Admission Guidelines





LSUHSC-NO Master of Physician Assistant Studies

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Introduction and Purpose

This booklet is intended to serve as a guide for potential and current applicants to the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (PA) Program at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center New Orleans (LSUHSC-NO). This booklet contains both generic information about our school and program in addition to specific admissions criteria and application data that is related to the current application cycle. It should be considered an adjunct to the PA Student Handbook, which contains information regarding the program and related policies.

Applicants are encouraged to fully explore the current website, including the Frequently Asked Questions.

The information herein is subject to periodic review and revision as deemed necessary by the program. Changes will be indicated by the publication/revision date. It is ultimately the applicant's responsibility to be aware of all application requirements and work with admissions staff to ensure a successful application.

Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center at New Orleans

Located on the banks of the Mississippi River, New Orleans is home to the LSU Health Sciences Center. Students are immersed in their disciplines while attending school with a wide range of programs, approachable teachers, and an atmosphere that encourages interdisciplinary collaboration.

Vision

To be the catalyst for a healthy Louisiana

Mission

We educate the future health professions workforce, lead advancement in research and scholarship, provide exceptional and equitable health care, and partner and advocate to build healthy communities.



Institutional Value Statements

- **Excellence:** We commit to achieving the highest standards and exceptional results in all our endeavors.
- **Integrity:** We are intellectually honest, ethically transparent, and respectful.
- **Accountability:** We take ownership of our commitments, demonstrate consistency and resilience, and act diligently in service to all of our communities.
- **Innovation:** We foster ingenuity, the spirit of inquiry, and a culture of discovery.
- **Collaboration:** We create and value teams that draw on diverse backgrounds, professions, and perspectives.

Transformational Strategies

1. **Student Success**: Design and deliver academic offerings for the next generation of learners and health professions workforce, enabled by contemporary teaching models, interprofessional approaches, and technology.
2. **Louisiana-Focused Research**: Advance research and discovery on health issues prevalent in Louisiana through comprehensive, HSC-wide initiatives.
3. **Building Healthy Communities**: Cocreate interdisciplinary partnerships across Louisiana that advance outreach, prevention, access to care, and advocacy to address health equity.
4. **Reducing Cancer's Burden**: Develop a team science approach that engages all schools; integrates our community and clinical partners; and improves cancer prevention, community engagement, and patient care and outcomes to achieve NCI designation with a focus on rural and urban health and health disparities.
5. **Clinical Growth**: Maximize alignment with our partners to collaboratively build clinical programs, expand patient access, and develop care models.

Enabling Strategies

1. **Focus on Our People**: Accelerate the recruitment, retention, growth, and development of our faculty and staff.
2. **Culture of Excellence**: Foster a transparent and inclusive environment that engages and inspires learners, staff, and faculty to reach their highest potential.
3. **Economic Sustainability**: Diversify and solidify sources of revenue via growth of the clinical enterprise, innovative research initiatives and partnerships, and expanded philanthropy.
4. **Operational Effectiveness**: Work as a highly integrated and efficient HSC with institution-wide policies, processes, technology frameworks, and data-driven decision-making to serve all stakeholders.

LSU Health NEW ORLEANS

Physician Assistant Profession

What is a PA?

A physician assistant (PA) is a medical professional who practices medicine in partnership with a physician as part of a healthcare team. A PA is a graduate of an accredited PA educational program who is nationally certified and state-licensed to practice medicine with the supervision of a physician.

PA Profession

Physician assistants are health care professionals trained in intensive programs that mirror the medical model of physician education and that must be accredited by the ARC-PA. Prior to entering clinical practice, a new graduate must take a national certification examination developed by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants in conjunction with the National Board of Medical Examiners.

Once certified by the NCCPA, the new graduate must be licensed to practice medicine with supervision by an appropriate state medical board. To maintain national certification, each PA must log 100 hours of continuing medical education every two years and sit for a recertification every ten years.

PAs provide a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services. They can be found in the primary care specialties of family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology as well as in other medical and surgical specialties and subspecialties.

As part of their comprehensive responsibilities, PAs conduct interviews and physical exams, diagnose and treat illnesses, order and interpret tests, counsel on preventive health care, assist in surgery, and in virtually all states can write prescriptions. A PA's practice may also include education and research.

What a PA does varies with training, experience, state law and the scope of the supervising physician's practice. In general, a PA will see many of the same types of patients as the physician. Referral to or consultation with the physician is done for unusual or hard to manage cases. All 50 states, the District of Columbia, and most U.S. Territories have enacted laws that authorize PA to prescribe in the context of the M.D. - PA practice arrangement.



Physician Assistant Program

Mission

The Mission of the LSUHSC-New Orleans Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program is to recruit and educate individuals of the highest quality to provide evidence-based, patient-centered healthcare to the people of Louisiana.

Vision

The LSUHSC-New Orleans Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program will be a leader in the education of competent, compassionate, healthcare providers providing access to care for the people of Louisiana.

Goals

- Recruit highly qualified applicants for enrollment as students in the LSUHSC-NO PA Program.
- Achieve a graduation rate of 90% or higher for students entering the LSUHSC-NO PA Program.
- Maintain a high five-year first-time pass rate at or above the national average on the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE).
- Maintain accreditation-continuing status.
- Educate high quality healthcare providers who obtain licensure to practice in Louisiana.



