| | Howard University<br>College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences<br>Department of Physician Assistant | Policy Number | PHAS - 001 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Admissions Policy (A2.05b, A3.13) | Effective Date | 08/01/2022 |
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| | Approved by:<br>Gina S. Brown, Ph.D., MSA, RN, FAAN, FNAP, FADLN<br>Dean, College of Nursing and Allied Health Sciences | Revision Date | 04/10/2025 |
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| Table of Contents | Page Number |
|---|---|
| I.    PURPOSE | 1 |
| II.   POLICY | 1 |
| III.  DEFINITIONS | 1 |
| IV.   PROCEDURES | 1 - 6 |

### I.    PURPOSE
To establish the Howard University Physician Assistant Program criteria and process for admission into the Physician Assistant Program.

### II.   POLICY
This policy will outline and define the practice and procedure for the admissions process of the Howard University Physician Assistant Department.

### III.  DEFINITIONS
N/A

### IV.  PROCEDURES
1. Applicants to the Howard University Physician Assistant Program must meet all program admission requirements to have their application considered and reviewed by the program Admissions committee. All applications will be reviewed to ensure compliance with the following requirements by the stated deadlines:
   a. Completion of CASPA application by January 15$^{th}$ each cycle
      - All applicants to the Howard University Physician Assistant Program must apply through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) - https://caspa.liaisoncas.com/applicant-ux/#/login).

      - Candidate applications in the verified CASPA status by January 15$^{th}$ will be reviewed for consideration.

2. Applicants must meet the following minimum criteria for consideration for admission into the Howard University Physician Assistant Program:
   a. Bachelor's degree from US institution of higher education accredited by a regional accrediting association or the degree equivalent in another country with a 3.0 GPA on a scale of 4.0 from the institution.
      - Applicants must have completed a regionally accredited college/

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university or appropriate international institution.

- Applicants may apply while their degree is in progress (final 12 credits); however, degree completion and final transcripts are required prior to matriculation into the Physician Assistant Program.

- Applicants with a Bachelor's degree earned outside of the United States must have their transcripts evaluated by one of the member organizations associated with the National Association of Credential Evaluation Services (**NACES**) for translation. Results will be submitted to CASPA. No exceptions will be made. This is a requirement before admission can be granted. The academic evaluation requirement cannot be waived.

- Applicants who are not United States citizens are required to submit official test scores for Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) https://www.ets.org/toefl. The minimum score is required for admission is 90. Howard's school code is: 5297
    1. The TOEFL/IELTS requirement will be automatically waived for international students who are from a country where English is an official language or who have studied in the United States for at least four years.

b. Applicants must successfully complete the following prerequisite courses with a grade of "C" or higher (within the Bachelor's degree or through coursework at a regionally accredited United States institution of higher education).
- *General Biology I and II with lab
- *General Chemistry I and II with lab
- *Organic Chemistry with lab **or** Biochemistry with lab
- *Microbiology with lab
- *Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with lab
- *recommendation for completion within 3 years of matriculation
- Statistics
- Psychology
- Social Sciences
    - *African American Studies/ Anthropology/ Communication/ Philosophy/ Sociology
- Medical Terminology

- If an applicant has a more advanced science prerequisite course grade of

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B or higher in a higher-level course in the same subject area within seven years, a course substitution for the program science prerequisite will be applied. The Admissions Committee will apply this substitution.

- Knowledge-based testing does not satisfy any of the prerequisites.

- Applicants may apply with up to **7** prerequisite credits pending completion the semester prior to matriculation.

- A pass/fail grade does not satisfy any of these prerequisite requirements.

