

APPLYING TO PA SCHOOL FAQs

Why might an application be rejected by CASPA (Central Application Service for Physician Assistant)?

Failing to document an institution a student attended and/or courses taken

What are five routes for earning patient contact hours?

EMT, CNA, Phlebotomy on patients, working in a physical therapy clinic, medical assistant

For the CASPA application do I need to have undergraduate research experience?

No

How can I send transcripts to CASPA electronically?

As UD is a member of the National Student Clearinghouse (www.studentclearinghouse.org) and CASPA accepts transcripts from this organization you can have your transcripts sent electronically via the National Student Clearinghouse

I have already submitted my CASPA application however I took another course after submitting it, do I need to send an updated transcript to the PA schools I applied to?

Yes, upon the PA Program's request

What items will crossover from cycle to cycle in CASPA?

Transcripts and standardized test scores (eg, GRE)

I am applying to 7 PA programs however one program is not a member of CASPA. How do I proceed?

For the PA program that is not a member of CASPA, follow instructions on that PA programs website for applying; for the remaining six programs submit your application thru CASPA

Will my CASPA ID number remain the same, if I do not get accepted in the current cycle but choose to reapply in the subsequent or other cycle?

Yes

How many letters of recommendation do I need?

Typically you need three letters, and one should be from a PA or MD

I received 5 letters of recommendation. Will PA Programs I applied to receive all 5?

Yes

When the CASPA website is closed for 2 weeks in April can any changes be made to my application?

No, you have to wait until the new cycle opens, typically at the end of April

What is the maximum number of characters for the personal essay?

5000

What is the maximum number of characters for the optional COVID-19 essay?

2500

I received a C in general biology, should I retake the course?

PA programs take a holistic approach to the students application, it will be viewed as a positive if the course is retaken and a higher grade is received

What is the average number of programs students apply to?

7

I am an EMT, where would I upload my credential documentation on CASPA?

The section entitled *Supporting Information*

Does CASPA recognize Grade Forgiveness?

CASPA does not recognize Grade Forgiveness, all courses on your transcripts(s) count toward your GPA (science and non-science)

Can I upload letters of recommendation or does the evaluator upload them?

Students cannot upload letters of recommendation. CASPA sends an email to the evaluator to let them know a student as identified them as an evaluator and also lets them know the deadline to upload the letter.

Do letters of recommendation carry over from cycle to cycle?

No

I am employed as a medical scribe. Would this activity constitute patient contact hours?

No. Patient contact hours typically constitute performing a medically related task or procedure on a patient such as taking vital signs

Does CASPA require documentation for patient contact hours?

No. The student enters contact information on the organization and hours worked per week. Total hours are automatically calculated. There is also a space where the student can enter text regarding their experience or hours accrued.

Will my US PA Certification be accepted in other countries?

No

To be a competitive applicant, how many patient contact hours should I aim for?

Depending on the PA Programs requirements, earning 500 to 800 patient contact hours would be ideal

I am applying to six PA Programs, three of which do not require the GRE. Do I still need to send my GRE scores to CASPA?

Yes

Can you give an example of supplemental information that may be required for my CASPA application?

Yes, an example would be the University of Colorado requiring the CASper test which is described as a situational judgement test. Scores are sent directly to the PA Program and carries a fee (may vary from year to year)

What are typical fees for CASPA?

While they are subject to change, CASPA may charge \$179 for initial PA Program and \$55 for each additional program

Does CASPA offer fee waivers?

Yes. Criteria includes the applicant filed a Federal Income Tax Return Form 1040 or 1040A with an adjusted gross income that falls below the Low Income Level listed below, or

Applicant was listed as a dependent on a filed Federal Income Tax Return Form 1040 or 1040A with an adjusted gross income that falls below the Low Income Level listed below. If you were claimed as a dependent by a parent or guardian on their 2020 Federal Income Tax Return, CASPA requires you to use that individual's Federal Income Tax Return instead of your own. Fee waivers are offered on a first come first serve basis and only covers the initial program fee, students are responsible for the additional program fees. Students must request the fee waiver before submitting their application.

Which PA Programs are accepting the PA-CAT Exam?

Pfeiffer University (Misenheimer, NC), Central Michigan University (Mount Pleasant, MI), Stanford University (Stanford, California), North Central College (Naperville, IL)

Can you recommend a reputable resource for learning more about the PA Profession?

The PA Life (www.thepalife.com)

UD PA Club <https://slukas3.wixsite.com/paclub>

In 2020 I opted for Pass/Fail for a few of my pre-reqs. Will PA schools accept Pass/Fail?

It depends on the PA Program. Would recommend contacting the PA programs you plan on applying to.

I took AP courses in high school such as general psychology. Do I need to retake this course at UD?

Check with the PA Programs you are applying to regarding AP courses.

Will MMSC courses like hematology count toward the CASPA science GPA?

Yes

Is there a form where I can document my patient contact hours as well as other experiences?

Yes, the healthcare experiences form can be found at https://www.udel.edu/content/dam/udelImages/chs/Documents/MMS/CHS_MMS-experiences-Form-for-MDD-Pre-PA.pdf