Non-Discrimination Policy

The LSUHSC-NO PA Program does not discriminate in the recruitment and admission of students on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, religion, political affiliation or handicap as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

Accreditation Status

The LSUHSC-NO PA Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA). The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation - Continued to the LSUHSC-NO PA Program until March 2027.

Accreditation- Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards*.



Educational Program

The LSUHSC-NO PA Program is divided into two phases (didactic and clinical) and spans 29 consecutive months.

Didactic Phase

The 17-month didactic phase of the curriculum focuses on human structure and function, physiologic systems governing body function, pathological and behavioral alterations causing clinical manifestations of illness, and therapeutic principles underlying the management of illness and injury. The program will include learning opportunities in clinical genetics, culture and diversity, ethics and health promotion and disease prevention.

Clinical Phase

The 12-month clinical rotation phase of the curriculum provides in-depth instruction in the evaluation and management of disease and injury alongside medical students, residents, allied health practitioners and faculty in emergency medicine, internal medicine (inpatient and outpatient), family medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry and behavioral medicine, and surgery.

The training experiences are used to prepare PA students to deliver health care services to diverse patient populations of all ages with a range of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions.

Students will have the opportunity to train in state-of-the-art urban medical centers, rural hospitals and clinics and in private offices of a variety of health care providers. Clinical sites are located throughout the State of Louisiana. **Students should plan on the possibility of being placed outside the New Orleans area for some of their supervised practice experiences during their clinical training. Students placed outside of the New Orleans area will be responsible for their own housing and transportation.**

Previous Matriculating Students Statistics

Graduating Class	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Total Applicants	308	283	307	345	388	525	435	448	463	456	395
Interviewed	104	122	120	120	167	152	132	120	137	130	110
Matriculated	30	30	30	30	35	35	35	35	35	35	35
Graduated	29	29	30	30	35	35	32	33	TBD	TBD	TBD
Female (%)	80	73.3	83.3	73.3	71.4	77.1	85.7	77.1	85.7	91.4	88.6
Average Age	23.3	23.5	23.4	23.7	24	24.3	23.8	24.4	23.1	22.7	22.6
LA residents (%)	90	86.7	86.7	93.3	91.5	91.4	100	97.1	100	91.4	100
Overall GPA	3.66	3.61	3.64	3.65	3.65	3.68	3.64	3.66	3.74	3.78	3.76
Science GPA	3.60	3.54	3.57	3.60	3.61	3.64	3.57	3.60	3.65	3.73	3.70
Healthcare Exp	1584	1956	2107	1894	3992	2413	2246	3535	1941	2240	2661
PA-CAT	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	540	529	528	537	540
GRE	305	306	305	303	307	304	307	304	304	305	303

Certification Examination

Following graduation, graduates are required to pass the PA National Certifying Examination (PANCE) to practice. Below are the most recent trends in the performance of our graduates.

NCCPA Certification. Excellence.

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Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination
Exam Performance Summary Report

Program Name: Louisiana State University - New Orleans
Program Number: 6019
Test Taker Status: All Test Takers

Definitions of the report headings are provided at the end of the report.
All information is current as of the date the report was generated unless otherwise specified.

Class	Class Graduation Year	Group	Number of Candidates Who Took PANCE	Number of Exam Attempts	Number of Exams Passed	Program Exam Pass Rate	National Exam Pass Rate for the Class Graduation Year	% of Candidates Who Ultimately Passed PANCE
LSUHSC NO MPAS 2021	2021	All Takers	30	30	30	100%	91%	100%
		First Time Takers	30	30	30	100%	93%	100%
LSUHSC NO MPAS 2022	2022	All Takers	33	35	33	94%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	33	33	31	94%	92%	100%
LSUHSC NO MPAS 2023	2023	All Takers	35	40	34	85%	89%	97%
		First Time Takers	35	35	29	83%	92%	97%
LSUHSC NO 2024	2024	All Takers	2	2	2	100%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	2	2	2	100%	92%	100%
LSUHSC NO MPAS 2024	2024	All Takers	30	31	30	97%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	30	30	29	97%	92%	100%
LSUHSC NO MPAS 2025	2025	All Takers	33	35	33	94%	89%	100%
		First Time Takers	33	33	31	94%	92%	100%

Cost of Attendance

The following table represents the estimated cost of attendance for the LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans Physician Assistant Program. These estimates include tuition, university fees, required educational expenses, and average living expenses as determined by the LSUHSC Office of Financial Aid.

The cost of attendance reflects the estimated expenses for a typical student for the duration of the program and is used to determine financial aid eligibility.

Actual expenses may vary based on individual circumstances.

