

MASTER OF SCIENCE IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

Make a direct impact on the lives of patients as a physician assistant (PA) by obtaining a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies from Saint Joseph's University. Our 24-month MSPAS program prepares you to deliver a broad range of medical services as a physician assistant, including acute patient care, research, and education.

You'll become a leader and innovator in this fast-growing and rewarding medical profession through this physician assistant graduate program. You'll learn how to take a medical history, complete physical exams, interpret diagnostic tests, develop treatment plans, and provide health counseling. You'll also work with diverse patients of all ages in the Greater Philadelphia area and neighboring states through nine clinical rotations over 45 weeks during the second year. During the clinical year, you'll learn under the supervision of a physician or a licensed PA, putting your knowledge into practice.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

In accordance with ARC-PA Standards, the Program defined five areas in which students will be competent ("Competencies") prior to entering clinical practice. These Competencies will be assessed within the final four months of the Program to verify that each student meets the Program requirements.

At the completion of the Program, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate proficiency of the clinical and technical skills necessary to enter clinical practice with a focus on those skills beneficial to a family practice provider.
2. Integrate clinical reasoning skills, medical decision-making, and problem-solving abilities through all aspects of patient care. Formulate robust differential diagnoses and determine appropriate next steps, assessments, prognoses, and develop well-reasoned acute and chronic treatment plans.
3. Develop strong interpersonal and interprofessional communication skills with an emphasis on a person/patient-centered approach to medicine. Demonstrate competency in written, oral, and electronic forms of communication. Identify when a referral is indicated to physicians and other healthcare professionals as a member of an interprofessional patient-centered health care team.
4. Possess and apply a thorough biomedical, and clinical science knowledge along with a core medical knowledge via a person/patient-centered approach that focuses on the understanding, analyzing, and evaluation of acute and/or chronic diseases/conditions that occur throughout the lifespan; distinguishing the definitions, etiologies, risk factors, epidemiology, pathophysiology, signs and symptoms, diagnostics, treatments (pharmacotherapies and non-pharmacotherapies), assessments, plans, complications, health promotion/counseling, disease prevention/monitoring, and prognoses of these diseases/conditions that are essential for practice and patient care.
5. Demonstrate professional behaviors in all aspects of patient care and have a robust knowledge of cultural awareness and humility,

diversity equity and inclusion, social and physical determinants of health, bioethics, healthcare policy, reimbursement, coding/billing, end of life care, health policy and legal issues as they relate to patient care.

Academic Standing & Progression

Academic Standing

Reflecting the level of professionalism and expertise needed to practice as a physician assistant, Program students are held to the high academic standards needed to satisfy the Program Competencies.

At all times while enrolled in the Program, students must meet the following academic standards ("Academic Standards"):

- 3.00 cumulative GPA at the end of each semester;
- Passing each and every course, meaning:
 - Obtaining a grade of 70.00%; and
 - Completing any other criteria required for passing, as outlined in each individual course syllabus.

Failure to meet the above Academic Standards will result in the following:

- At the end of any semester, a student who does not achieve a cumulative 3.00 GPA or does not pass a course will be put on Academic Probation.
- A student who fails to achieve a 3.00 cumulative GPA and fails a course in the same semester will be dismissed from the Program.
- A student who fails more than one course in the same semester will be dismissed from the Program.
- A student already on Academic Probation who does not achieve a cumulative 3.00 or does not pass a course will be dismissed from the program.

In addition, as further described below, to complete and graduate from the Program, students must:

- Complete the Curricular Requirements in succession;
- Meet the Progression Requirements for each of the Didactic and Clinical Phases of the Program; and
- Complete all Graduation Requirements

Academic Grade Appeals

I. Grades on individual assessments within courses

SJU's Student Complaint Policy (<https://www.sju.edu/offices/academic-admin/registrar/resources/student-complaint-policy-contact-information/>) applies to course-related issues, other than final course grades (addressed below).

II. Final course grades

SJU's Grade Appeal (<https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/programs/#gradextxt>) policy applies to the final course grades in the Program.

Requirements for Progression within the Didactic Phase

In addition to maintaining the academic and curricular requirements above, progression requirements and deadlines for completion are outlined below.

To complete Year 1 of the Program and move on to the Clinical Phase, students must:

1. Pass each course in the Didactic Phase.
2. Successfully remediate any assessments or courses as described in the Remediation Policy, below.
3. Complete PACKRAT Examination (subject to Remediation)
4. Demonstrate the required skills necessary for clinical practice, as determined by the Program.
5. Actively participate in required advising activities.
6. Obtain BLS/ACLS certification.
7. Complete all performance improvement plans, as required by the Program.

Deadline for completion of all Didactic Phase requirements: the end of each semester in which they occur.

Requirements for Progression within the Clinical Phase

Requirements for Progression within the Clinical Phase

In addition to maintaining the academic and curricular requirements above, progression requirements and deadlines for completion are outlined below.

To complete Year 2 of the Program, students must:

1. Pass each course in the Clinical Phase.
2. Complete PAEA End of Rotation exams ("EOR exams") with a minimum grade of 65.00%.
3. Obtain an 80.00% (i) on all Preceptor Final Evaluations and (ii) in the professionalism section of each Preceptor Final Evaluation Form.
4. Successfully remediate any assessments or courses as described in the Remediation Policy, below.
5. Complete PACKRAT Examination (subject to Remediation)
6. Demonstrate the required skills necessary for clinical practice, as determined by the Program.
7. Actively participate in required advising activities.
8. Complete all performance improvement plans, as required by the Program.

