

*Disclaimer: The questions and answers provided on this page may be updated without notice. Continue to check this page frequently for additions, subtractions and changes. **Last updated 11/19/18***

General

Is the PA Program at NAU accredited?

Answer: The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) has granted Accreditation – Continued status to the Northern Arizona University Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Northern Arizona University. Accreditation – Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA Standards. Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the Standards. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be September 2025. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation Standards and ARC-PA policy.

Where is the program offered?

Answer: The program is housed at the new Phoenix Biomedical Campus in downtown Phoenix, between 5th and 7th Streets and Van Buren Street. This is also the location of the University of Arizona College of Medicine – Phoenix.

Is the program offered on the Flagstaff campus? Are there any plans to offer the program on the Flagstaff campus?

Answer: The program is not offered nor anticipated that the program will be offered in Flagstaff.

Is the program offered with any part-time options?

Answer: No, the program is only offered on a full-time basis.

Is the program offered online?

Answer: No, the program is only offered on campus in downtown Phoenix. Live attendance is required. The program does not offer optional attendance to on campus coursework.

What degree is granted?

Answer: Upon successful completion of program requirements, graduates are awarded Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) degree and a certificate of completion.

What are the admission requirements for the program?

Answer: The admission requirements can be viewed at: <https://in.nau.edu/physician-assistant/admission/>.

Is the application process through CASPA?

Answer: Yes, the application process is through the CASPA system. In addition, there is an NAU Graduate College application that must be completed and submitted by the September 1 deadline as well.

When and how can I apply, and when is the application due?

Answer: CASPA opens June 1 and closes September 1 of every year. The NAU Graduate application will be available during this time as well. All applications to CASPA must be “verified” by CASPA no later than December 1. Applicants who are verified early will be reviewed on a first come first served basis. Applicants verified close to and after December 1 may not be considered if all 50 seats are already filled. Please consult with CASPA regarding verification policies and timelines.

What degree do I need to apply?

Answer: The program accepts any Bachelor's degree, however, applicants with science degrees; i.e., biological sciences and chemistry, are preferable.

When will you make decisions about who is accepted into the program?

Answer: Some applicants will be informed of their admission status shortly after their interview, and others will be notified at the end of the interview process, which will likely occur sometime in December or January.

How many students apply and how many will be accepted into the program?

Answer: The NAU PA program receives over 2000 applications per year. The applicant pool is different every year. In addition, the pool has grown in number every year. Currently, only 50 seats are available for new students.

Will there be a wait list for the program?

Answer: Yes, in addition to the 50 individuals who will be selected for admission, other qualified applicants will be wait-listed (alternate status) in the event that positions in the class become available.

How do I make an appointment to meet with a program advisor?

Answer: Due to the volume of inquires we receive, we are not able to schedule individual appointments in most cases. However, we do address telephone and email inquiries as quickly as we can. We do not offer transcript review. Email inquiries are preferred. Our email address for inquiries is PAProg@nau.edu. Additionally, tours of the Health Sciences Education Building are conducted twice a month (see schedule: <http://nau.edu/chhs/phoenix-biomedical-campus/>). Time permitting, questions will be answered both during and after the tours. To sign up for a tour, please call 602-827-2450.

Experience

Does the program require direct patient care experience?

Answer: Direct patient care experience is not required; however, it is highly recommended.

Does the program prefer paid over volunteer health care experience?

Answer: The program does not prefer paid over volunteer health care experience. Both are considered valuable.

What type(s) of health care experience are recommended to fulfill the admission requirement of 500 hours?

Answer: High quality health care experience might include, but are not limited to, the following: medical assistant, PT, RT, OT, MSW, EMT, LPN, chiropractor, RN, CNA, nurse's aide, medic or corpsman, paramedic, PharmD, OD, NP, foreign medical graduate, DVM, DPM, medical lab technician, medical technologist, athletic trainer, audiologist, exercise physiologist, radiology technician, phlebotomist, optometry technician, registered dietician, patient care assistant, and PT assistant. Additional acceptable experience might include the following: medical scribe, research technician, lab-based researcher volunteering at marathons, blood donor clinics, and other non-medical work in waiting room or other medical setting.

Is PA shadowing required for admission?

Answer: No, PA shadowing is not required for admission; however, shadowing a PA can provide some valuable insights about the profession. It can also be counted as health care experience. Some applicants also ask PAs whom they shadow to write letters of reference/recommendation. Applicants with PA shadowing and/or letters from PAs are not given any advantage in the admissions process.

Does the program require community service and/or extracurricular activities?

Answer: Although there is no minimum required, the admissions committee highly recommends community service and extracurricular activities. The most successful applicants have many hours of involvement.

Prerequisites

When do prerequisite courses need to be completed?

Answer: All prerequisite courses must be completed, graded, and reported to CASPA at the time of application. The Bachelor's degree does not need to be completed at the time of application; however, it must be completed by the time of matriculation (enrollment) into the PA program.