	Full Time University Tuition and Fees	Non-Resident Fee	Insurance Fee	Loan Fee	Books and Supplies	Housing and Meals	Transportation	Miscellaneous /Personal Expenses	Total Resident Cost	Total Non-Resident Cost
Spring I Semester	$ 9,794.00	$ 9,612.00	$ 3,718.80	$ 320.00	$ 1,284.00	$ 6,000.00	$ 1,216.00	$ 3,888.00	$ 26,220.80	$ 35,832.80
Summer I Semester	$ 4,910.00	$ 4,806.00			$ 642.00	$ 3,750.00	$ 760.00	$ 2,430.00	$ 12,492.00	$ 17,298.00
Fall I Semester	$ 9,298.00	$ 9,612.00	$ 3,718.80	$ 320.00	$ 1,284.00	$ 6,000.00	$ 1,216.00	$ 3,888.00	$ 25,724.80	$ 35,336.80
Spring II Semester	$ 9,794.00	$ 9,612.00	$ 3,718.80	$ 320.00	$ 1,284.00	$ 6,000.00	$ 1,216.00	$ 3,888.00	$ 26,220.80	$ 35,832.80
Summer II Semester	$ 4,910.00	$ 4,806.00			$ 642.00	$ 3,750.00	$ 750.00	$ 2,430.00	$ 12,482.00	$ 17,288.00
Fall II Semester	$ 9,298.00	$ 9,612.00	$ 3,718.80	$ 320.00	$ 1,284.00	$ 6,000.00	$ 1,216.00	$ 3,888.00	$ 25,724.80	$ 35,336.80
Spring III Semester	$ 9,794.00	$ 9,612.00	$ 3,718.80	$ 320.00	$ 1,284.00	$ 6,000.00	$ 1,216.00	$ 3,888.00	$ 26,220.80	$ 35,832.80
Total for Program	**$ 57,798.00**	$ 57,672.00	$ 18,594.00	$ 1,600.00	$ 7,704.00	$ 37,500.00	$ 7,590.00	$ 24,300.00	**$ 155,086.00**	**$ 212,758.00**

Full Time University Tuition and Fees

The total cost of tuition is calculated by summing the tuition and required university fees for each semester of the program. These charges are determined by LSU Health Sciences Center New Orleans and apply to all full-time students enrolled in the School of Allied Health Professions.

A detailed list of university tuition and mandatory fees is maintained by the LSUHSC Registrar and is available on the registrar's website: Allied Health Professions Tuition and Fees.

These fees may include tuition, academic excellence fees, operational fees, and other institutional charges required for enrollment.

Tuition and fees are subject to change at the discretion of the university. **The University will be increasing tuition and fees by 10% beginning in the 2026–2027 academic year. Updated tuition and fee information will be reflected on this page once the University releases the official fee schedule.**

Non-Resident Fee

Students who do not qualify for Louisiana residency are assessed an additional non-resident fee each semester in accordance with LSUHSC residency policies.

Insurance Fee

Students are required to maintain health insurance coverage while enrolled in the program. The insurance fee represents the cost of the LSUHSC student health insurance plan unless a student receives an approved waiver by demonstrating comparable health insurance coverage.

Loan Fee

Loan fees represent estimated federal student loan origination fees charged by the U.S. Department of Education when students borrow federal student loans. These fees are deducted from loan disbursements.

Housing and Meals
Housing and meals represent estimated living expenses for students during enrollment in the program. These estimates are determined by the LSUHSC Office of Financial Aid and reflect typical housing and food costs in the New Orleans area.

Actual costs will vary depending on a student's living arrangements and personal spending habits.

Transportation
Transportation includes estimated costs associated with commuting to campus and traveling to clinical education sites during supervised clinical practice experiences. This may include fuel, public transportation, vehicle maintenance, and parking.

Miscellaneous
The miscellaneous category includes estimated program-related expenses that students may incur during the program. Some of these costs are assessed by the university or program, while others are expenses students typically incur in order to successfully complete the program and prepare for professional practice.

Estimated expenses include:

Item	Estimated Cost
Graduation Fee	$110
Physical Examination Equipment	$1,200
Patient Tracking System	$100
Background Check (initial and clinical onboarding)	$150
Laptop Computer	$1,300 – $1,500
Uniforms/White Coat	$500
Anatomy Laboratory Fee	$60
Simulation Supplies	$500
AAPA Student Membership	$75
LAPA Student Membership	$35
NCCPA PANCE Registration	$550
Louisiana State Licensure Fee (Initial)	$275
Professional Liability Insurance	$300

Estimated total program-related miscellaneous expenses for a typical student: approximately $5,100 – $5,300. Some of these expenses occur during the program, while others occur near graduation as students prepare for licensure and entry into professional practice. Actual costs may vary depending on individual purchasing decisions.

Personal Expenses
The Cost of Attendance developed by the LSUHSC Office of Financial Aid includes an estimate for personal expenses during the program. These costs are included to reflect typical personal expenses students may incur while enrolled and to ensure students have sufficient access to financial aid resources.

Examples of personal expenses may include:

- Personal hygiene and household supplies
- Cell phone and internet service
- Clothing and laundry
- Professional clothing for clinical experiences
- Study resources and board examination preparation materials
- Technology maintenance or replacement
- Professional conference attendance or continuing education resources
- Unanticipated personal expenses

These personal expenses are included within the Miscellaneous/Personal Expenses category of the Cost of Attendance used by the LSUHSC Office of Financial Aid. Actual expenses will vary depending on individual spending habits and lifestyle.

Estimated In-State Student Tuition: $57,798.00

Estimated Total Resident Cost: $155,086.00

Estimated Total Non-Resident Cost: $212,758.00

Financial Aid

The primary responsibility for the funding of your education lies with you and your family. Financial aid is available to U.S. citizens and permanent residents. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid.

External loan repayment opportunities exist and are further detailed on our website.

Program Sequence and Advanced Standing

Students are expected to complete the designated professional curriculum in the sequence specified. Each semester's course work is to be considered pre-requisite to the next semester. Students may not enter the program with advanced standing, regardless of educational or work experience, and no accelerated curriculum or course waivers are offered.

