

Director or Director of Clinical Education if patient safety or clinical performance is being jeopardized because a student is sleep-deprived or unable to prepare (e.g. read) for the day's cases.

## HOW MUCH CONTROL WILL I HAVE OVER THE SCHEDULING OF MY SUPERVISED CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCES?

The PA Department has hundreds of affiliations with clinicians and facilities in Western New York (i.e. greater Buffalo), as well as surrounding areas. If you have a specific request, or know of a specific clinician you would like to work with, the department will do its best to facilitate that request. Please keep in mind that the scheduling does lie in the hands of the PA Department, and without adequate information or notice from a requested site the Department will place you in an experience that best suits your situation. The majority of sites will be in Western New York with established clinicians and facilities. Travel to rural areas of New York that provide excellent clinical opportunities (and student housing) should be expected. The student is responsible for the cost of travel.

## WHAT IS THE COST OF THE THREE-YEAR PROGRAM?

Graduate students (i.e. MS) pay per credit (\$). The three-year program consists of 104 total degree credits. The estimated cost for the program is \$100,568 plus lab and student activity fees. Graduate students are eligible for graduate financial aid packages (i.e. loans). No scholarships are awarded. Please be advised that the College's Board of Trustees reviews tuition fees annually and may elect to make incremental increases. (See our college catalog for tuition and fees.) If advance standing is granted for Phi 321 Medical Ethics and NSC 310, tuition costs are reduced by 6 credits or approximately \$5,802.

Undergraduate students (i.e. BS/MS) pay per semester for the first four semesters of the PA Program and per credit for the final clinical year (i.e. 38 credits). The estimated cost for the three-year program is \$87,656 plus lab and student activity fees. BS/MS students are eligible for financial aid packages that typically include generous scholarships that continue through all 500 level PAS courses. Scholarships are not offered for students taking 600 level PAS courses. Please be advised that the College's Board of Trustees reviews tuition fees annually and may elect to make incremental increases. (See our college catalog for tuition and fees.)

The estimated undergraduate cost of attendance noted above does not include the tuition and fees required to complete four semesters of prerequisite coursework during the freshman and sophomore years of attendance. Estimated additional fees for equipment, supplies, dues and subscriptions could add up to between \$6,375 and \$9,850.

## CAN ANY OF THE PAS COURSES BE TRANSFERRED IN FROM ANOTHER INSTITUTION?

All PAS courses must be taken at Daemen College. No advance standing is granted.

A fantastic source of information regarding PAs, employment, and statistics, is the website of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). Visit the site at [www.aapa.org](http://www.aapa.org)

If you have any questions that have not been addressed here, please feel free to contact **Vincenette SanLorenzo, Director of PA Graduate Services, at (716) 839-8383** or [vsanlore@daemen.edu](mailto:vsanlore@daemen.edu), and she will be more than happy to answer any questions that you may have. Also, for more information regarding Daemen College in general, please visit [www.daemen.edu](http://www.daemen.edu)



# Physician Assistant Program

## Frequently Asked Questions

### WHEN DOES THE PA PROGRAM START?

A new class of 65 students begins each September (usually the day after Labor Day).

### HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO COMPLETE THE PA PROGRAM?

The Daemen College Physician Assistant Program, accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, is three years (33 months) in length. This includes six academic semesters and one full summer. For students admitted as freshmen to the College with a reserved seat in the three year PA Program, it will take four additional semesters, at a minimum, to complete all prerequisites before beginning Physician Assistant Studies courses. Therefore, the combined BS in Natural Science-Health Science concentration and MS in Physician Assistant Studies will require at least five years. Some students elect to complete the prerequisites in three years. A freshmen with advanced academic standing from AP courses and college credits earned in high school will not be admitted to the PA Program early.

*Co-requisite course requirements preclude part-time study at the 500 and 600 level.*

### CAN I BE A STUDENT-ATHLETE AND BE SUCCESSFUL IN THE PA PROGRAM?

Some students pursuing a career as a physician assistant have successfully balanced the demands of being a student-athlete; however, it realistically poses a significant time management challenge for most after the sophomore year. Historically, many student-athletes at Daemen College have not continued to participate once accepted to the PA Program in year three of the five-year BS/MS degree because of the academic rigor and extraordinarily high demands of the curriculum at the 500 and 600 level. The option to extend the BS/MS degree from a 2+3 (i.e. 5 years) to a 3+3 (i.e. 6 years) curriculum design can be discussed with your academic advisor, coach, and the athletic director, if desired.