What science courses can I take at my institution to satisfy the prerequisites and the additional science courses?

Answer: Applicants who attend Arizona institutions should consult their individual institution prerequisite course list for course preferences. <https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2018/11/Arizona-Prerequisite-Checklist-Book-NAU-PASP-copy.pdf>

Applicants with coursework from other states should consult our General Prerequisite Course List for more specific recommendations. <https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2018/11/Arizona-Prerequisite-Checklist-Book-NAU-PASP-copy.pdf>

Does the program require laboratory courses?

Answer: Although the program has no requirement for any specific laboratory experience, it is expected and preferred that applicants have documented laboratory experience in the biological sciences and chemistry on their course transcripts.

How do I know if the statistics course I take will be acceptable?

Answer: Any introductory course in statistics will fulfill the requirement, and should include topics such as statistics terms, analytical statistics, measurement of the mean and variance, null hypothesis, p-values, confidence intervals, and probability. Applicants who attend Arizona institutions should consult their individual institution checklist for statistics course options in our admissions section here. <https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2018/11/Arizona-Prerequisite-Checklist-Book-NAU-PASP-copy.pdf>

Will courses from other colleges and universities be accepted to meet the pre-requisites?

Answer: Yes, prerequisite courses may be taken at any US regionally accredited school, including online programs.

Will you accept advanced placement (AP) credits and/or credit by examination for any prerequisite coursework?

Answer: Yes, AP and/or credit by examination is accepted for prerequisite coursework. All AP and credit by exam credits must be documented on official transcripts.

Will you accept concurrent enrollment courses taken while in high school?

Answer: Yes and no. Concurrent enrollment coursework must be included as part of the official transcript in order to be considered for prerequisite completion. Concurrent enrollment coursework documented only on high school transcripts only will not be accepted.

Does the program accept calculus for the statistics prerequisite?

Answer: No

Does the program accept online courses?

Answer: Yes, as long as they are from an accredited institution and documented on the official transcript.

Does the program accept online lab courses?

Answer: Yes, as long as they are from an accredited institution. At least one live, hands-on laboratory course is preferred.

Do prerequisites have to be taken within a certain time frame? Do they expire?

Answer: No, applicants can use credit for prerequisites taken at any time in the past. However, applicants should ensure that at least 9 credits of science coursework are taken in the last 5 years. The 9 credits do NOT have to be sciences listed in the prerequisites.

Does the program accept community college coursework?

Answer: Yes, as long as the community college is accredited and the coursework is documented officially on a transcript.

Does the program accept prerequisite science courses taken for non-science majors?

Answer: No. Applicants who attend Arizona institutions should consult their individual institution prerequisite course list for course preferences. <https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2018/11/Arizona-Prerequisite-Checklist-Book-NAU-PASP-copy.pdf>

Applicants with coursework from other states should consult our General Prerequisite Course List for more specific recommendations. <https://in.nau.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/114/2018/11/Arizona-Prerequisite-Checklist-Book-NAU-PASP-copy.pdf>

Does the program "waive" any prerequisites?

Answer: No

I attended medical school in the USA. Will the program give me credit for those courses?

Answer: No.

I attended PA school at another PA program but did not complete the program. Can I apply to NAU? Will the program give me credit for any of those courses?

Answer: Yes. You may apply to the PA program at NAU. Admission decisions are based on competitive application with the overall applicant pool. No special preference is given. In the event an applicant with prior PA coursework is invited to join the program, the student will not be given credit for any PA coursework taken at other institutions.

I took coursework at a school that uses quarter/trimester credits instead of semester credits. How do I know if I have enough “semester” credit hours to meet NAU’s prerequisite requirements?

Answer: To convert quarter/trimester credits to semester credits, multiply the number of quarter/trimester credits by 0.667. For example, a course worth 5 quarter/trimester credits is worth 3.34 semester credits which is generally rounded to 3 semester credit hours.

Do all prerequisites need to be completed and graded by the September 1 deadline?

Answer: Yes. Prerequisite courses cannot be “in progress” past the September 1 deadline. Applicants indicating courses as “in progress” on the CASPA application prior to the September 1 deadline are responsible for notifying the program of course completion.

I will be finished with my prerequisites before the application deadline (September 1), but I am submitting my CASPA application before I finish the course(s). Can I still apply?

Answer: Yes, you can still apply. However, the coursework must be finished, graded, and appear on the official transcript by the September 1 deadline. If an applicant submitted the CASPA application before finishing the prerequisite coursework, it is the applicant’s responsibility to follow-up with the program to be considered further. The program will not seek out applicants who have prerequisite courses missing and/or marked “in progress” on CASPA.

Does the program accept “continuing/professional education” courses to satisfy the prerequisites?