Important External Links

The following links maybe useful in learning about the PA Profession:

- The American Academy of Physician Assistants
  - www.aapa.org
- The Louisiana Academy of Physician Assistants
  - www.ourlapa.org
- The Physician Assistant Education Association
  - www.paeaonline.org
- PAEA Applicant Resource Blog
  - www.pafocus.org
- The US Bureau of Labor Statistics
  - www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/physician-assistant.htm

Admissions Requirements and Process

The following information represents the most comprehensive and up-to-date policies and standards for those interested in applying for the PA Program this **current admission cycle**.

The LSUHSC-New Orleans PA Program does not review individual transcripts to determine course qualifications for applicants. The program will not meet with or advise applicants on an individual basis due to time constraints and volume of requests. The Information Sessions provide answers to many questions potential applicants have regarding the program, including admissions requirements and process.

It is the responsibility of the applicant to be aware of the information in this document and meet all published deadlines and requirements to apply to the program. If an application file is not complete and verified by the August 1st deadline, it will not be considered, regardless of the original CASPA submission date. **Please pay close attention to the instructions, requirements, and deadlines in this guidebook to ensure a complete and competitive application.**

Falsification or deliberate exclusion of information (personal or academic) during any portion of the application process, including the CASPA application, will be cause for immediate withdrawal of your application for the current cycle and future consideration for acceptance into the LSUHSC-NO PA Program.

Application Process

The PA Program will admit students only once a year (in January). An application file will be considered complete and reviewable by the PA Program Admissions Committee after satisfactorily completing the following steps:

Step 1: Review All Admission Requirements Outlined Below

It is the applicant's responsibility to be familiar with the information contained in this publication (and any subsequent revisions applicable to this admission cycle) and to ensure they meet all the Admissions Requirements outlined therein.

Step 2: Complete the CASPA Application

All applications must be processed through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). GRE and/or PA-CAT Scores must be sent directly to the CASPA website and/or the LSUHSC New Orleans PA Program. Unsolicited information or letters of recommendation will not be added to any application. The LSUHSC-NO PA Program does not have a supplemental application. **All application materials will be gathered by CASPA and sent to the program after completion and all information is verified.**

- Applications are accepted beginning late April and must be **electronically submitted to CASPA AND verified by August 1st** for entry into the class that will start the following January.
- The PA Program reserves the right to verify credentials documented in the applicant's application.
- You should review and adhere to the CASPA Admissions Code of Cooperation and Professional Code of Conduct.
- The application fee is determined by CASPA. LSUHSC-NO PA Program does not require a

supplemental application fee.

- Waiver of Fees: If the CASPA fee is prohibitive to applying, please review the "Fee Waiver Division" information at the CASPA website to determine if you qualify for this service (See CASPA FAQ section).
    - This waiver is offered by CASPA and with limited funding. Waivers are granted until funding is depleted. Please contact CASPA for more information.
- **Personal Narrative:** Applicants are asked to write *"a brief statement expressing your motivation or desire to become a physician assistant"*, which should be written at a graduate level and demonstrate that you have an in-depth understanding of the PA role and functions.
    - The personal narrative should reflect your current motivation and reflect on your career pursuits.
    - Applicants are also encouraged to explain any aspects of their application that may need further clarification (e.g., gaps in education or work history; academic inconsistency, difficulty or poor performance; etc.).
- **Letters of Reference:** Although CASPA only requires two (2) letters of reference to consider an application complete, LSUHSC-NO PA Program **requires three (3) references**. All three **MUST** be submitted before your application will be considered complete and reviewable by the PA Program Admissions Committee.
    - References should be selected from individuals who are well-acquainted with the applicant academically, personally, and/or professionally over a period of time.
    - References should be from a variety of sources.
    - References from family members are **STRONGLY DISCOURAGED.**
    - Unsolicited information or letters of recommendation sent directly to the program will **not** be added to any application.

Special Instructions

- Updating Completed Courses: If you have already submitted your CASPA application but have completed coursework that will fulfill the pre-requisites, it is the applicant's responsibility to update the CASPA transcript as outlined in the "After the Application" section.
    - The final day to access and update your CASPA application is determined by CASPA.
- **Reapplying:** If reapplying to our program, it is the applicant's responsibility to make sure the newest application reflects your most recent transcripts, healthcare experience, and certifications.
    - No assumptions will be made by the admissions staff regarding these areas.

Contact CASPA with any questions (617.612.2080) **caspainfo@caspaonline.org**

CASPA®

It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete all areas of the CASPA application. Applications will be eliminated for the following reasons:

- Failure of application verification and mailing by CASPA by the published deadline.
- Aptitude scores and grade point averages do not reach the required minimums.
- Missing transcripts or letters of recommendation.
- Inability to complete course prerequisites prior to matriculation.
- Failure to complete and/or submit official score reports from GRE or PA-CAT by the deadline.
- Failure to meet and/or maintain the program technical standards.
- Failure to accumulate 80 hours minimum of healthcare experience.

Selection Process

All applications submitted by Louisiana residents that meet the minimum requirements will be further reviewed by the Admissions Committee. These applications will be scored based upon GPAs (cumulative, science, and pre-requisite), PA-CAT or GRE scores, the amount of direct healthcare hours acquired, PA shadowing experience, personal statement quality, and quality of references. The committee will also review select out-of-state residents who meet the following criteria: attain overall and science GPA of 3.5 or higher, achieve composite scores of at least 520 on the PA-CAT or 300 on the GRE (with 3.5 on analytical writing component), have all prerequisite coursework complete, have at least 80 hours of healthcare experience, and have logged at least 40 hours of PA shadowing. Interview preference is given to Louisiana residents.

