

**MEDICAL PROFESSIONS
ADVISEMENT**



**EAST TENNESSEE STATE
UNIVERSITY**

**PRE-PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT
GUIDE**

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

125,500

jobs in 2019

164,800

jobs projected in 2029

MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE

\$115,390

in 2019

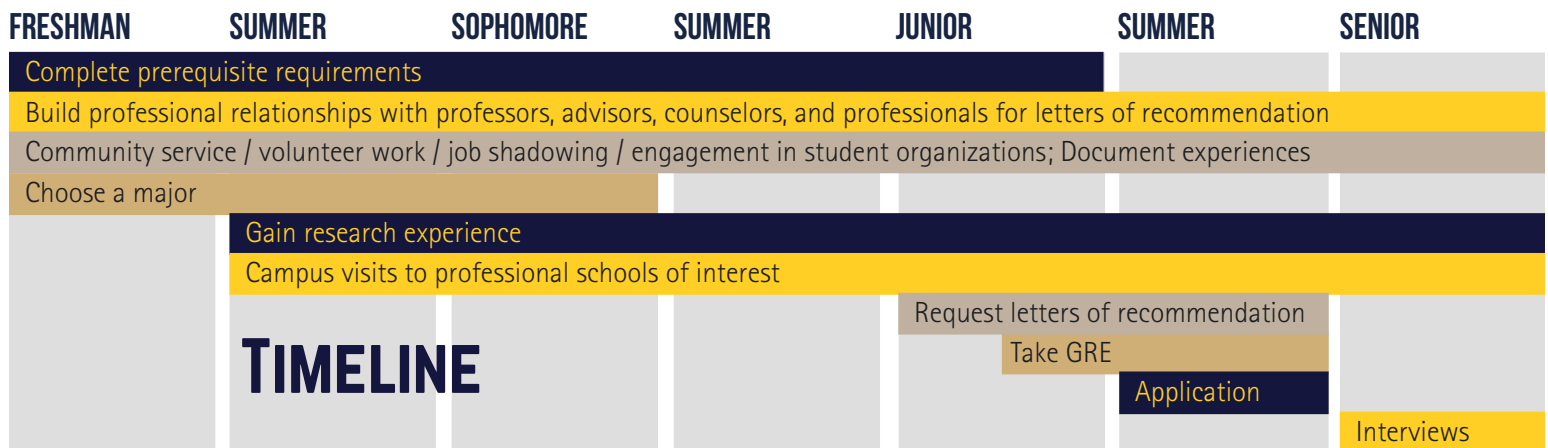
for more information, see the Bureau of Labor Statistics
<http://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistants.htm>

The Pre-Physician Assistant track at East Tennessee State University prepares students for application to a two-year Physician Assistant master's degree program. Completion of a bachelor's degree is required for acceptance to a physician assistant program.

CAREERS AS A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

Physician assistants, also known as PAs, practice medicine under the direction and supervision of licensed physicians. They are formally trained to examine patients, diagnose injuries and illnesses, and provide treatment.

Physician assistants work in all areas of medicine, including primary care and family medicine, emergency medicine, and psychiatry. The work of a physician assistant is largely determined by their specialties and the needs of their supervising physicians.



TIMELINE

ADVISEMENT

PRE-PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT IS NOT A MAJOR. Therefore, you must choose a major (and minor, if appropriate) which supports your life goals by the time you earn 60 credit hours. Students may major in their field of choice. Some schools, however, feel that students who major in Biology or Chemistry will be the most prepared for entry into physician assistant school. Students should speak with a Pre-Physician Assistant counselor before/when declaring a major.

We strongly recommend you meet with your MPA counselor and major advisor each term before registering for the following semester. Students who receive scholarships or participate in specialized ETSU programs (such as athletics or Honors College programs) must also seek advisement from those departments. Serious consequences can occur if students fail to meet with advisors (e.g., failure to graduate on time, missing appropriate courses to prepare for application, etc.).



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET INTO A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM?

GPA - 3.60

Average overall undergraduate GPA among students who matriculated in 2017-2018

SCIENCE GPA - 3.50

Average undergraduate science GPA

AVERAGE GRE SCORE

Quantitative 153.1
Verbal 153.1
Analytical 4.1

AVERAGE PATIENT CONTACT

2664 hours

CORE PREPARATION COURSES

Different programs may have varying prerequisite requirements. It is up to the student to research and ensure the required courses are completed before application to the preferred program(s) of interest.

