

**DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT  
STUDIES SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS  
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS MEDICAL BRANCH AT GALVESTON**

**ADMISSIONS INFORMATION / FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**How many applications are received each year? How many are accepted?**

The number of applications received varies annually; however, the average ranges from 800-1500 per application cycle. The number of accepted applicants varies annually, from 80-90 students.

**What is the typical profile of accepted students?**

The minimum required overall GPA is 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. We also have a minimum science GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale. We do not have a minimum score for the GRE. For more information, please go to the typical profile of accepted students.

<http://shp.utmb.edu/PhysicianAssistantStudies/CharacteristicsAcceptedStudents.asp>

**Is there an advisor I can talk to directly?**

Office or walk-in appointments are not available due to schedule constraints.

We strongly encourage interested persons to attend one of our open house sessions, which will provide detailed information regarding the profession, our program, and the application process.

**Can I have my transcript reviewed?**

We do not review transcripts or provide guidance on which courses to take in order to make you a stronger applicant. We do, however, review transcripts the day of your interview, and we will notify you the day of your interview if you are missing specific courses.

**Do you have informational sessions?**

Informational sessions (Open House Sessions) are scheduled regularly and typically occur on Friday afternoons from 1-3 pm. The sessions are in the School of Health Professions and are led by the Chair of the Recruitment Committee. These sessions provide a detailed overview of the PA profession, the UTMB Program, and the application process. You must RSVP. Please follow this link for more information: [http://shp.utmb.edu/open\\_house.asp](http://shp.utmb.edu/open_house.asp)

**DEADLINES**

**What is the CASPA application deadline?**

Applicant must have completed the CASPA application, including all official transcripts, official GRE scores and all supporting documents by **September 1** annually. Applications must be marked by CASPA that they were **VERIFIED on or before the September 1 deadline** (midnight EST time). Applicants must also complete the UTMB supplemental application. The supplemental application link will be sent to the applicant when Enrollment Services begins processing the CASPA application. Please do not fill out the supplemental application until the link is sent to you.

### **What is the GRE Score deadline?**

Official scores of the Graduate Record Examination – General Test taken within the last five years are required. GRE scores must be **submitted directly to CASPA using the code 0437 and not to UTMB**. The GRE deadline is the same as the CASPA deadline, which is September 1; therefore, all scores must be received by the deadline regardless of when you took the exam. Your CASPA application is not considered complete without the GRE scores. If you are a re-applicant or have previously sent your GRE scores to UTMB, you still need to send them to CASPA using the same code 0437.

### **PREREQUISITE INFORMATION**

**We have changed our prerequisite requirements. We now require Medical Terminology (2-3 credit hours) as a prerequisite. Medical Spanish and/or Spanish Medical Terminology may not count towards this prerequisite requirement.**

### **Do advanced placement courses count towards the prerequisite requirements?**

All prerequisite courses must be assigned a letter grade. Therefore, advance placement courses do not meet our prerequisite requirements.

### **Can you apply without all prerequisites completed?**

Regardless of the applicant's prior degree(s) or experience, all prerequisite credits and awarding of the bachelor's degree must be completed no later than the end of the spring semester of the year of matriculation.

On the CASPA application, please document matriculation in prerequisite courses by semester attended, in progress, or planned with as much detail as possible. Provide information and/or documentation for all requirements. Your application will be considered incomplete if there is missing information and/or documentation by the published deadlines, and will not be processed due to the volume of applications received.

### **Can prerequisites be completed at community colleges?**

Prerequisites can be taken from any accredited college or university, which includes community colleges.

### **What does "Prerequisite courses must be for science majors" mean?**

Although you are not required to have a science major or degree, prerequisite science courses must be from the science curriculum at your university or college. Be cautious about completing science courses unique to a particular subject/major as they will not be accepted (e.g., Microbiology for kinesiology majors).

### **Are online classes accepted?**

Prerequisites can be taken from any accredited college or university, which includes online or distance courses, but the course must be assigned a grade. Pass/fail courses will not count as a prerequisite.

Updated 10/17

### **How long are courses considered valid for admissions?**

There is no specific time frame in which courses are not considered valid, but we do recommend that you re-take some science courses (e.g., Anatomy and Physiology) in order to make yourself a more competitive candidate and become more familiar with the recent science information. If classes are over 10 years old and you attended college in Texas, you could be eligible for academic fresh start. Please see the website below for more information.

<http://www.collegeforalltexans.com/index.cfm?objectid=6D10C9BD-DD24-153F-90B91DA6C20D1C97>

### **How are grades calculated?**

Only official transcripts from approved institutions of higher education are accepted for evaluation and grade point calculation. All GPA's are calculated by CASPA.

## **TRANSCRIPT INFORMATION**

### **Where do I send my transcripts?**

Transcripts are sent directly to CASPA. Upon acceptance to the PA program, official transcripts will be sent to UTMB Enrollment Services. During interviews, you will be asked to bring a student copy of your grades and/or unofficial transcripts to document courses in progress or lacking at the time of your CASPA application. Please do NOT send transcripts via email to the program unless specifically requested by staff.