Based upon these factors, the Admissions Committee will invite the most qualified individuals for interviews. All invitations for interviews are generated and communicated to qualified applicants through CASPA and the LSUHSC-NO PA Program via email. The dates for interviews are decided by the PA Program and published in advance. Invitees are required to acknowledge their acceptance of the offer for interview within two business days of the interview invitation being sent.

These interviews will be conducted using a multiple mini-interview approach to assess the following program values and care provider attributes:

- Communication
- Critical Analysis
- Teamwork
- Emotional Awareness
- PA Role Awareness
- Integrity
- Resilience
- Professionalism
- Maturity
- Empathy
- Discretion

Each interviewer then completes an Interview Form that generates a mean score that is factored into the Final Acceptance Rank Score.

Interview dates for the 2026 Application Cycle are July 15, August 4-6, August 10 – 12.

Acceptance

The Program Director and the Admissions Committee will then review all materials and recommend one of the following:

- Acceptance (for those who have completed all prerequisites and are highly recommended for admission)
- Conditional acceptance (for those who need to complete prerequisites)
- Wait list (applicants who meet the minimum requirement and who may be offered acceptance if the best qualified candidates do not fill all available seats)
- Non-admission (applicants who do not meet the minimum requirements or who are not competitive within the applicant pool)

Notifications and Communication

Upon submission of any of the application requirements, applicants will receive electronic notification of their application status from the LSUHSC-NO PA Program. Due to the high volume of applications, **e-mail is the best mode of communication** with the program office. You are required to regularly check your account and update the PA Program with regards to any e-mail address changes in a reasonable period of time. Failure to respond to program requests in a timely manner may result in loss of eligibility for program admission. Notification of acceptance will be communicated via email four to six weeks after all interviews have been completed.

Application Important Dates

It is the applicant's responsibility to follow up with CASPA and LSUHSC-NO to make sure all requirements are met, and documents are received in a timely manner to comply with the published deadlines.

Please note the following **DEADLINES** for matriculation:

PA Class Entering	CASPA Application Deadline	PA Class Graduation
January 2027	August 1st, 2026	May 2029

EARLY APPLICATION does not guarantee an interview or give the applicant any advantage. All applications will be considered if submitted and verified by August 1st.

IT IS BEST TO APPLY TO OUR PROGRAM SHORTLY AFTER YOU HAVE COMPLETED ALL PREREQUISITE COURSES AND HAVE THE FINAL GRADES LISTED ON YOUR TRANSCRIPT.

Residency

Residents of the State of Louisiana are given preference in the admissions processes of all LSU Health Sciences Center certificate and degree programs. For certain highly competitive curricula, non-resident applications will not be accepted.

Residents of the State of Louisiana are given preference in the admissions process of the PA Program at LSU Health Sciences Center – New Orleans.

Residence status is determined by the Office of the Registrar and is based upon guidelines established by The LSU System in Permanent Memoranda 31.

Applicants who are not residents of Louisiana will be required to meet the following criteria in addition to all other published requirements:

- Application must be verified and submitted through CASPA by the published deadline.
- Overall and Science GPA must be at least 3.5 on a 4.0 scale.
- Standardized examination must be taken – PA-CAT or GRE. If the out-of-state applicant chooses to take the PA-CAT, he or she must achieve a composite score of 520 to be considered. If the out-of-state applicant chooses to take the GRE, he or she must achieve a composite score of 300 and 3.5 (analytical) to be considered.
- All prerequisite coursework must be completed prior to application submission.
- A minimum of 40 hours of PA Shadowing Hours is required.
- A minimum of 80 hours of healthcare experience is required.

Admission Requirements

GPA

All applications must have a minimum overall GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale AND a minimum overall science GPA of 3.0 at the time of application.

Note: Although 3.0 is the minimum GPA required, students with higher GPAs are more competitive.

All course grades are used in GPA calculations. Refer to CASPA information for method of calculating GPAs.

Standardized Examinations

Applicants are required to take a standardized exam. The applicant may choose from one of the following two exams – Physician Assistant College Admission Test (PA-CAT) ***or*** Graduate Record Examination Test (GRE).

Physician Assistant College Admission Test (PA-CAT):

All applicants seeking admission to the LSUHSC-NO PA Program are highly encouraged to take the PA-CAT. The PA-CAT is a specialized test designed to measure applicant knowledge in key prerequisite science subjects typically required for PA school. The PA-CAT measures general academic ability and scientific knowledge necessary for success in the demanding Physician Assistant curriculum. The following topics are covered on the PA-CAT: Anatomy, Physiology, General Biology, Biochemistry, General and Organic Chemistry, Microbiology, Behavioral Sciences, Genetics, Statistics. For information about the PA-CAT and to schedule your exam, visit their website at www.PA-CAT.com

- Once registered for the exam, ensure Louisiana State University – New Orleans is selected as the institution to receive your official score report in your PA-CAT Candidate Portal.
- It is highly recommended you take the PA-CAT in April, May or June. This will allow your score report to be received prior to August 1st deadline.
- LSUHSC-NO recommends a composite score of 520 or higher to be competitive with others in the overall applicant pool. Applicants who are not Louisiana residents are required to achieve a composite score of 520 or higher to be considered.