If continued participation as a student-athlete is desired at the 500 and 600 level, please consult with your faculty advisor and coach about scheduling issues. The PA Program schedule and that of our clinical affiliates is always primary. Routine scheduling conflicts (i.e. regular season) will not be considered an appropriate rationale for "excused absences" from lectures, examinations, laboratories, fieldwork assignments, call-back events or supervised clinical practice experiences. The importance of attending scheduled PA Program activities must be emphasized and is expected of all students, including student-athletes.

### HOW COMPETITIVE IS ADMISSION INTO THE PROGRAM?

The College has one PA Program, but offers two degree tracks: BS/MS and MS. The combined class size is 65 students. The College first offers reserved seats in the PA Program to students accepted as freshmen. These students must complete four semesters of prerequisite coursework and meet academic eligibility standards before advancing to the PA Program. Seats in the PA Program left unfilled are then offered to graduate students. We estimate that approximately 15 to 25 seats will be available each year. Most successful applicants had credentials far in excess of the minimum requirements.

Due to the limited number of seats available for graduate students, the Admissions Committee generally only offers 50 to 60 interviews to the most qualified applicants based on a comprehensive review of the file.

## WHAT ARE THE ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS?

FOR THE THREE-YEAR MS DEGREE:

- Baccalaureate Degree (any discipline)
- Overall GPA of 3.0 or better (average of accepted students generally > 3.5)
- No more than two grades below C in any college level course
- 8 credits of Biology with lab (e.g., Zoology, Botany, General Biology I and II, A & P I and II)
- 8 credits of General Chemistry
- 3 credits of Calculus
- 9 credits of Psychology and/or Sociology
- GPA of 3.0 or better (average of accepted students generally >3.4) in the following four courses:
  - 4 credits of Anatomy including lab, 300 level
  - 4 credits of Physiology including lab, 300 level
  - 4 credits of Microbiology including lab, 300 level
  - 4 credits of Organic Chemistry or Biochemistry including lab, 300 level
- 120 hours of direct patient contact experience (see definition at bottom of page)
- We do not require the GRE
- TOEFL, If applicable: Applicants whose first language is not English, must demonstrate their proficiency in the English language by taking the TOEFL iBT® test. The test scores must be submitted directly to CASPA and the full report must be received by the Daemen PA department by January 1.
  - \* Refer to [daemen.edu/physicianassistant](https://daemen.edu/physicianassistant) for minimum score requirement details

Applicants are **strongly** encouraged to complete at least 8 credits of 300 level or higher science coursework within 12 months of entering the physician assistant program. All courses used to calculate the science GPA must have been completed within the past 5 years.

### **For the combined five-year BS in Natural Science-Health Science concentration and MS in Physician Assistant Studies Degree:**

The comprehensive evaluation of freshmen applicants includes, but is not limited to, Grade Point Average (GPA), standardized test scores (SAT/ACT), rank in class, New York State Regents Examination Scores or equivalent, letters of recommendation, personal essay, and review of high school transcripts. It is expected that all successful freshmen applicants will have a record of academic performance that clearly demonstrates strong math and science preparation. Most successful applicants have a SAT score >1170 (avg. 1150), GPA > 94% (minimum 90%). It is preferred that students will have embarked on a challenging high school curriculum that included Advanced Placement (AP), Honors, and/or college credit coursework.

Faculty interview required. Students must demonstrate knowledge of the profession and demonstrate superior interpersonal communication skills.

Upon acceptance to the College, students must complete the following prerequisites and meet published academic requirements to be eligible to matriculate in the Physician Assistant Program. A student is immediately disqualified for the PA Program if he or she fails to meet the academic requirements.

All 300-level courses used to calculate the GPA must be completed at Daemen College and may not be transferred or substituted. A student may, if necessary, repeat no more than two of these courses to achieve the grade point average of 3.00. A student is immediately disqualified for the PA Program if the GPA requirement is not met. If a course that must be repeated is not offered in a term (e.g. summer), a student may need to decelerate and enter the following class.

