu/kinesiology/graduate/pa-program/index.html>

Biology Faculty Advisor who can guide you for this path is:

Dr. Anil Rao

email: raoa@msudenver.edu

Pathway to Physician Assistant



REQUIREMENTS FOR A MAJOR IN BIOLOGY for 2020-2021 or future catalogs ONLY

A grade of "C-" or better is required for each BIO prefix course to count towards the major

Required Biology Courses for both the B.A. or the B.S. Degree

BIO 1080-3 General Biology I	3
BIO 1090-1 General Biology Lab I.....	1
BIO 1081-3 General Biology II	3
BIO 1091-1 General Biology Lab II.....	1
 BIO 3520-3 General Ecology	 3

Take ONE of these Genetics options:

- BIO 3600-4** General Genetics (no lab).....4
- OR
- BIO 3610-4** Genetics: Principles & Analysis (has lab)4

Pick ONE of these options:

- Option 1:** **BIO 2100-5** General Botany
OR
- Option 2:** **BIO 2400-5** General Microbiology
OR
- Option 3:** **Both BIO 2310-4 and BIO 2320-4** (Anatomy & Physiology I & II)
(You must take both semesters to get credit for this option)
OR
- Option 4:** **Either BIO 3200-4** Invertebrate Zoology or **BIO 3260-4** Vertebrate Zoology
(If you wish to take both zoology courses, the other will count as an upper division elective)

Students are required to take a Senior Experience course:

Fulfills Senior Experience Requirement	
<input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4050-3 Advanced Cell & Molecular Biology <input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4230-3 Issues in Conservation Biology <input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4300-3 Neurobiology <input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4820-4 Developmental Biology <input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4850-3 Evolution	<input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4510-4 Microbial Ecology <input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4540-4 Plant Ecology <input type="checkbox"/> BIO 4550-4 Animal Ecology

Pathway to Physician Assistant

Elective Biology courses: Biology courses from 2000, 3000, and 4000 must be completed to bring the total of biology courses approved for the major to 40 credits. *At least 21 of these Biology credits must be from the 3000 or 4000 courses of the Department of Biology.*

Recommended Elective Courses To Choose From (Specific to PA):

- BIO 3050 – Cell Biology: 4
- BIO 3320 – Advanced Human Physiology: 4
- BIO 3330 – Advanced Human Cadaver Anatomy: 5
- BIO 3350 – Immunology Credits: 3
- BIO 4450 – Pathogenic Microbiology Credits: 5

Total Credit Hours in Biology (minimum of 40) _____

Upper Division Biology Credit Hours (minimum of 21) _____

B.S. Non-Bio Course Requirements:

CHE 1800-4 Gen Chemistry I _____

CHE 1801-1 Gen Chemistry I Lab _____

CHE 1810-4 Gen Chemistry II _____

CHE 1811-1 Gen Chemistry II Lab _____

CHOOSE YOUR PATH:

CHE 3100-4 Organic Chemistry I _____

CHE 3120-1 Organic Chemistry I Lab _____

AND

CHE 3110- 3 Organic Chemistry II _____

~OR~

ºCHE 3090- 4 Survey of Organic Chem _____

CHE 3120-1 Organic Chemistry I Lab _____

AND

ºCHE 4310-4 Biochemistry _____

º **Note on CHE 3090 – Survey of Organic Chemistry** - this class is no longer being offered

º **Note on CHE 4310 – Biochemistry** – requires completion of both Organic Chemistry I and II

B.A. Non-Bio Courses Requirements:

*CHE 1100-4 Principles of Chem _____

CHE 2100-4 Intro to Org/Biochem _____

~OR~

CHE 1800-4 Gen Chemistry I _____

*CHE 1801-1 Gen Chemistry I Lab _____

CHE 1810-4 Gen Chemistry II _____

CHE 1811-1 Gen Chemistry II Lab _____

*To use CHE 1100 or 1800 for the Natural and Physical Sciences requirement, students must take the corresponding lab (CHE 1150 or CHE 1801, respectively).

Math Requirement:

Two Semesters of Math: _____

One Semester of Math: _____

Pathway to Physician Assistant



Choose from the following math courses:

MTH 1108-1109 (Stretch College Algebra)*, MTH 1111 and MTH 1101 (College Algebra with Lab), MTH 1110 (College Algebra), MTH 1112 (College Algebra through Modeling), MTH 1115/1116 (College Algebra through Modeling with Lab), MTH 1120 (Trigonometry), MTH 1210 (Intro to Statistics), MTH 1410 (Calculus I)**

MTH 1108-1109 is a Stretch Course and only counts as ONE of the required math courses for the BIO BS.

Students planning to take Calculus must take MTH 1108-1109, MTH 1110, or MTH 1111

Math Requirement (Specific to PA)

***** Students interested in a PA program will also need to take: 3 semester hours of Statistics*****

PSY 2310-3 - Introduction to Statistics for Social and Behavioral Sciences

OR

MTH 1210 -4 - Introduction to Statistics

Psychology Requirement (Specific to PA)

***** Students interested in a PA program will also need to take: 6 semester hours of Psychology*****

PSY 2210-3 - Psychology of Human Development

AND

PSY 3620-3 - Abnormal Psychology

General Studies Requirements (33 cr. total), please visit

<http://www.msudenver.edu/advising/facultystaff/generalstudiesrequirements/>

Total Credits (Minimum 120) _____

Total Upper Division Credits (Minimum 40 TOTAL) _____

What is your Minor? (required) _____

Pathway to Physician Assistant