Answer: No. All coursework must be official coursework taken at a college and/or university. Coursework must be part of the official catalog of course offerings at an educational institution. Courses and trainings offered for the purposes of professional and career development are not considered for the satisfaction of PA program prerequisites.

Transcripts

Do I have to submit official transcripts?

Answer: Yes, to CASPA (upon application) and to NAU (upon acceptance).

Do I send transcripts to the PA program?

Answer: No, unless the applicant is submitting updated transcripts for consideration or as requested by the program.

Do you accept unofficial transcripts?

Answer: No, unless otherwise requested by the PA program.

Do I need to submit transcripts from every school I attended even though I transferred coursework?

Answer: Yes. Transcripts from all schools attended are required regardless of transfer coursework. Consult CASPA policy for further details.

I have a degree from the USA and a degree from a foreign country. Do I need to submit my foreign transcripts?

Answer: Yes. All transcripts from all schools attended are required. Foreign transcript evaluation (WES/ECE) may not be required for foreign transcripts for applicants with degrees from the USA although the admissions committee may still ask for an official evaluation from WES/ECE. Applicants using foreign coursework to satisfy prerequisite and/or minimum Bachelor’s degree or higher requirements must submit WES/ECE evaluations along with the foreign transcripts.

I attended another professional graduate school (medical school, dental school, etc.) but did not complete the degree. My Bachelor's degree is complete. Do I still have to submit the incomplete graduate school coursework transcript?

Answer: Yes. All transcripts from all schools attended are required. Applicants with histories of failure to complete professional graduate degrees should be prepared to discuss circumstances in detail that contributed to prior degree incompleteness. Applicants who fail to report prior degree work may be considered in breach of the CASPA Code of Conduct.

My transcript shows academic probation and/or academic dismissal. Will I still be considered for admission?

Answer: Yes; however, applicants must be prepared to discuss either and/or both in detail.

Do I need to submit high school transcripts?

Answer: High school transcripts are not required nor accepted. In some cases, high school transcripts may be requested to satisfy federal grant requirements for student scholarships, etc. Matriculants will be notified when and if they are necessary.

GPA

What is the minimum GPA required for admission?

Answer: The minimum GPA for admission is a 3.0 GPA on overall coursework (all courses, all schools, all transcripts) and a 3.0 GPA on all science coursework. Courses considered "science" are listed on the CASPA website. Please consult the CASPA website for details.

How are GPAs calculated?

Answer: GPAs are calculated by CASPA from all coursework submitted by the applicant. NAU does not recalculate nor correct CASPA GPA calculations. Applicants should consult ([CASPA link](#)) for detailed information on GPA calculation.

Is the minimum 3.0 GPA required for all science courses taken or just the PA Program prerequisites?

Answer: The most qualified candidates will have a cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 for all college level science coursework taken at all institutions. Applicants should consult ([CASPA link](#)) for detailed information about science GPA calculation.

Does the program use the "most recent" grade for a repeated course to "replace" older grades?

Answer: The program follows CASPA policy. CASPA includes ALL grades for ALL courses taken regardless of repetition.

What does the program look for on transcripts?

Answer: Besides successful course completion with competitive grades, the program looks for trends in performance, drops/withdrawals, repeats, and academic rigor.

How many semester credit hours should I be taking per semester?

Answer: The most competitive applicants take 15+ semester credit hours per semester. The least competitive applicants take <9 semester credit hours per semester.

I worked full-time while I was enrolled in courses. I could not take 15 hours every semester. Does the program take working into consideration?

Answer: Yes, but it is crucial for applicants to document their work and course loads in CASPA. This can also be discussed during admissions interviews if invited.

I attended a quarter/trimester school. How do I convert my courses to meet NAU's requirements?

Answer: The CASPA system will automatically convert quarter hours to semester hours (quarter hour x 0.667) if quarters are reported on the transcript. CASPA verifiers do not manually convert hours. The conversion of quarter hours to semester hours only occurs in the GPA section of the application. Conversion is not done on the Coursework section of the application.

Foreign Applicants

I have a degree from the USA and a degree from a foreign country. Do I need to submit my foreign transcripts?

Answer: Yes. All transcripts from all schools attended are required. Foreign transcript evaluation (WES/ECE) may not be required for foreign transcripts for applicants with degrees from the USA although the admissions committee may still ask for an official evaluation from WES/ECE. Applicants using foreign coursework to satisfy prerequisite and/or minimum Bachelor's degree or higher requirements must submit WES/ECE evaluations along with the foreign transcripts.

Does the program accept foreign medical graduates?

Answer: Yes, provided all prerequisites have been completed in an accredited US institution and the applicant meets all other minimum course requirements.

Does the program accept any other foreign transcript evaluations besides WES/ECE?

Answer: No. Only WES/ECE are accepted. WES is preferred by CASPA and NAU PASP.

Can foreign medical graduates get advanced placement for coursework?

Answer: No. Advanced placement is not offered for any PASP coursework for any individual for any reason.