Graduate Record Examination Test (GRE):

If the applicant chooses to take the GRE, the program requires that official scores are submitted to CASPA and verified by the August 1st deadline. When filling out the application, you will be asked for an Institutional Code. The institutional code for LSUHSC-NO PA Program is 0202. The program recommends a minimum composite score of 300 and 3.5 on the analytical writing components of the GRE General Test to be competitive with others in the overall applicant pool. Applicants who are not Louisiana residents are required to achieve a minimum composite score of 300 and 3.5 on the analytical writing component to be considered.

Citizenship

Applicants must be a United States Citizen or permanent resident. Despite recent advances in the PA concept in other countries, it is a unique profession to the United States healthcare environment. As such, we train physician assistants to work with the U.S. healthcare system and want to ensure graduates of the PA Program are eligible to continue in the U.S. upon completion of their training.

Bachelor's Degree

Applicants must have completed all undergraduate degree requirements and have been issued a bachelor's degree prior to matriculation. The applicant's bachelor's degree **must be** issued by a regionally accredited U.S. college or university. Official transcripts from the awarding institution must specify the date upon which the degree was issued.

> NOTE: A bachelor's degree must be completed before December 31st of the year prior to the anticipated matriculation.

Prerequisite Coursework

Applicants must have completed the following required courses and have earned a grade of "C" or better. Applicants must have completed the required courses within the past ten years. All courses must be taken at a regionally accredited college or university; online courses are accepted. Pre-requisite coursework is mutually exclusive and cannot fulfill multiple requirements. For Louisiana residents, some coursework may be in progress at the time of application. All courses must be completed by December 31 prior to matriculation. Competitive applicants will have all coursework completed at the time of application. **ALL science courses must be for science majors.**

- General Chemistry I and II (with labs) - 8 credits
- Microbiology or Bacteriology (with lab) - 4 credits
- Anatomy (with lab) (human or comparative) - 4 credits
    - Anatomy & Physiology I & II (with labs) may be taken to meet this requirement, the courses must be taken in sequence, and all 8 credits must be completed to fulfill the pre-requisite requirements.
- Physiology (with lab) (general, human, or comparative) - 4 credits
    - **Note:** LSU A&M students: Biol 2160 will meet this requirement. A 3000 or 4000 level physiology course (with lab) will also meet this requirement.
    - Anatomy & Physiology I & II (with labs) may be taken to meet this requirement, the courses must be taken in sequence, and all 8 credits must be completed to fulfill the pre-requisite requirements.
- Biological Science Electives – 8 credits
    - These courses should have a biological science prefix, be 300/3000+ level courses, and be related to medicine or the human body in some form or fashion. (Please see institutional checklists for examples of accepted courses.)
    - Professional courses (i.e. occupational therapy, physical therapy, medical lab sciences) will not fulfill this requirement.
- Genetics - 3 credits
- Organic Chemistry or Biochemistry (with lab) - 4 credits
- College algebra or higher - 3 credits

- Statistics (with analysis of variance and/or multiple regression) - 3 credits
- Behavioral Sciences - 6 credits
    - Sociology or Psychology courses

All prerequisite coursework must be completed within the last ten years. Coursework completed greater than ten years prior to application will not be accepted.

Healthcare Experience

The program requires a minimum of eighty hours of documented healthcare experience; however, more hours are highly recommended. This experience may be either paid or volunteer and should include exposure to advanced practice providers. We reward healthcare experience based on your CASPA application descriptions, so it is important that you carefully follow the CASPA guidelines when describing the type of experience you have accumulated.

Below you will find examples of acceptable healthcare experience:

- Emergency Medical Technician
- Licensed Vocation Nurse
- Medical Assistant
- Medical Scribe
- Medical Technologist
- Military Medical Corpsman
- Nursing Assistant
- Paramedic
- Psychiatric Technician
- Radiologic Technician
- Respiratory Therapist
- Chiropractor

Current American Heart Association Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (AHA BLS) certification must be obtained and maintained throughout matriculation if accepted.

Physician Assistant Shadowing Experiences

Physician Assistant Shadowing Experiences are not required for applicants who are Louisiana residents, but highly recommended. This experience not only gives the applicant an insight into the profession on an intimate level but also affords the applicant an opportunity to see if she or he is a 'good-fit' for the profession.

If PA shadowing is not done, it is recommended that you research the profession and talk about the PA profession with a Physician Assistant before interviewing. Your knowledge of the profession and your reasons for selecting this career are likely to play a role in the interview process.

Applicants who are not Louisiana residents are required to have at least 40 hours of PA shadowing experience.

Technical Standards

All applicants must be able to master the Technical Standards prior to and throughout the program.

This description defines the capabilities that are necessary for an individual to successfully complete the LSUHSC-NO PA Program curricula.

Medical education requires that the accumulation of knowledge be accompanied by the acquisition of skills and professional attitudes and behavior. Allied health school faculties have a responsibility to society to matriculate and graduate the best possible physician assistants, and thus admission to the PA Program is offered to those who present the highest qualifications for the study and practice of medicine. Technical standards presented in this document are prerequisite for admission, progression, and graduation from LSU Health – New Orleans School of Allied Health in New Orleans. To accomplish its mission, LSUHSC-NO PA Program has developed a curriculum consisting of core courses and clerkships, required rotations, and elective rotations. The faculty and administration of the school have developed essential functions with which all students must comply independently in order to satisfy PA program curriculum demands. All core courses in the curriculum are required so that students can develop the essential knowledge and skills necessary to function in a broad variety of clinical situations and to render a wide spectrum of patient care.