## **OTHER**

### **Can I submit more than 5 letters of recommendation?**

Submit only 5 letters of recommendation directly to CASPA. Please do not send any documents to UTMB. References for CASPA can be the same for the supplemental application.

### **Is shadowing, medical or volunteer experience required?**

UTMB does not have a minimum requirement for medical experience or shadowing, but it is highly recommended in order to be a more competitive applicant. We do not have any set specific number of hours that are recommended. We look at the information on the entire application to determine acceptance.

### **What will make me a more competitive applicant?**

Many students ask this question. The best way to make yourself a competitive candidate is to be well-rounded. If you feel as though your grades are not as competitive as others, then gaining more medical experience will help. We look at the entire application to determine qualities of an excellent physician assistant student.

### **Can I attend the PA program on a part-time basis?**

No, students cannot attend part-time. The curriculum consists of a sequence of courses, which must be taken on a full-time basis.

### **Can I work while I am in the PA Program?**

Working while enrolled in PA program courses (including while on clinical rotations) is not recommended or allowed due to the heavy schedule and workload. It is difficult to juggle class time, study time, and personal time. The student must stay focused to be successful.

### **When do I receive my UTMB supplemental application?**

Once UTMB receives the CASPA application, the registrar's office will correspond with the applicant and give him/her instructions on locating and completing the supplemental application. This information will also include a deadline for submission.

### **Do you give preference to Texas residents?**

Applicants seeking admission span states across the nation. More applications are received from Texas residents; however, applications from residents of all areas are considered. Applications are reviewed on a competitive basis.

### **What do I need if I am an international applicant?**

Admissions requirements apply for all students regardless of the prior degrees obtained. Academic work at foreign colleges, universities, or preparatory schools shall be excluded from the GPA calculations. Transfer credit appearing on US institution transcripts, student copies of an evaluation, and other foreign evaluations will not be accepted. Evaluation services accepted are noted in the instructions on the CASPA website under "Other Foreign Transcripts".

### **International students must submit and/or complete the following:**

- 1) Take and score satisfactorily on the test of English as a foreign language (TOEFL) if the native language is not English and/or if coursework is being submitted from a foreign institution where the primary language is not English;
- 2) Submit an acceptable English translation with the transcripts if the transcripts are not in English, and;
- 3) Submit a professional evaluation of foreign credentials.

The following are the Credentialing Services approved by UTMB:

Foreign Credentials Services of America  
1910 Justin Lane  
Austin, TX 78757  
512 – 459 – 8428  
Email: [billpaver@fcsa.biz](mailto:billpaver@fcsa.biz)

Spantran Services  
7211 Regency Square Blvd., Suite 205  
Houston, TX 77036-3197  
713 – 266 – 8805

World Education Services, Inc.  
PO Box 745  
Old Chelsea Station  
New York, NY 10113-0745  
1 – 800 – 937 – 3895 ext. 316  
[info@wes.org](mailto:info@wes.org)

## **INTERVIEW INFORMATION**

### **What should I expect on the interview day?**

One-on-one faculty interviews are conducted. Practicing an interview may make you feel more at ease. Many college advisors can assist you with this process.

### **Applicant Photograph**

The request for a photograph at interviews is not used by the admissions committee in the decision process and in no way affects the processing of your application. Rather, the purpose of the photograph is to act as a memory aid for the faculty.

### **What if I do not get accepted?**

We are unable to give personal information in regards to decision making of the review process. We encourage all applicants to reapply.

## **PROGRAM INFORMATION**

### **Tuition information**

Enrollment Services is responsible for the administration of financial aid programs, fiscal counseling for students, and the collection of loan repayments. Counselors in the financial aid office are available to help you estimate your expenses and understand the sources of financial aid available to you once you are accepted for admission into the UTMB program. Please visit the web site: <http://www.utmb.edu/enrollmentservices/tuitionandfees.asp>

### **What is the Program Mission?**

To develop and graduate academically and clinically exceptional physician assistants.

### **What is the curriculum length?**

The program curriculum is 26 months in length.

### **What does the curriculum consist of?**

Please refer to the PA Student Handbook for current degree plans.

<https://shp.utmb.edu/PhysicianAssistantStudies/Documents/passthdbk201618.pdf>

### **Are we an accredited PA program?**

At its July 2017 meeting, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) placed the **University of Texas Medical Branch Physician Assistant** program, sponsored by the **University of Texas Medical Branch**, on **Accreditation-Probation** status until its next review in **June 2019**.

Probation is a temporary status of accreditation conferred when a program does not meet the standards and when the capability of the program to provide an acceptable educational experience for its students is threatened.

Once placed on probation, programs that still fail to comply with accreditation requirements in a timely manner, as specified by the ARC-PA, may be scheduled for a focused site visit and/or risk having their accreditation withdrawn.

Specific questions regarding the Program and its plans should be directed to the Program Director and/or the appropriate institutional official(s).

Updated 10/17

**What is the PANCE first time pass rate?**

UTMB is very proud of the high pass rate consistently well above the national average.

<https://shp.utmb.edu/PhysicianAssistantStudies/Documents/UTMB%20PANCE%20Report.pdf>

**Where do students complete clinical rotations?**

Clinical rotation sites span Galveston and Harris Counties as well as sites throughout Texas and internationally.