Can the program review my foreign credentials to determine if I am qualified to apply?

Answer: Due to the volume of inquires we receive, we are not able to schedule individual appointments in most cases. However, we do address telephone and email inquiries as quickly as we can. We do not offer transcript review. Email inquiries are preferred. Our email address for inquiries is PAProg@nau.edu. Additionally, tours of the Health Sciences Education Building are conducted twice a month (see schedule: <http://nau.edu/chhs/phoenix-biomedical-campus/>). Time permitting, questions will be answered both during and after the tours. To sign up for a tour, please call 602-827-2450.

Entrance Examinations

Does the program require the GRE?

Answer: Yes

Can GRE scores be waived?

Answer: No. GRE scores are required for admission.

Will you accept the MCAT instead of the GRE for admission purposes?

Answer: No. Only the GRE is accepted.

Must the GRE scores be submitted to CASPA at the same time as the application or can they come in later?

Answer: They must be submitted at the time of application. The official score report must be sent to CASPA per instructions below.

What code do I use to send my GRE scores directly to CASPA?

Only CASPA-specific program codes will allow official GRE scores to be submitted directly into the CASPA application. ETS will list institution and program specific GRE codes in its online and printed code publications, and in the computer-based test package. All CASPA-specific codes will also be posted in the Instruction & FAQ section on the CASPA applicant portal

How long will it take ETS to send my GRE scores to CASPA?

ETS will send new GRE scores to CASPA up to twice a week. Scores are reported 10 to 15 days after taking the computer-based GRE revised General Test.

How do I verify my GRE scores have been sent to the institution that I designated?

The best way to verify that scores have been sent is to log into the myGRE account at www.ets.org/mygre and view all scores and score reports that were processed. Applicants can also log into their application accounts at www.caspaonline.org or the CASPA mobile application

portal to check if official test scores have been received. Applicants should check that the name on the application matches the name entered in ETS.

Whom should I contact if I have additional questions?

For questions about GRE scores or score reporting, contact ETS at GREtests@ets.org or the Educators' help Line at 609-683-2002. CASPA related questions can be directed to customer service at 617-612-2080.

How do I prepare for the GRE?

Answer: NAU offers GRE Test Prep Courses – information can be found at nau.edu/testprep. Otherwise, there are study guides available in print and prep courses available online to help prepare.

What GRE score(s) are required for admission?

Answer: The PA program has not set a specific GRE score requirement for admission. However, a composite (verbal/quantitative) score ≥ 284 is desirable in the most competitive applicants.

Which section(s) of the GRE are considered for admission?

Answer: The PA program examines scores for the verbal and quantitative sections of the GRE.

I took the GRE over 5 years ago. Will you accept my scores?

Answer: Yes and no. ETS does not send out score reports older than 5 years. GRE scores taken within the last 5 years should be submitted through CASPA using the instructions above. If the applicant has an official score report older than 5 years in their possession that can be submitted directly to the PA program, it will be accepted provided that the report is official and untampered. Applicants are responsible for notifying the PA program that a GRE score report older than 5 years will be submitted directly. The PA program will not seek out applicants who have not submitted GRE scores. Applicants who do not submit GRE scores will not be considered for admission.

Letters of Reference

Are letters of reference required to apply?

Answer: Yes. Three letters of reference are required to apply.

How do I submit my letters of reference?

Answer: Letters are accepted through the CASPA system only. Please follow CASPA instructions for submission.

I need to submit a written and/or extra letter of recommendation? How do I submit it? Who do I send it to?

Answer: Letters of reference submitted outside of the CASPA system cannot be used in the admissions process. Applicants are welcome to send them directly to our program office in Phoenix for inclusion in the admissions file for reference only.

Who can write letters of reference for me?

Answer: Anyone the applicant chooses. The program prefers letters from health care professionals applicants have shadowed or worked with, employers/supervisors and professors. Letters from friends and family are discouraged.

What should the letters of reference contain?

Answer: The letters of reference are standard format from CASPA. Please follow CASPA instructions for letters of reference.

The CASPA system is asking me to "waive" my right to see the letters of reference. What should I answer?

Answer: It's up to the applicant, but the standard is to waive the right to see them. Many people, especially professors, will not write letters of recommendation without a waiver on file with CASPA.

I sent requests to all three of my references, but only two returned the letters to CASPA. The deadline has passed. What should I do?

Answer: Ultimately, it is the applicant's responsibility to make sure the entire application/submission process is complete. The program does not make exceptions for lack of responsibility on the part of the applicant. Applicants should communicate with CASPA customer service to resolve any technological issues affecting letters of reference.

Interviews

Will an interview be required? If so, when will it occur?

Answer: Interview day activities are required for admissions decisions. The most qualified candidates will be invited for in-person, on campus interviews and activities. Interview activity dates are set to begin in September/October and run through December.

What is the purpose of the admissions interview?