Biology	8 hours	BIOL 1110/1111, BIOL 1120/1121
General Chemistry	8 hours	CHEM 1110/1111, CHEM 1120/1121
Organic Chemistry	10 hours	CHEM 2010/2011, CHEM 2020/2021
Biochemistry	Hours vary	Consult with your counselor
Microbiology	4 hours	HSCI 3320/3321
Anatomy and Physiology	8 hours	HSCI 3000 and HSCI 3020
English	6 hours	ENGL 1010, 1020
Communication	3 hours	SPCH 1300, 2300 or 2320
Psychology	6 hours	PSYC 1310, PSYC Elective
Medical Terminology	3 hours	COBH 2750
General Genetics	5 hours	BIOL 3100/3141

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED COURSES

Calculus	8 hours	MATH 1910 and 1920
Nutrition	3 hours	NTFD 2420
Immunology	3 hours	HSCI 3540
First Aid and Emergency Care#	3 hours	COBH 2030

#Some PA programs require students to be American Heart Association BLS certified before applying to their academic program. COBH 2030 First Aid and Emergency Care allows students to gain American Heart Association certification for CPR/BLS in a classroom setting. However, applicants may obtain certification individually through other American Heart Association certification programs.

SUGGESTED 2-YEAR SCHEDULE FOR PRE-PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDENTS

FRESHMAN

Fall

CHEM 1110/11
BIOL 1110/11
MATH 1530
ENGL 1010
PREH 1350

Spring

CHEM 1120/21
BIOL 1120/21
PSYC 1310
ENGL 1020
ELECTIVE

SOPHOMORE

Fall

CHEM 2010/11
HSCI 3000
SPCH*
PSYC ELECTIVE
COBH 2750

Spring

HSCI 3020
CHEM 2020/21
MATH ELECTIVE
ELECTIVE
ELECTIVE

Students should maintain a minimum of 17-19 credit hours per semester

* Consult your MPA counselor before choosing a speech course

THE APPLICATION PROCESS

Typically, students should begin the application process to physician assistant programs during their junior year of college. Most programs use the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). CASPA is a centralized application service that enables prospective students to apply to multiple programs. Applications are available in April; however, application deadlines vary from June through March. Please research your program choices closely to determine when applications are due. The website address is <https://portal.caspaonline.org>.

During the application process, most programs will require three letters of recommendation to be submitted, one of which must be from a doctor or physician assistant. Therefore, it is imperative that you establish a strong relationship with the person you are shadowing.

In addition, some programs require or recommend a university letter of recommendation. Please contact your MPA counselor for additional information.



MPA COUNSELOR CONTACT
Medical Professions
Advisement Office
423-439-5602

STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

WE HAVE 15+ PRE-HEALTH STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS FROM THE 250+ AT ETSU

PRE-PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDENT ORGANIZATION (PASO)

The Pre-Physician Assistant Student Organization provides an avenue for pre-physician assistant students to develop a community within their field of study and through interdisciplinary programs. Members have access to social events, school tours, shadowing/volunteer opportunities, and guest lectures.

ALPHA EPSILON DELTA HONOR SOCIETY (AED)

AED functions as a health pre-professional honor society encouraging excellence in scholarship. It emphasizes the importance of health education and promotes cooperation and contact among professionals.



Please visit Student Activities and Organizations to find an organization that best fits your goals.

etsucampuslabs.com/engage/organizations

Physician Assistant Education Association

www.paeaonline.org

American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)

www.aapa.org

WHAT CAN I BE DOING NOW TO STRENGTHEN MY APPLICATION TO PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAMS?

RELATED EXPERIENCE Students are encouraged to explore the physician assistant profession either through employment or as a volunteer. Physician assistant programs want to know that a student has worked in the field, observed what is involved, and still has the desire to continue in that profession. Students should gain as much experience as possible without sacrificing grades. Most physician assistant programs require extensive direct patient care experience prior to application. The typical requirement is around 500-1000 documented hours (or 6 months of full-time employment) of clinical experience. Many physician assistants have experience as certified nursing assistants, emergency medical technicians (EMTs), paramedics, or other allied health professions involving direct patient care before applying to a physician assistant program.

EXTRACURRICULARS The admissions committees of physician assistant programs are interested in seeing a range of extracurricular activities, especially those demanding a significant leadership role. Students should demonstrate their ability to balance full academic schedules with extracurricular involvement on and off campus and/or through employment opportunities. ETSU has many organizations that students can join. Students should visit the SAO or www.etsu.edu/students/sao/ for more information regarding extracurricular activities. It is not beneficial to simply join an organization; you must demonstrate leadership qualities!

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE Physician assistant programs are looking for candidates who demonstrate a commitment to community service. Students should seek volunteer projects that focus on giving back to the community.

ONLINE ETIQUETTE Please consider personal email addresses when corresponding with professional programs. First impressions are often based on correspondence; therefore email addresses should be appropriate for professional communication. Messages and images sent electronically are reflections of judgment and potential suitability for professional careers. Inappropriate behaviors shared on an accessible venue can be viewed and shared by anyone, possibly compromising your chances of admission to physician assistant school.

WATCH WHAT YOU POST!



EAST TENNESSEE STATE UNIVERSITY