

# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT – M.P.A.

Loma Linda University offers a professional course of study leading to the Master of Physician Assistant (M.P.A.) degree. This degree prepares students for medical work as health-care professionals.

The program consists of didactic and clinical phases that run sequentially for eight quarters over a 24-month period. A new class is accepted annually from diverse cultural and ethnic backgrounds—with consideration of academic performance, clinical experiences, and service to the community.

## Mission statement

The Loma Linda University Department of Physician Assistant (PA) Sciences educates primary-care physician assistants who will provide health care in collaboration with physicians as active members of a professional health-care team. We are committed to excellence and compassion for the whole person and quality health care for underserved communities locally and globally, in accordance with the mission of Loma Linda University and the School of Allied Health Professions.

## Vision

Graduates of the Loma Linda University Master of Physician Assistant Program will be recognized for professional excellence, integrity, empathy, teamwork, and advocating lifestyle changes to promote wholeness.

## Program learning outcomes

In addition to the stated institutional learning outcomes (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/institutional-learning-outcomes/>), at the end of this program, the graduate should be able to:

1. Apply the basic sciences to physician assistant sciences.
2. Demonstrate clinical skills in patient-care settings.
3. Demonstrate critical thinking skills in physician assistant sciences and practice.
4. Exhibit professionalism appropriate for physician assistants.
5. Provide culturally proficient, whole-person care to individuals and communities.
6. Demonstrate a commitment to the promotion of the physician assistant profession.

## Goals

1. Provide a curriculum whose required academic content and clinical experience equip graduates to provide competent medical care that will enhance the services of the medical profession.
2. Graduate PAs who enhance the services of supervising physicians as part of the physician-PA team and collaborate with other members of an interdisciplinary health-care team to provide quality patient care.
3. Graduate PAs who will utilize their education and training to make significant contributions to the health of the community.

4. Graduate PAs who improve access to medical services by providing whole-person care to those living in underserved communities.
5. Graduate PAs who are culturally competent and able to care for diverse populations with compassion and excellence.
6. Graduate PAs who will provide care with the highest ethical standards.
7. Graduate PAs who will be lifelong learners and actively engaged in the PA profession.

## Housing

On-campus housing is available for men and women. For information on Daniells Residence, call 1-909/558-4562. For information on Lindsay Hall, call 1-909/558-4561.

## Financial assistance

For information regarding funding opportunities, see Student Aid (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/financial-policies-information/>) in the financial policies section of this CATALOG.

## Accreditation

View our Accreditation History (<http://www.arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-loma-linda-university/>).

The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA), 3325 Paddocks Parkway, Suite 345, Suwanee GA 30024; telephone, 1-770/476-1224; email, [accreditationservices@arc-pa.org](mailto:accreditationservices@arc-pa.org); website, <http://www.arc-pa.org>; has granted Accreditation-Continued status to the Loma Linda University Physician Assistant program sponsored by Loma Linda University. Accreditation-Continued is an accreditation status granted when a currently accredited program is in compliance with the ARC-PA *Standards*.

Accreditation remains in effect until the program closes or withdraws from the accreditation process, or until accreditation is withdrawn for failure to comply with the *Standards*. The approximate date for the next validation review of the program by the ARC-PA will be March 2027. The review date is contingent upon continued compliance with the Accreditation *Standards* and ARC-PA policy.

## Admissions

Applications are accepted between May 1 and October 1, 11:59 pm EST. Applications must be made through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants. This service is available at [caspa.liaisoncas.com](http://caspa.liaisoncas.com) (<https://caspa.liaisoncas.com>). In addition, completion of a secondary application from Loma Linda University is required. Completed applications and all supporting documents must be received by the Department of Physician Assistant Sciences no later than December 15, 11:59 pm PST. Required interviews are granted to qualified applicants upon invitation by the admissions committee. Applicant must also complete the following requirements:

- A baccalaureate degree from an accredited college or university, completed by December 31 of the year of application.
- An overall G.P.A. of at least 3.0 or higher and a science G.P.A. of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale.
- Three letters of reference, including one from a practicing MD/DO/PA who you have worked under in a direct, hands-on, paid patient care experience. Letter of reference from MD/DO/PA **must** be typed

on official letterhead. This letter **cannot** be from a friend or relative, and **cannot** be from a shadowing experience.

- Documented paid patient-care experience of 2,000 hours minimum by August 1st of the year of matriculation. Accepted clinical experiences include accredited, credentialed professions that provide patient assessment, treatment, patient care plans, and diagnostic testing.

Applicants must have direct patient care experience working in a clinical setting which requires a high level of critical thinking and responsibility to the patient. Only paid hours are acceptable. Hours completed during the following experiences are **not** accepted: student clinicals, externships, internships, foreign medical positions, shadowing, and volunteer experiences.