Answer: Every PA program has a different purpose for interviewing applicants. At NAU, the PA program uses the interview process as a means to provide a more qualitative and holistic approach to the admissions process. Apart from reviewing the entire CASPA application as a whole, the program considers the interview process a vital part of the decision-making process. Applicants have the opportunity to be advocates for themselves through activities designed to provide rich description of their

purpose and process for applying to NAU. The interview day is run over an entire day. It is as much of an opportunity for applicants to get to know the program as it is for program to get to know its applicants.

How will I know if I am invited for interview activities?

Answer: All invited applicants will be notified by email. The email used to contact all applicants is the preferred email address entered into the CASPA application. It is the applicant's responsibility to keep the email address current on CASPA and to check email correspondence in a timely manner. All correspondence from the PA program to the applicant is strictly documented to ensure both program and applicant are well informed.

How are applicants selected for interviews?

Answer: Each applicant's file is reviewed in detail. Those with the best combination of more favorable characteristics are invited.

Can I interview online, by phone, or on Skype/FaceTime/Zoom from a distance?

Answer: No. All interview activities must be completed in-person and on campus.

How many interview invitations are sent out?

Answer: The number of invitations varies every year. In general, the PA program prefers to interview at least three applicants for every position in the new class.

Fellow applicants that also applied to NAU received interview invitations. I did not get an invite when they did. Should I assume I will not receive an interview?

Answer: Interview day invitations are unlikely to be sent after December 1. Most invitations are sent between September 1 and December 1. Applicants who have not received a response from the program by December 1 should contact the program at PAprog@nau.edu.

How can I prepare for my interview?

Answer: Search online for interview tips and techniques. Dress in business formal attire. Research as much as you can about NAU's PA program. Applicants are expected to be familiar with the curriculum and the mission of the program.

How much does the interview count toward the admissions decision?

Answer: This may vary from year to year and is not considered public information; however, the interview is a crucial part of the admissions process. Applicants should put their "best foot forward" and sell themselves accordingly.

What happens during the interview day? What activities can I expect?

Answer: Interview day activities consist of exercises and experiences designed for the program to get to know each applicant and for each applicant to get to know the program. Examples of activities include, but are not limited to, information sessions, campus tours, individual and group interviews, written and oral assessments, and interaction with existing PA students.

I was invited for an interview and assigned a date. Can I attend the interview on a different date?

Answer: Yes and no. Logistics for scheduling interviews can be complicated and difficult to change. Although we prefer not to make changes to interview day schedules, we understand sometimes there may be some extenuating circumstances. Applicants with interview invitations having difficulty attending on the assigned date should communicate with the program as soon as possible to inquire whether any changes can be made. Unfortunately, changes requested that affect the last few dates for interviews are rarely able to be accommodated.

Will I have to interview in Flagstaff also or just in Phoenix?

Answer: The entire interview day process occurs in our Phoenix Biomedical Campus in downtown Phoenix, Arizona.

Can I bring my kid(s), family member(s), significant other, spouse with me on interview day?

Answer: No. Security on the Phoenix Biomedical Campus is a strict process requiring advanced notice. Applicants will be busy most of the day and will most likely not have much time to devote to loved ones also attending. Applicants may utilize the Arizona Center (outdoor mall) across the street to keep guests nearby. The Arizona Center has several popular restaurants and a large movie theater to keep everyone entertained during the full day process. The PA program provides each applicant with lunch with an opportunity to meet and talk to existing PA students. Most applicants will not want to miss this opportunity either.

Will I be able to meet current PA students to ask them questions about the program?

Answer: Yes. The program makes every effort to include a meet and greet with PA students who have volunteered to be ambassadors during the lunch hour. Due to extenuating scheduling circumstances, it is sometimes difficult to recruit a large number of PA students from both classes. Generally, PA students in their first year (didactic) participate as ambassadors. Clinical year (second year) students are difficult to recruit due to complex off campus scheduling and varied geographic locations.

Acceptance

How many applicants are accepted?

Answer: Currently, the PA program accepts 50 new students per year.

Does NAU have “rolling” admissions?

Answer: Yes and no. The PA program utilizes a “quasi-rolling” process to make admissions decisions.

Is there a difference between waitlist and alternate status?

Answer: Yes. The admissions committee follows a quasi-rolling process to make admissions decisions. A small number of applicants are either accepted or denied after each interview day. The rest (majority) are “waitlisted” for further review at a later time in the admissions cycle pending further review by admissions committee members. Once the admissions committee has completed the review process, an applicant’s status is changed to “offered, denied or alternate.” Alternate status is changed to “offered” only when the applicant has been invited to join the incoming class of 50 students of any one of the 50 “offered” applicants turns down the offer.

How many alternates are selected?

Answer: This number can vary from year to year and is not considered public information. The PA program prefers to select between 10 – 20 alternates.

Is the alternate list ranked in order of preference?

Answer: Yes, the alternate list is ranked in order of preference.