The LSUHSC-NO PA Program maintains a strong institutional commitment to equal education opportunities for qualified students with disabilities who apply for admissions to the program or who are already enrolled. The technical standards are not intended to deter any candidate for whom reasonable accommodations will allow the fulfillment of the complete curriculum. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act LSUHSC-NO has determined that certain technical standards must be met by prospective candidates and students. A candidate for the Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree must possess aptitude, abilities, and skills in the five areas discussed below as advised by the Special Advisory Panel on Technical Standards for Medical School Admissions convened by the AAMC. (memorandum 79-4).

The Technical Standards listed are identical to the technical standards required of students matriculating in the LSUHSC-NO School of Medicine and conform to these standards. This description defines the capabilities that are necessary for an individual to successfully complete the LSUHSC-NO PA Program curricula.

Observation:
The individual must be able to observe demonstrations and participate in experiments of science, including but not limited: to dissection of cadavers, examination of specimens in anatomy, pathology and neuroanatomy laboratories, physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues. PA students must be capable of viewing and interpreting diagnostic modalities and to detect and interpret non-verbal communication from patients.

Communication:
Students should be able to communicate with patients in order to elicit information, detect changes in mood, activity and to establish therapeutic relationships. Students should be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and all members of the health care team both in person, in writing and through telecommunication.

Motor Function and Coordination:
Individuals must possess the capacity to perform physical examinations and diagnostic maneuvers. Individuals must be able to perform motor activities required in providing general and emergency

treatment to patients, such as cardiopulmonary resuscitation, administering intravenous medication, applying pressure to stop bleeding, opening obstructed airways, suturing simple wounds, and performing routine obstetrical maneuvers.

Intellectual Abilities: Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative:
Individuals must have sufficient cognitive abilities and effective learning techniques to assimilate detailed and complex information presented in the PA school curriculum. Individuals must be able to learn through a variety of modalities including classroom instruction; small group, team and collaborative activities; individual study; preparation and presentation of reports and use of computer and information technology. Individuals must be able to memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze, synthesize, and transmit information by multiple mechanisms. Problem solving, a critical skill demanded of physician assistants, may require all of these intellectual abilities. Individuals must meet applicable safety standards for the environment and follow universal precaution procedures.

Behavioral and Social Attributes:
Individuals must possess the emotional health required for the appropriate use of their intellectual and mental abilities, including logical thinking, good judgment, impulse control, empathy, interest, and motivation. These abilities should be sufficient to assure the development and maintenance of therapeutic relationships with patients and those who care for them. Individuals must be able to maintain emotional health despite stress, uncertainty, and physically taxing workloads and to adapt to changing situations while handling the responsibilities associated with medical education and patient care. Individuals must accept responsibility for learning, exercising good judgment and promptly completing all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients.

The technical standards outlined above must be met with or without accommodation. Students who, after review of these technical standards, determine that they require reasonable accommodation to fully engage in the program should contact the Office of Disability Services at (504) 568-2211 or ods@lsuhsc.edu to confidentially discuss their accommodation needs. Given the clinical nature of our programs, time may be needed to create and implement the accommodations. Accommodations are never retroactive; therefore, timely requests are encouraged.

LSUHSC-NO PA Program will consider for admission, progression, and graduation individuals who demonstrate the knowledge and the ability to perform or learn to perform the skills described in this document. Individuals will be assessed not only on their scholastic accomplishments, but also on their physical and emotional capacities to meet the requirements of the school's curriculum and to graduate as skilled and effective practitioners of medicine.

After the Application

Notification and Communication

Upon receipt of a verified application, applicants will receive electronic notification of their application status via e-mail through the CASPA website. You are required to regularly check your e-mail account provided on your CASPA application and update any e-mail address changes in a reasonable period of time. Failure to respond to program requests in a timely manner may result in loss of eligibility for program admission. Notification of acceptance will be communicated via email within six weeks after all interviews have been completed. Accepted applicants will have 14 days to respond to the offer of admission.

When trying to get information from the LSUHSC-NO Program office, e-mail communication is preferred. You may e-mail the program at PAProgram@lsuhsc.edu. Please allow up to one week for a response. Note that during busy admissions cycles, you may receive an automatic reply outlining when you should expect to receive a response.

Updating CASPA Transcripts

If you have already completed and submitted your CASPA application but have since completed additional coursework that is required by our program (i.e. pre-requisites), you must update your CASPA application, so we are able to calculate your pre-requisite GPAs.

This can be accomplished in the following manner and MUST be completed before access to your application is removed by CASPA:

- Navigate to the "Coursework" section of your verified CASPA application for this cycle.
- Delete any Planned/In Progress courses that are now complete.
- Re-enter these courses as "Completed".
  NOTE: you must have completed ALL courses in the term before you can change the status to "Complete"
- You may also enter any new "Planned" or "In-progress" courses in upcoming terms as applicable.
- Click "Save" to submit the information as an update.

NOTE: All transcripts should be mailed to CASPA for verification. Offer of invitation to the PA Program may be made while some coursework is in progress if the applicant is a Louisiana resident. Those courses MUST be completed before December 31, 2026. Those transcripts are the ONLY transcripts that should be sent directly to the program and should only be sent upon request.

Once you update the courses, you MUST submit proof of completion from the individual school(s) for us to verify the updated information. Unofficial or student copies of transcripts will not be accepted. Once an offer for matriculation is made, official transcripts will be required.