- Prerequisites:
  - Please note that a passing grade is considered a C or better. Prerequisite courses which were changed to Pass/Fail (P/F) due to closure of academic institution during the COVID-19 pandemic will not be accepted.
  - All prerequisite coursework must be taken at an accredited college or university in the United States prior to acceptance.
  - A maximum of 2 total prerequisite courses may be outstanding at the time of application; with no more than 1 science prerequisites outstanding.
  - Science courses must be for science majors and include a laboratory component. All prerequisite science courses are required to have been taken within the last 10 years. Introductory courses are not accepted as meeting our science prerequisite course criteria.
  - All outstanding prerequisites must be completed with a grade of C or better by the end of the spring term prior to matriculation.
- International applicants (non-U.S. citizens and non-U.S. permanent residents) must meet all admission requirements, provide suitable recommendations, furnish English evaluations of all official foreign transcripts and credentials, and give evidence of their ability to meet estimated living expenses and all financial obligations to the University during their program. Please refer to the international student information (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/>) page for a complete list of requirements for international students.
- Admission into the PA Program at Loma Linda University is contingent upon a criminal background check. Falsification of this information or omission of criminal misconduct is not acceptable and may result in retraction of offer of admission.

## Prerequisite courses

The final determination on whether a course will meet our criteria will rest with the admissions committee. Please note, while the Physician Assistant Program at Loma Linda University requires specific courses as prerequisites to enrollment, these prerequisites cannot substitute for more advanced applied content within the Physician Assistant Program curriculum. College-level prerequisite courses include the following:

- Human anatomy and physiology with laboratory. Coursework can be a complete sequence OR separate courses in human anatomy and human physiology. Must cover all organ systems.
- General chemistry, one-year sequence with laboratory **or** a 2- or 3-term complete sequence of inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, and biochemistry with laboratory for all courses.
- General microbiology with laboratory. Must cover the following areas: bacteria, viruses, fungi, and protozoa.

- General psychology: must be general and cover topics across the lifespan.
- General sociology **or** cultural anthropology (must cover multiple groups).
- College algebra: must be college-level or higher. Statistics courses, although recommended, do not satisfy this prerequisite.
- English composition: one year sequence. English as a second language (ESL) courses do not satisfy this prerequisite.

## Recommended courses

- Statistics
- Medical terminology
- Conversational Spanish

## Admission preferences

- Seventh-day Adventists
- Graduates of Loma Linda University
- Applicants from underrepresented populations
- Applicants with a history of meaningful, continuous involvement in community service consistent with the mission and values of Loma Linda University
- Applicants with documented military service

## Program requirements

First Year		Units
PAST 501	Anatomy for Physician Assistants I	2
PAST 502	Anatomy for Physician Assistants II	2
PAST 503	Anatomy for Physician Assistants III	2
PAST 504	Primary Care Pediatrics	3
PAST 505	Women's Health Care	3
PAST 511	Pharmacology for Physician Assistants I	2
PAST 512	Pharmacology for Physician Assistants II	2
PAST 513	Pharmacology for Physician Assistants III	2
PAST 530	Diagnostic Techniques for Physician Assistants I	2
PAST 531	Diagnostic Techniques for Physician Assistants II	2
PAST 532	Diagnostic Techniques for Physician Assistants III	2
PAST 547	Basic Medical Science	3
PAST 551	Normal and Pathologic Physiology for Physician Assistants I	2
PAST 552	Normal and Pathologic Physiology for Physician Assistants II	2
PAST 553	Normal and Pathologic Physiology for Physician Assistants III	2
PAST 554	Clinical Skills for Physician Assistants	4
PAST 556	Preventive Medicine and Health Promotion	2
PAST 558	Psychiatry for Physician Assistants	3
PAST 571	Integrative Spanish for Physician Assistants	3
PAST 572 <sup>1</sup>	Culture and Community for Physician Assistants	3
PAST 575	Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants I	1
PAST 576	Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants II	1
PAST 577	Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants III	1
PAST 578	Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants IV	1
PAST 581	Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants I	2
PAST 582	Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants II	3

PAST 583	Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants III
PAST 584	Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants IV
PAST 591	Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants I
PAST 592	Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants II
PAST 593	Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants III
PAST 594	Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants IV
PAST 601	Evidence-Based Medicine for Physician Assistants I
PAST 602	Evidence-Based Medicine for Physician Assistants II
RELE 505	Clinical Ethics

## Second Year

PAST 516A	Physician Assistant Professional Issues
PAST 516B	Physician Assistant Professional Issues
PAST 603A	Capstone
PAST 603B	Capstone
PAST 701	Rotation I
PAST 702	Rotation II
PAST 703	Rotation III
PAST 704	Rotation IV
PAST 705	Rotation V
PAST 706	Rotation VI
PAST 707	Rotation VII
PAST 708	Rotation VIII

**Total Units:**

**131**

<sup>1</sup> Fulfills service learning requirement

Eight six-week clinical rotations, including: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics/gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, behavioral medicine, and one elective are required.

## Normal time to complete the program

2.33 years (eight [8] academic quarters) — full-time enrollment required

## Courses

### PAST 501. Anatomy for Physician Assistants I. 2 Units.

First of three courses in anatomy for physician assistants. Study of the anatomical structure of the human body by organ system. Includes dissection of cadavers and preserved specimens; and, histology, anatomic relations, and the anatomical basis for disease, injury and dysfunction.