Will the PA program tell me what my alternate rank is in order to assess my admissions chances?

Answer: Yes, all alternates are given their rank order at the time of status assignment.

I have been waitlisted pending further review. Can I find out why? Is there anything I can do to help the admissions committee make a decision?

Answer: No. The admissions committee reserves the ability to make the best decision possible by utilizing as much of the data gathered from the admissions process. Our admissions professionals will communicate with waitlisted applicants when a decision has been made.

May I contact members of the PA faculty and/or admissions committee regarding my application?

Answer: Generally, no. Applicants should refrain from contacting faculty and admissions committee members until the admissions process has been completed. If there is an extenuating circumstance with some urgency that requires the immediate attention of our program, please contact our admissions staff by phone at (602) 827-2450 as soon as possible. Our admissions staff will determine next steps on an individual basis.

I did not get accepted. Can I find out why? Who can I talk to?

Answer: Due to the volume of inquiries we receive and the sensitivity of all admissions decisions, the PA program does not discuss any admissions decision with any applicant. Applicants with difficulty gaining admission to the program should continue to attend as many information sessions on campus and local recruitment events as possible. Tours of the Health Sciences Education Building are conducted twice a month (see schedule: <http://nau.edu/chhs/phoenix-biomedical-campus/>). Time permitting, questions will be answered both during and after the tours. To sign up for a tour, please call (602) 827-2450. Individualized advising by PA program faculty is reserved for enrolled PA students in the program and is not available for admissions purposes. Many of our faculty attend various recruiting events throughout the state of Arizona where applicants are free to ask questions about the admissions process. Program policy prohibits any faculty member from reviewing admissions data and decisions with any applicant. The PA program continues to develop strong relationships with health professions advisors at colleges and universities throughout the state of Arizona. Applicants should contact their school's advisors advice regarding the admissions process.

After Acceptance

Can I work while I am enrolled in the program?

Answer: Most likely not. The program discourages students working while enrolled in the program.

Does the program require a security deposit if I get accepted?

Answer: Accepted applicants do not need a security deposit.

Can I enroll in the program part-time?

Answer: No. The program is offered only on a full-time basis.

Is a criminal background check required?

Answer: Yes. A criminal background check is required of all accepted applicants BEFORE the first class day.

Will my criminal background affect my ability to gain admission into the program?

Answer: No. The admissions committee does not use the criminal background to make admissions decisions. However, your criminal background may affect your ability to complete the program. If you feel your criminal background may affect your ability to complete the program, please consult with the program director. Most, if not all, clinical sites require relatively clear criminal records in order to participate in and complete clinical rotations.

How often do I need to get a criminal background check?

Answer: Yearly while enrolled in the program.

What kind of criminal record may affect my ability to complete the program?

Answer: A felony crime will be difficult in most states to acquire licensure as a PA. In some states, serious misdemeanors will also result in a difficult path to licensure. For the purposes of most clinical rotation sites, criminal records should be clear of felony charges.

Are drug screens required?

Answer: Drug screens are required in order to rotate through certain facilities and clinical sites.

Is a pre-participation physical examination required?

Answer: Yes. Proof of recent physical examination by a licensed healthcare provider must be on file at matriculation. Detailed instructions are sent to all accepted applicants before matriculation.

Are any immunizations required by the program?

Answer: Yes. All accepted applicants must have a current PPD negative result, Hepatitis B series or proof of immunity, Meningitis vaccination if <30 years old, and Varicella, if non-immune. A flu shot is required yearly. Other vaccine recommendations are listed in the instructions sent to all accepted applicants.

If I am accepted and have an emergency, can I defer my decision?

Answer: Yes. Applicants invited to join the PA program may request to defer the admissions decision for one year only under EXTENUATING circumstances. Deferrals must be approved by the Program Director.

I have graduate level coursework in anatomy completed at another institution. Do I still need to take the Anatomy course required in this program?

Answer: Yes, all required PHA coursework must be taken while enrolled in the program. No advanced placement/transfer credit is accepted.

I attended another PA program. Can any of my previous PA coursework be applied to my NAU PASP degree plan?

Answer: No. Applicants with coursework from other PA programs will not be given advanced placement standing, credit or advantage in the competitive admissions process nor can the coursework be used to replace any NAU coursework.

What is the process for requesting advanced placement credit?

Answer: There is no process for advanced placement credit. The PA program does not allow advanced placement credit for any PHA courses for any reason from any discipline. Credit by examination for PHA courses is not offered.

I have a documented disability that may require accommodations. What should I do about reporting my disability?