Deadline for completion of all Clinical Phase requirements: the end of each semester in which they occur (unless subject to applicable Remediation or Academic Probation requirements).

Requirements for Graduation

Students must fulfill all Program and SJU requirements before being awarded a diploma. In addition to meeting the Program's Academic Standards, to fulfill Program graduation requirements, students must:

1. Have a cumulative 3.00 GPA
2. Complete the Didactic Phase progression requirements
3. Complete the Clinical Phase progression requirements

Deadline for completion of all graduation requirements: the end of each semester in which they occur (unless subject to applicable Remediation or Academic Probation requirements).

Deceleration Policy

Students must advance sequentially through the Program within their cohort. Students are allowed to join a later cohort, or "decelerate," only if they qualify for a leave under the SJU Temporary Separation policy. If temporary separation is approved by the University, a student may join a new cohort in a subsequent academic year, beginning at the start of the semester in which the temporary separation began. If the subsequent cohort is at capacity, the student will be offered the next available seat in a following cohort.

To support a successful return to the Program, a student will be required to pass a re-entry examination (cumulative of their completed coursework up to the date of temporary separation) as a condition of matriculating into a subsequent cohort. Therefore, it is strongly recommended that students commit to self-study and review of materials during their leave. The Program will provide reasonable guidance on a course of study to prepare the student for the re-entry examination until the student successfully passes the exam.

Requirements

| Code | Title | Hours |
|---------|--------------------------------|-------|
| PHA 501 | Advanced Human Anatomy | 4 |
| PHA 502 | Advanced Human Physiology | 3 |
| PHA 503 | History/Physical I | 3 |
| PHA 505 | PA History | 1 |
| PHA 508 | Human Pathophysiology | 3 |
| PHA 509 | Medical Sciences Foundations | 1 |
| PHA 507 | Psychosocial Medicine | 2 |
| PHA 522 | Hist/Phys II & Clinical Skills | 3 |
| PHA 523 | Clinical Medicine I | 5 |
| PHA 525 | Diagnostics I | 2 |
| PHA 528 | Pharmacological Therapy I | 3 |
| PHA 529 | Clinical Research & Evidence | 1 |
| PHA 547 | Women's Health | 2 |
| PHA 541 | Clinical Medicine II | 5 |
| PHA 542 | Diagnostics II | 2 |
| PHA 543 | Research Design & Methods | 1 |
| PHA 544 | Pediatrics | 2 |
| PHA 545 | Emergency Medicine | 3 |
| PHA 546 | Surgery | 2 |
| PHA 548 | Pharmacological Therapy II | 3 |
| PHA 601 | Professional Practice I | 1 |
| PHA 602 | Geriatrics I | 1 |
| PHA 603 | Professional Practice II | 1 |
| PHA 604 | Capstone | 2 |
| PHA 605 | Geriatrics II | 1 |
| PHA 606 | Professional Practice III | 1 |
| PHA 651 | Family Medicine Rotation I | 5 |
| PHA 652 | Family Medicine Rotation II | 5 |
| PHA 653 | Internal Med Clinical Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 654 | Pediatrics Clinical Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 655 | Women's Health Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 656 | Behav/Mental Health Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 657 | Surgery Rotation | 5 |

| | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| PHA 658 | Emergency Medicine Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 660 | Elective Rotation | 5 |
| Total Hours | | 103 |

Typical Course Sequence

| Course | Title | Hours |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| First Year | | |
| Fall | | |
| PHA 501 | Advanced Human Anatomy | 4 |
| PHA 502 | Advanced Human Physiology | 3 |
| PHA 503 | History/Physical I | 3 |
| PHA 505 | PA History | 1 |
| PHA 508 | Human Pathophysiology | 3 |
| PHA 509 | Medical Sciences Foundations | 1 |
| Hours | | 15 |
| Spring | | |
| PHA 507 | Psychosocial Medicine | 2 |
| PHA 522 | Hist/Phys II & Clinical Skills | 3 |
| PHA 523 | Clinical Medicine I | 5 |
| PHA 525 | Diagnostics I | 2 |
| PHA 528 | Pharmacological Therapy I | 3 |
| PHA 529 | Clinical Research & Evidence | 1 |
| PHA 547 | Women's Health | 2 |
| Hours | | 18 |
| Summer | | |
| PHA 541 | Clinical Medicine II | 5 |
| PHA 542 | Diagnostics II | 2 |
| PHA 548 | Pharmacological Therapy II | 3 |
| PHA 543 | Research Design & Methods | 1 |
| PHA 544 | Pediatrics | 2 |
| PHA 545 | Emergency Medicine | 3 |
| PHA 546 | Surgery | 2 |
| Hours | | 18 |
| Second Year | | |
| Fall | | |
| PHA 601 | Professional Practice I | 1 |
| PHA 602 | Geriatrics I | 1 |
| PHA 651 | Family Medicine Rotation I | 5 |
| PHA 652 | Family Medicine Rotation II | 5 |
| PHA 653 | Internal Med Clinical Rotation | 5 |
| Hours | | 17 |
| Spring | | |
| PHA 603 | Professional Practice II | 1 |
| PHA 605 | Geriatrics II | 1 |
| PHA 655 | Women's Health Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 656 | Behav/Mental Health Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 657 | Surgery Rotation | 5 |
| Hours | | 17 |
| Summer | | |
| PHA 604 | Capstone | 2 |
| PHA 606 | Professional Practice III | 1 |
| PHA 654 | Pediatrics Clinical Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 658 | Emergency Medicine Rotation | 5 |
| PHA 660 | Elective Rotation | 5 |
| Hours | | 18 |
| Total Hours | | 103 |