



COLLEGE OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

## MASTER'S DEGREE - PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

### Admission Requirements\* (*Accreditation Standards A3.12, A3.13*)

1. Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the College of Graduate and Professional Studies.
2. Applicants must complete and submit an application through CASPA (Centralized Application Service for PAs).
3. Applicants must have earned a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.
4. Applicants must complete all prerequisite coursework listed below, with a grade of C or better, by September 1 prior to the start of the program.\*\*
5. A minimum of 500 hours of healthcare experience is required.
6. Applicants for whom English is a second language must achieve the following TOEFL scores or higher: TOEFL – 550 (PBT), 79-80 (IBT), or 213 (CBT).
7. A cumulative GPA of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale is required. A strong science GPA is preferred. ISU uses the CASPA GPA calculations in the application evaluation. GPAs under 3.0 will not be considered.
8. Applicants must submit three letters of reference, including at least one academic and one professional reference.
9. Applicants must submit a personal goal statement explaining why they want to become a Physician Assistant.
10. Applicants must attest to meeting the Indiana State University PA program's technical standards prior to admission. (*Accreditation Standard A3.12e*)
11. Indiana State University's PA program does not accept advanced placement courses. (*Accreditation Standard A3.12c*)

Preference will be given to Indiana residents, Indiana State University (ISU) graduates, veterans or active-duty members of the United States Armed Forces, and applicants with a demonstrated interest in rural health medicine or serving medically underserved communities. Additional preference will be given to students who demonstrate strong community service involvement (greater than 200 hours). (*Accreditation Standard A3.12a*)

Beginning with the 2026–2027 CASPA application cycle, all required prerequisite coursework must be completed at:

- a regionally accredited institution located in the United States, or
- an accredited institution in English-speaking Canada.

Prerequisite coursework completed at institutions outside these locations will not fulfill admission requirements, even if evaluated by a credential evaluation service.

Beginning with the **2027–2028 CASPA application cycle**, applicants may have **no more than two outstanding prerequisite courses** at the time of application submission. Applications with more than two outstanding prerequisites will not meet the program's admissions requirements and will not be considered. Additionally, beginning with the 2027–2028 CASPA application cycle, certificates for prerequisite courses will not be accepted.

\*\*ISU does not currently enforce an expiration date for prerequisites. However, candidates whose prerequisite coursework is older than 10 years are strongly encouraged to consider refreshing. Required prerequisite coursework is as follows:

- Human Anatomy with lab (ISU equivalent: ATTR 210/210L, BIO 231/231L)
- Human Physiology with lab (ISU equivalent: BIO 241/241L or PE 220/220L)
- Microbiology with lab (ISU equivalent: BIO 274/274L or BIO 374/374L)
- Organic Chemistry I & II with labs (ISU equivalent: CHEM 351/351L and CHEM 352/352L)
- Statistics (ISU equivalent: HLTH 340 or MATH 241 or BIO 485)
- Medical Terminology (ISU equivalent: ATTR 225)
- Two upper-level (300-400) Biological Sciences (Examples of acceptable courses: Genetics, Virology, Immunology, Pathology, Biomedical Ethics, Molecular Biology, Cell Biology)

\*Applicants to the Physician Assistant program are considered on a competitive basis. Satisfaction of the basic admission requirements does not ensure acceptance into the program. Each application will be evaluated on its own merits. Evidence of academic potential, intellectual capacity, maturity, clarity of goals, knowledge of the healthcare system, and other qualities appropriate for graduate study will weigh strongly on the admission decision. Additional materials may be requested for examination prior to admission.

### Ranges of academic qualifications for accepted applicants:

#### Class of 2025

UG GPA Average: 3.55

UG Science GPA Average: 3.52

#### Class of 2027

UG GPA Average: 3.52

UG Science GPA Average: 3.40

#### Class of 2028

UG GPA Average: 3.50

UG Science GPA Average: 3.38



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#### ***Technical Standards for Admission, Retention, Promotion, and Graduation***

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) requires all Physician Assistant (PA) programs to publish technical standards for admission. "Technical Standards" are defined as "Nonacademic requirements for participation in an educational program or activity. They include physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and entry into the profession." All PA students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. Because these standards describe essential functions that students must demonstrate to meet the requirements of PA education, they are prerequisites for entrance, continuation, promotion, and graduation from the PA program. The use of an intermediary, a person trained to perform essential skills on behalf of the student, is not permitted. The following technical standards are adapted from the Association of American Medical Colleges guidelines.