Answer: After acceptance ONLY, if you have a documented disability, you can request accommodations by contacting Disability Resources (DR) at 523-8773 (voice) or 523-6906 (TTY), dr@nau.edu (e-mail) or 928-523-8747 (fax). Once eligibility has been determined, students are required to register with DR every semester to activate their accommodations. Although you may request an accommodation at any time, in order for DR to best meet your individual needs, you are urged to submit a self-identification form and necessary documentation (www.nau.edu/dr) at least 4 weeks prior to the time you wish to receive

accommodations. DR is strongly committed to the needs of students with disabilities and the promotion of Universal Design. Concerns or questions related to the accessibility of programs and facilities at NAU may be brought to the attention of DR or the Equity and Access Office (523-3312 or equityandaccess@nau.edu). The university ADA Coordinator/504 Compliance Officer is DR Director, Jamie Axelrod. He may be reached at Jamie.Axelrod@nau.edu.

Didactic Curriculum (Year One)

How difficult is the first year of PA school at NAU? What can I expect?

Answer: PA education can be a rigorous and strenuous process. Although the PA program makes every effort to make PA school “enjoyable,” the overwhelming nature of large amounts of course content, curriculum, assessments, examinations, and commitments required of PA students renders the experience most likely less enjoyable than previously attempted experiences in higher education. Potential students should look carefully at the curriculum map available on our website to make informed decisions about career planning and student/life balance.

How many hours per week are required for on campus coursework?

Answer: The number of classroom contact hours varies from course to course from week to week. However, potential students should expect to be occupied with on campus curriculum a minimum of 30 – 40+ hours per week depending on scheduling. PA students often spend 4 – 8 hours studying outside of the classroom per day.

How many exams per week are given by professors?

Answer: The number of exams and/or assessments given per week varies by course and type of exam/assessment. The PA program makes every effort to limit high stakes exams/assessments to no more than two per week. Due to scheduling and extenuating circumstances, PA students are expected to be flexible and ready to be examined/assessed with short notice. There are weeks; i.e., finals week and others, with three or more scheduled exams/assessments.

Does the program teach any online courses?

Answer: Yes and no. Currently, the PA program does not offer any exclusively online courses. Program faculty do utilize hybrid teaching modalities that require students to learn in online platforms. All PHA courses include some element of online instruction to varying degrees. PA students are expected to be flexible and open to non-traditional, innovative, novel, and creative methods of curriculum delivery.

Does the PA program require any kind of technology upon matriculation such as a laptop or tablet computer? If so, what specifications and/or software are required?

Answer: Yes. Every PA student must possess a working and reliable laptop computer. Laptops should be recent technology with capability of connecting to the internet. Machines with either Windows or MacOS are required. Chrome (Chromebook) laptops are not compatible with testing software required for all PHA courses. Tablet devices are both portable and valuable for the modern educational experience. Although they are not required, many students find them to be helpful adjuncts for learning and entertainment purposes. All PA students are expected to check online course management systems and email communication often. This may require paying for monthly internet service at home throughout the entire PA curriculum. NAU provides the Microsoft Office 365 package to PA students while enrolled in the program for free. The PA program requires students to take written examinations on laptop using program provided software.

Does the PA program require any kind of equipment to be purchased for use while in the program?

Answer: Yes. The PA program requires all PA students to purchase a medical equipment kit just prior to matriculation. The kit includes such things as a high-quality stethoscope, otoscope/ophthalmoscope, tuning forks, and reflex hammer to name a few items.

Where do I buy medical equipment required for PA school and what do I buy? Which brands and specifications, etc.?

Answer: All matriculating students will be sent an order form containing a list of approved/required brands and specifications for medical equipment a few months prior to matriculation. The PA program has made every effort to secure volume student pricing to ensure the best possible pricing for each student. Every student is required to purchase the approved/required medical equipment kit through an approved vendor. Student can expect to pay around \$800.00 for the medical equipment kit.

Does NAU offer child care services while enrolled in the PA program?

Answer: Child care services are not available at the Phoenix Biomedical Campus.

Does the program offer tutoring for PA coursework?

Answer: Formal individualized and group tutoring is provided for the Gross Anatomy course. Tutoring may be arranged for all other PHA coursework as needed but is not guaranteed. The PA program employs the services of a learning specialist who works closely with students to determine learning styles, best practices for studying, developing study habits, time management, exam performance, and certification exam preparation to name a few things. The program employs various remediation and retention techniques depending on course requirements and individual student needs.

Does the program require students to join any professional associations?

Answer: Yes. All PA students are required to join both the Arizona Society of Physician Assistants (ASAPA) and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) as student members. PA students should plan on paying between \$75 – 150 for a student membership lasting the two years enrolled in the program.

Clinical Curriculum (Year Two)

What are clinical rotations and how many hours a week are required?

Answer: Clinical rotations are supervised clinical practice experiences completed under the supervision of a preceptor who is responsible for student training over a four-week time period. While some rotations have a 40-hour work week, the time required could be higher. The student is also expected to do additional studying after hours to meet the expectations of the rotations and the program.

What disciplines are covered in clinical rotations?