- Official transcripts should be mailed to the following address:
  Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center
  School of Allied Health Professions
  Office of Student Affairs
  411 S Prieur Street, HDC 417
  New Orleans, Louisiana 70112

- Official transcripts should be e-mailed to the following address:
  sahpsa@lsuhsc.edu and paprogram@lsuhsc.edu

Notice of Interviews

Competitive applicants will be invited to participate in an interview process to assess interpersonal and communication skills, maturity, and understanding and commitment to the PA career and the LSUHSC-NO Program's missions and values.

Interviews may be held on the LSUHSC-NO campus or virtually. Absence or withdrawal from the interview automatically places the applicant at risk for forfeiture of consideration for a seat in the class. All invitations for interviews are generated and communicated to qualified applicants through CASPA and the LSUHSC-NO PA Program via email. The dates for interviews are decided by the PA Program and published in advance. Invitees are required to acknowledge their acceptance of the offer for interview within two business days of the interview invitation being sent.

Interview dates for the 2026 Application Cycle are July 15, August 4-6, August 10 – 12.

Applicants will receive invitation to interview via e-mail throughout the application cycle. Applicants will be scheduled to one of the predetermined interview days and will only have the option to accept or decline a scheduled interview. This notification of acceptance is required by the program within 2 business days.

Acceptance in the Program

Notification of acceptance into the LSUHSC-NO PA Program will be provided within 6 weeks of the final interviews. Applicants offered a seat in the January class must acknowledge acceptance of the offer within 14 days of their notification by providing the following:

1. An electronic response to the PA Program of Acceptance letter.
2. A non-refundable acceptance deposit ($500) to hold a seat in the class which will be applied toward tuition.
3. A completed criminal background check (will include checking sex offenses and crimes against minors or elderly). Regarding misdemeanors or felonies, even if indicated that record is expunged, the information is still discoverable during a background check. **Any omission or errors are considered falsification of the application, and this could result in negative clearance.** A negative clearance, however, will not necessarily preclude matriculation; but a conviction of a felony offense may result in ineligibility to receive licensure in Louisiana.
4. A completed drug screen will be required prior to matriculation.

Health Requirements

The State of Louisiana requires students in health care related fields to be immunized against certain diseases. The specific immunization requirements are based on Louisiana Department of State Health Services, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and Centers for Disease Control recommendations. The health requirements for incoming students can be found here.

Transfer Credit

The PA Program will not accept transfer of coursework by an applicant in any other program.

Wait List Status

Students who are not offered a seat in the program following the Interviews may be placed on a wait list, at the recommendation of the Admissions Committee. Rank or position on the wait list will not be disclosed to candidates due to its dynamic nature. A wait list is valid from the close of the interview process through the add/drop date of the first semester of the Program for which the student applied. Wait-listed applicants not advanced to a seat are NOT considered for admission to the following class without reapplication.

Deferment Policy

LSUHSC-NO does not allow deferment of acceptance into the Program. Those applicants who cannot matriculate into the Program after acceptance for any reason must re-apply the following application cycle.

Reapplication

Applicants who are not accepted to the PA Program are encouraged to self-evaluate their application (and interview if granted) to identify areas that can be improved. The PA Program at LSUHSC- NO encourages reapplication once a serious effort has been made to remedy any deficiencies. Such an effort by an applicant is viewed by the admissions committee as an indication of motivation and perseverance and highlighted in a subsequent application.

If recycling your CASPA application for a subsequent admissions cycle, it is the applicant's responsibility to ensure the resubmission accurately reflects your most recent preparation and status. Updating your transcripts, healthcare experience, certifications, and personal statement are highly recommended.

Information Sessions

The LSUHSC-NO Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program offers information sessions for individuals who are interested in attending the program. Dates for these information sessions will be posted on the program website.

The LSUHSC-New Orleans PA Program does not review individual transcripts to determine course qualifications for applicants. The program will not meet with or advise applicants on an individual basis due to time constraints and volume of requests. Information sessions provide answers to many questions potential applicants have regarding the program, including admissions requirements and process. LSUHSC-New Orleans does not have a graduate counselor to assist in these matters.

What to expect: Information sessions are given by the program and are open to the public. These sessions are scheduled two to three times a year. Attendance at these sessions is not required for admission. The applicant is responsible for knowing program prerequisites and requirements.

Participants learn firsthand about our Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program from the program faculty. A review of the prerequisite courses required for admissions, an admissions process overview and if time permits, a tour of the program, including classrooms and physical examination lab. Occasionally, current students will be on hand to share a glimpse of their life as a PA student.

Participants are encouraged to come prepared by bringing a notebook and pen/pencil. We have found that spending time reviewing the information on our website before coming to an information session is valuable.

We also highly recommend that participants research the physician assistant profession prior to attending a session. We highly recommend these information sites:

http://www.aapa.org/
https://portal.caspaonline.org/
http://www.paeaonline.org

We want you to leave with a very clear understanding about the high expectations we have of our students, the challenging nature of graduate school and what you are committing to if you enter our program.

Driving Directions and Parking

The LSUHSC – New Orleans PA Program is located in the Human Development Center at 411 S. Prieur Street, New Orleans, LA 70112.

A plan of the campus and a map indicating how you may reach us is located here. Parking is available on the first floor of the South Roman Street Garage. The garage entrance is located at 425 South Roman Street. There is an automated pay station located on the first level near the elevators. The automated pay station accepts cash and credit cards. Visitor parking rates are $1.00 per hour up to a daily max of $10.00. You may also find parking on the streets surrounding the LSUHSC campus and the nearby pay to park lots.