

# Pre-physician Assistant

Departments  
and Programs  
in the College  
of Science

Biochemistry &  
Biophysics

Biology

Botany & Plant  
Pathology

Chemistry

Environmental  
Sciences

Geosciences

Mathematics

Microbiology

Molecular &  
Cellular Biology\*

Physics

Pre-professional  
Programs in the  
Health Sciences

Professional  
Science Masters\*

Science &  
Mathematics  
Education\*

Statistics\*

Zoology

\*graduate program only

... a pre-professional option within a General Science bachelor's degree. Physician assistants (PAs) are highly trained health care providers who practice medicine under the supervision of a licensed physician and the regulation of state law. PAs are trained to provide diagnostic, therapeutic, and preventive healthcare services. Working as members of the healthcare team, they take medical histories, examine and treat patients, order and interpret laboratory tests and x-rays, and make diagnoses. In most states, physician assistants may prescribe medications.

## Career Opportunities

The U.S. Department of Labor ranks physician assistants among the fastest growing occupations, due to anticipated expansion of the health care industry and an emphasis on cost containment. Job opportunities for PAs should be particularly good in rural and inner city clinics, because those settings have difficulty attracting physicians. More than half of jobs for PAs are in the offices of physicians. The rest are in hospitals, outpatient care centers, including HMO's, the Federal Government, and educational institutions. Opportunities are best in states that allow PAs a wider scope of practice.

U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.. *Occupational Handbook 2006-07*

Many PAs work in primary care specialties, such as general internal medicine, pediatrics, and family medicine. Other specialty areas include general and thoracic surgery, emergency medicine, orthopedics, and geriatrics. PAs specializing in surgery provide preoperative and postoperative care and may work as first or second assistants during major surgery. They also treat minor injuries by suturing, splinting, and casting. PAs record progress notes, instruct and counsel patients, and order or carry out therapy

## Preparing for Physician Assistant Study

There are more than 100 physician assistant programs in the United States. In Oregon, the Oregon Health and Science University (OHSU) in Portland offers a 26-month course of full-time study leading to a master's degree in physician assistant studies. The mission of the OHSU program is to prepare physician assistants for the delivery of primary care services to rural and medically underserved

populations of Oregon. Thus, Oregon residents, particularly those from rural or other medically underserved communities, are given special consideration for the 20 positions in each class per year. Pacific University in Forest Grove, Oregon, admits approximately 30 students per year to its 27 month Master of Science in Physician Assistant studies degree program.

Most PA programs require or highly recommend extensive experience in a health care setting for admission. OHSU requires a minimum of the equivalent of one year of full-time experience in direct hands-on patient care, while Pacific University requires 1,000 hours approximately 6 months. For the college student, this experience can be obtained as an emergency medical technician EMT, certified nursing assistant CNA, medical assistant, athletic trainer, or other appropriate paid or volunteer experience.



# General Science/ Pre-physician Assistant

## What to know about Oregon State University

Head Advisor  
College of Science  
128 Kidder Hall  
541-737-4811

OSU Admissions  
104 Kerr Administration  
541-737-4411  
800-291-4192

OSU Financial Aid  
Student Employment  
Loans & Scholarships  
College Work Study  
218 Kerr Administration  
541-737-2241

OSU Registrar  
102 Kerr Administration  
541-737-4331

OSU Housing  
102 Buxton Hall  
541-737-4771

OSU Website  
<http://oregonstate.edu>

## For more information, please contact:

Ariella Wolf, Advisor  
Pre-physician Assistant Program  
College of Science  
Oregon State University  
128 Kidder Hall  
Corvallis, Oregon 97331-4608  
phone: 541-737-4811  
fax: 541-737-1009  
email: [ariella.wolf@oregonstate.edu](mailto:ariella.wolf@oregonstate.edu)  
<http://catalog.oregonstate.edu/Option-Detail.aspx?id=295>

Oregon State University is an Affirmative Action  
Equal Opportunity Employer and complies with  
Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973.

0107

## Course of Study

The first-year student in pre-physician assistant studies will take courses in general chemistry, general psychology, mathematics, and the baccalaureate core (BC). The sophomore year will include organic chemistry and general courses in biological science, and statistics. During the junior and senior years, students will take subjects that are more directly related to their future professional training. They will include human anatomy and physiology, abnormal psychology, human development and upper division science courses.

Graduation requirements include 48 credits for the BC, consisting of writing/speech (9 cr.), mathematics (3 cr.), fitness (3 cr.), physical and biological sciences (12 cr.), western culture/cultural diversity/literature and arts/social processes/difference, power and discrimination (15 cr.), and contemporary global issues/science technology and society (6 cr.) Completion of the four-year pre-physician assistant program in the College of Science at OSU leads to a Bachelor of Science degree. Satisfactory completion of the OSU curriculum facilitates but does not guarantee admission to a physician assistant program since applicants are accepted on a competitive basis. It is important for students to check specific requirements of all schools to which they plan to apply.

## Sample Curriculum

An official graduation checklist may be obtained from an advisor. Spanish is highly recommended.

Freshman Year			credits	Sophomore Year			credits
General Chemistry	CH 121, 122, 123 or CH 221, 222, 223	15		Organic Chemistry	CH 331, 332, 337	12	
Math Sciences	MTH 111,112	8		General Biology	BI 211, 212, 213	12	
Computers: Applic. & Implica.	CS 101	4		Statistics	ST 201, 202	6	
General Sociology	SOC 204	3		Medical Terminology	PHAR 210	2	
General Psychology	PSY 201,202	6		BC: Writing II	WR 222	3	
Orientation	ALS 111, BI 109, or EXSS 132	1-2		BC: other courses		9	
BC: Writing I	WR 121	3		Electives		2	
BC: Fitness		3					
BC: Other courses		3					

Junior Year			credits	Senior Year			credits
Human Anatomy and Physiology	Z 331, 332, 333, 341, 342, 343	15		Approved upper division sci- ence, psychology or health		9	
General Physics	PH 201, 202, 203	15		Biochemistry	BB 350 or 450,451	4-7	
Human Lifespan Development	PSY 350	3		Microbiology	MB 302, 303	5	
Cell and Molecular Biology	BI 314	4		Genetics	BI 311	4	
Abnormal Psychology	PSY 381	3		History of Science approved WIC course		3	
Intro. Human Disease	H 320	3		Contemporary Global Issues	H 312	3	
BC: Writing III		3		BC: required courses and/or electives		14-17	

Experience.  
Explore.  
Discover  
Achieve.

**Biochemistry &  
Biophysics**

**Biology**

**Botany & Plant  
Pathology**

**Chemistry**

**Environmental  
Sciences**

**Geosciences**

**Mathematics**

**Microbiology**

**Molecular &  
Cellular Biology\***

**Physics**

**Pre-professional  
Programs in the  
Health Sciences**

**Professional  
Science Masters\***

**Science &  
Mathematics  
Education\***

**Statistics\***

**Zoology**

\*graduate program only