Answer: The 'core' clinical disciplines are covered in three, 8-week, and five, 4-week rotations. They are family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, Women's health, mental health, surgery and emergency medicine. Family practice, internal medicine, and pediatrics are each eight weeks in length. There is also one 'elective' rotation. All rotation assignments are determined based on availability, quality of the site, and are located in Arizona.

Can clinical rotations be completed outside of Arizona?

Answer: No. Because of the mission of this program, every student is required to complete most, if not all, clinical rotations in Arizona. Under very few circumstances, students may complete clinical rotations outside of the state. Requests for out-of-state rotations are approved for very limited reasons. Applicants hoping to complete clinical rotations in their home state should try to apply to PA programs located closer to home. Students may complete their elective clinical rotation in any location within the continental United States which includes Alaska and Hawaii.

Can I work while I am taking courses during the didactic year and/or completing the clinical rotations?

Answer: The program is an intensive and demanding course of study. Working while attending the program is strongly discouraged. Absences, tardiness, and failure to participate in program curriculum

and activities will not excused due to work obligations and may result in poor performance and/or recommendation for dismissal from the program. Please see our Technical Standards document here. <https://in.nau.edu/physician-assistant/technical-standards/>

Where in Arizona will the clinical rotations be located?

Answer: The program is responsible for the assignment of all clinical rotations. Clinical rotations are available throughout Arizona, and in a variety of settings. Students are expected to be flexible and although the program will make all reasonable attempts to accommodate student preferences, students may not always be assigned their choice of sites and locations. When feasible and at the students' requests, placements are made in locations close to or within the communities where students have ties. This is in support of the program's mission to develop health care providers for the underserved areas of Arizona. The program has active clinical rotations all across the state of Arizona. Every student is assigned to at least three clinical rotations at distances anywhere from one to six hours away from the Phoenix metro area. Due to availability of clinical sites and preceptors, some students may have more geographically distant clinical experiences than others.

Is housing available for distant clinical rotations? If so, do I have to pay for housing?

Answer: The clinical year team keeps an updated list of available student housing throughout the state. Most student housing is affordable. Some students choose to seek their own housing options or commute daily, whichever they find most economical and efficient. Students are responsible for the cost of housing and transportation during the clinical phase of the program.

Does the program offer international clinical rotations?

Answer: The program does not currently offer any rotations located outside the United States. The program is interested in establishing relationships with healthcare providers, educational institutions, and medical centers in other countries. Students interested in these experiences should consult with the Program Director and Faculty Clinical Coordinator.

What are the requirements for the elective rotation?

Answer: The elective rotation is four weeks in duration. It can be arranged anywhere within the United States which includes Alaska and Hawaii. Students are required to return to the downtown Phoenix campus on the last day of the rotation for testing and activities. No exceptions are made due to distant travel to elective rotations. Students interested in elective rotations outside the state of Arizona must declare their interest and intent to rotate distantly within the specify timeline and deadline given by the Faculty Clinical Coordinator. Elective rotations located at distant locations to Arizona are preferably allowed when they are "outpatient" in nature. Contractual agreements and negotiations with inpatient/institutional entities require six to twelve months processing time which may not be ideal for a program as compact as ours.

What specialties are allowed for elective rotation?

Answer: Any medical specialty where a physician assistant can provide services is allowed.

Program Completion (Graduation)

What are the program's graduation requirements?

Answer: Every student must successfully complete the entire PHA curriculum with a minimum 3.0 GPA, no more than 11 accumulated hours of C grades, no F grades, and be continuously enrolled. In addition, every student must satisfactorily complete/pass several benchmarks designed to assess both knowledge and competency throughout the program. These include but are not limited to a final comprehensive written examination, a final comprehensive clinical/practical examination, and a completed peer-reviewed, evidence-based medicine research project.

Does the program place graduates in jobs after completion of the program?

Answer: No. The program does not participate in any job placement activities for alumni. However, the program and its faculty area a good resource for any PA job search. The program also relies on the Arizona State Association of Physician Assistants (ASAPA) to assist with the PA job search via the position postings available to all ASAPA members.

How does the program prepare students for the PANCE?

Answer: Completion of the entire 24-month curriculum is the primary preparation method utilized by our program. The PA program prides itself on not being laser-focused on the PANCE as the only measure of success for any graduate. Program faculty are not only interested in successful scores on the PANCE, but also producing the best possible competent practitioners for our community and the public of Arizona and beyond. Students enrolled in our program will be subject to frequent benchmarks and assessments to further develop their knowledge base and practical skills of assessment and critical thinking.

Where do NAU graduates work?

Answer: The latest data show that our graduates work in almost every specialty. The slight majority of our graduates work in primary care specialties while a large percentage do work in specialties not considered primary care. This is in accordance with national trends. One national study shows that 83% of NAU graduates (2014 – 2017 cohorts) remain practicing in Arizona. This comes as a direct result of the mission of the NAU program to address healthcare needs in Arizona.