It is the policy of Indiana State University to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a disability so they can meet these required technical standards with or without reasonable accommodations. Students who wish to request reasonable accommodations to meet any of the Technical Standards may request a reasonable accommodation by seeking assistance through the Accessibility Advocacy Resource Office (AARO). The student, AARO, and program leadership will work together to provide reasonable accommodation while still maintaining the technical standards. If a student is not able to meet the technical standards with reasonable accommodation, the student may be dismissed from the program. The safety and welfare of a patient shall never be put in jeopardy as a result of an effort to accommodate a disability. Medicine is a physically and mentally demanding profession, and medical providers are routinely asked to place the interests of their patients above their own. The ISU PA program has a responsibility to train PAs who can care for their patients.

Accepted students with a disability who believe they may require special accommodations should contact the Accessibility and Advocacy Resource Office (AARO) or by calling 812-237-3829, immediately upon accepting the offer of admission. Before matriculation, accepted students must attest in writing that they can meet the program's technical standards. Candidates for admission to and graduation from the Indiana State University PA Program must possess and attest to the following abilities:

#### **Observation**

The student must be able to observe required demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to anatomic dissection, microscopic studies, and patient demonstrations. A student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision, hearing, and somatic sensation. Students must also be able to interpret X-rays and other graphic images such as EKGs, with or without the use of corrective or assistive devices, and be able to adequately perform a physical exam including the use of diagnostic equipment such as a stethoscope, ophthalmoscope, and otoscope.

#### **Communication**

A student must be able to speak, hear, and observe patients to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive non-verbal communication. A student must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing in English. The student must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the healthcare team as well as university personnel and peers. Students must be able to relate effectively to patients while conveying compassion and empathy, recognize and respond promptly to emotional cues, such as sadness or agitation, and record observations and plans accurately and legibly in legal documents, such as the patient record.

#### **Motor Abilities**

A student must have sufficient motor function to carry out the basic laboratory techniques and to elicit information from

patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers, and perform dissection of a human cadaver. A student should be able to perform a complete physical examination (including pelvic and rectal examination); diagnostic procedures (e.g., venipuncture and basic laboratory tests (e.g., urinalysis). A student must maintain physical stamina to perform a variety of activities for long periods including sitting, standing, moving between rooms, and assisting in patient positioning and transport.

A student must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of treatment reasonably required of physician assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administering intravenous medication, applying pressure to stop bleeding, suturing simple wounds, assisting in surgical operations, and performing simple, general obstetrical and gynecological procedures. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch, vision, and hearing. Students must be able to lift a minimum weight of 25 lbs.

### Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative

Problem-solving, the critical skill demanded of physician assistants, requires that a student be able to learn, retrieve, analyze, sequence, organize, synthesize, and integrate information efficiently, and reason effectively. This also includes the ability to comprehend, retain, and integrate a large volume of material in a short period. In addition, a student should possess the ability to measure and calculate accurately, perceive three-dimensional relationships, and understand the spatial relationships of structures. This also requires students to acknowledge limitations of knowledge and/or performance to provide safe, effective patient care.

### Behavioral and Social Attributes

A student must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients and their family members, staff, and colleagues. Each student must be able to work effectively as a member of a healthcare team.

A student must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, collegiality, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education processes.

A student must appreciate and respect differences in individual, social, and cultural beliefs of fellow students, instructors, professional colleagues, and patients to reason morally and practice ethically.

A student must be self-reflective, recognize one's own personal and professional limitations, monitor and react appropriately to their own emotional needs, and be able to tolerate stress in the educational and clinical settings.

A student must be able to accept constructive criticism and respond maturely to modify behaviors as necessary.