## WHAT CAN BE CONSIDERED “DIRECT PATIENT CONTACT”?

The PA Program's definition of “direct patient contact” is fairly straightforward. It can be either paid or volunteer work, including shadowing, in which you were exposed to patients in one way or another. The goal of this prerequisite is to be assured that you have been exposed to both the good and the bad aspects of healthcare, and the PA profession remains something you choose to pursue. Direct patient care with advanced levels of responsibility are encouraged, recommended, and highly valued by the Admissions Committee.

## HOW DO I APPLY TO DAEMEN COLLEGE AS A GRADUATE STUDENT?

The Physician Assistant Department at Daemen College participates in an online application service called CASPA (Central Application Service for Physician Assistants). You will visit <https://caspa.liasoncas.com> and begin an application electronically. All extraneous materials, i.e. reference letters, transcripts, will be sent directly to CASPA.

CASPA acts almost as a collection agency; once CASPA has received your complete online application, your three letters of reference, and all of your official transcripts, they will then forward an application packet on to each school that you have designated as a recipient.

Please note that the CASPA application process is a lengthy one, and that an application will not be considered complete until all necessary materials are received by CASPA. Once an application is complete, it takes CASPA four to six weeks to process the application and send it to the designated schools. We highly recommend that you submit your application to CASPA by December 1st due to their high volume of applications and necessary processing time.

The submission deadline to CASPA for Daemen College is January 15th of each year. Any completed applications returned to Daemen College from CASPA after March 15th may not be considered for an interview by our Admissions Committee.

## HOW DO I APPLY TO THE BS/MS DEGREE TRACK?

First year students interested in the BS in Natural Science-Health Science concentration and MS in Physician Assistant Studies must apply directly to the Admissions Office of the College. The PA Program does not accept transfer applications. Transfer applicants are encouraged to complete a BS or BA degree and then apply to the MS program.

## WHAT HAPPENS ONCE I HAVE COMPLETED MY APPLICATION?

Once CASPA or the Admissions Office has processed your application, it will be reviewed and considered for an interview. You should receive contact within a few weeks of receiving your application, simply to let you know that your application was in fact received, and what stage of the process it is in. If you have satisfied all the necessary prerequisites, you will be placed in a pool of applicants to be considered for an interview. The PA Department traditionally conducts two sets of interviews. Freshmen applicants to the BS/MS program are interviewed between October and January. Applicants to the MS program are interviewed in the Spring.

Once you have completed an interview, the timeframe for an admission decision varies greatly. Most successful applicants will be notified within two weeks. However, for applicants placed on the waiting list, a decision may come as late as August.

## WHAT DOES A TYPICAL SCHEDULE OF CLASSES LOOK LIKE WITHIN THE PA PROGRAM?

Daemen College utilizes both core faculty and highly qualified clinicians (MD, DO, PA) from the local medical community to provide a rewarding, yet extremely rigorous PA education. Due to this fact, PA students do not follow a traditional 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. schedule. More often than not, the classes that the core faculty teach will be in the mornings and afternoons. Local clinicians offer courses in the afternoon and early evening. Schedules vary day to day, week to week, and semester to semester. However, the curriculum is highly synchronized and coordinated. For example, as students learn about myocardial infarctions in clinical medicine, they are introduced to echocardiograms, EKGs, cardiac pharmacology, and smoking cessation in other courses.

## IS IT ACCEPTABLE TO WORK WHILE IN THE PA PROGRAM?

Some students attempt to work part-time while enrolled in the program. Full-time employment is an unreasonable expectation. In fact, 95% of current PA students report working 10 hours or less per week with the majority of students not working at all.

Any employment during the first semester of the program and during the clinical phase is very problematic. If employment is essential, please consult with your faculty advisor about scheduling issues. The PA Department Chair must be informed in writing of the work schedule each semester.

Employment is not considered an appropriate rationale for “excused absences.” The PA Program schedule and that of four clinical affiliates is always primary. A student may be removed from a supervised clinical practice experience, at the discretion of the Program