*\*Prerequisite science courses must be completed within seven years prior to  program matriculation.*

*\*\*The program does ~~will~~ not award or grant advancement placement credit for courses within the  program curriculum.*

    c. Submission of a personal statement responding to the writing prompt in CASPA.

    d. Submission of a current resume/CV, inclusive of education, volunteer, and professional experience, if applicable.

    e. Three (3) letters of recommendation addressing the applicant's potential as a physician assistant.
- One letter of recommendation **must be** from a practicing healthcare provider or academic professor or employer/supervisor.

    f. Documentation of a minimum of 800 hours of direct patient care experience (volunteer experience may be considered) is required. (Direct Patient Care Hours Form)
- Direct patient care hours must be current within the 7 years application.

- It is recommended that students obtain direct patient care hours in different medical settings, e.g., hospice, assisted living facility, hospital, underserved areas/countries, etc.
- To obtain direct patient care experience, students are encouraged to seek opportunities in following areas: paramedic, nurse's aide, phlebotomist, medical assistant, radiologic technologist, EKG tech, EMT (I or Basic),

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| | | **Next Review** | 05/12/2026 |

LPN, dental hygienist, or clinical laboratorians (the student <u>must</u> perform phlebotomy, and have direct patient interaction, not just specimen handling), medical scribe or behavioral health technician.

- All required direct patient care hours **<u>must</u>** be completed and submitted by the January 15<sup>th</sup>.

g. Documentation of up to 40 hours shadowing a practicing physician assistant is recommended, not required. (Shadowing Hours Form)

3. Applicants must be able to pass a background check and drug screening test. Background checks and drug screening tests must be performed within 90 days of matriculation of matriculation in the Howard University Physician Assistant Program, and prior to start of the clinical phase of the program.

4. All applications submitted through CASPA are reviewed by the Program Administrative Specialist or designated faculty/staff to ensure applications meet the minimum criteria. Applications meeting the minimum criteria for review are assigned to a member of the Admissions Committee for review and ranking based on the scoring rubrics designed by the faculty for this purpose. The components of the rubric are:

- Cumulative GPA
- Science GPA
- Letters of recommendation
- Direct patient care experience (paid/volunteer)
- Physician Assistant shadowing experience (not required)

5. Applicants must be able to meet the program's Technical Standards which can be found on the Howard University Physician Assistant Program website.

**6.** Applicants must have no history of dismissal from another Physician Assistant program for academic or disciplinary reasons.

7. The program awards preference related to the program mission to candidates with the following attributes:

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- Military veterans
- Military reservists
- Military-connected dependents
- Graduates from Howard University
- Graduates from an accredited HBCU

8. Qualified applicants who meet a minimum of 75% of total points possible on the Applicant Application Rating Summary Form will be invited to participate in an on-site (or virtual) interview. A maximum of 125 interview invitations are extended.
   The interview process will include the following elements:
   a. An on-site writing assignment on a relevant healthcare topic.
      - Virtual applicants submit a writing sample during the virtual interview via email within 5 minutes of completions of the writing assignment.

   b. Interview with a panel comprised of the program admissions committee members, program alumni, advisory board members, clinical preceptors, and other University faculty. Interviewers will complete an interview scoring rubric with recommendation.
      - Any candidate who receives a "Do Not Recommend" will not be considered.

   c. Applicants will participate in a group round table discussion with the program director.

   d. All components of the interview process will be scored and submitted. Once all scores have been compiled, applicants will be ranked in numerical order based on points accumulated.

   e. Current matriculating physician assistant students will participate as student ambassadors.

9. Applicants who meet a minimum of 75% of total points possible after the interview will be eligible for program selection.

10. The Admissions Committee will review, discuss, and render a final decision on the applicants who will be offered an acceptance for the new cohort. Each cohort will comprise of twenty (20) students.
    a. Students who meet the criteria but are greater than twenty (20) students will be placed on a waiting list.

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b.  Students who are offered a seat in the program will be made aware through the Office of Admissions.

c.  To confirm acceptance of a seat in the new cohort, candidates are required to submit a nonrefundable program seat deposit ($700) and enrollment fee ($300) upon confirmation.