### PAST 502. Anatomy for Physician Assistants II. 2 Units.

Second of three courses in anatomy for physician assistants. Study of the anatomical structure of the human body by organ system. Includes dissection of cadavers and preserved specimens; and, histology, anatomic relations, and the anatomical basis for disease, injury and dysfunction. Prerequisite: PAST 501.

### PAST 503. Anatomy for Physician Assistants III. 2 Units.

Third of three courses in anatomy for physician assistants. Study of the anatomical structure of the human body by organ system. Includes dissection of cadavers and preserved specimens; and, histology, anatomic relations, and the anatomical basis for disease, injury and dysfunction. Prerequisite: PAST 501, PAST 502.

### PAST 504. Primary Care Pediatrics. 3 Units.

Introduces common medical and surgical disorders encountered in pediatric medicine. Emphasizes primary care concepts in the care of children. Introduces rare disorders that the physician assistant may encounter in primary care. Presentation of disease processes mirrors adult medicine by discussing etiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, diagnostic work-up, and management.

### PAST 505. Women's Health Care. 3 Units.

Common problems encountered in caring for women; management of these problems. Etiology, pathophysiology, clinical presentation, and diagnostic work-up.

### PAST 511. Pharmacology for Physician Assistants I. 2 Units.

The first of three parts of a continuum of courses that study the basic concepts of pharmaceuticals used in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases—including a systematic presentation of pharmacology and the therapeutic value of the drugs used in medicine. Related topics include drug legislation, routes of administration, adverse effects, drug interactions, and drug toxicity, with special consideration to pediatric and geriatric pharmacology.

### PAST 512. Pharmacology for Physician Assistants II. 2 Units.

The second of three parts of a continuum of courses that studies the basic concepts of pharmaceuticals used in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases—including a systematic presentation of pharmacology, and the therapeutic value of the drugs used in medicine. Related topics include drug legislation, routes of administration, adverse effects, drug interactions, and drug toxicity, with special consideration to pediatric and geriatric pharmacology. Prerequisite: PAST 511.

### PAST 513. Pharmacology for Physician Assistants III. 2 Units.

The third of three parts of a continuum of courses that studies the basic concepts of pharmaceuticals used in the diagnosis, prevention, and treatment of diseases—including a systematic presentation of pharmacology and the therapeutic value of the drugs used in medicine. Related topics include drug legislation, routes of administration, adverse effects, drug interactions, and drug toxicity, with special consideration to pediatric and geriatric pharmacology. Prerequisite: PAST 511, PAST 512.

### PAST 516A. Physician Assistant Professional Issues. 1 Unit.

A history of the physician assistant (PA) profession and current trends and issues. Includes the PA's role in health-care delivery, political, legal, and intraprofessional factors that affect PA practice, and the PA's role in relation to physicians and other health-care providers. Addresses professional responsibility and biomedical ethics, professional organizations, program accreditation, graduate certification and recertification, employment consideration.

### PAST 516B. Physician Assistant Professional Issues. 1 Unit.

Continues PAST 516A. Prerequisite: PAST 516A.

### PAST 530. Diagnostic Techniques for Physician Assistants I. 2 Units.

Introduces laboratory investigations and imaging techniques used to confirm or exclude probable diagnoses. Acquire and apply knowledge, skills and medical reasoning required to select both screening and confirmatory tests in a medically sound, cost-effective manner.

### PAST 531. Diagnostic Techniques for Physician Assistants II. 2 Units.

Introduces and applies laboratory investigations and imaging techniques used to confirm or exclude probable diagnoses. Acquire and apply knowledge, skills and medical reasoning required to select both screening and confirmatory tests in a medically sound, cost-effective manner. Prerequisite: PAST 530.

**PAST 532. Diagnostic Techniques for Physician Assistants III. 2 Units.**

Introduces and applies laboratory investigations and imaging techniques used to confirm or exclude probable diagnoses. Acquire and apply knowledge, skills and medical reasoning required to select both screening and confirmatory tests in a medically sound, cost-effective manner. Prerequisite: PAST 530, PAST 531.

**PAST 547. Basic Medical Science. 3 Units.**

Provides an overview of scientific principles as they pertain to the practice of clinical medicine. Emphasizes microorganisms commonly encountered by physician assistants in clinical practice. Provides a foundation for principles of clinical medicine and pharmacology.

**PAST 551. Normal and Pathologic Physiology for Physician Assistants I. 2 Units.**

Exploration of normal physiological function from a systems-based medical perspective which serves as a foundation for understanding the process of disease. Includes etiology, pathogenesis, and clinical manifestations of medical disorders.

**PAST 552. Normal and Pathologic Physiology for Physician Assistants II. 2 Units.**

Exploration of normal physiological function from a systems-based medical perspective which serves as a foundation for understanding the process of disease. Includes etiology, pathogenesis, and clinical manifestations of medical disorders. Prerequisite: PAST 551.

**PAST 553. Normal and Pathologic Physiology for Physician Assistants III. 2 Units.**

Exploration of normal physiological function from a systems-based medical perspective which serves as a foundation for understanding the process of disease. Includes etiology, pathogenesis, and clinical manifestations of medical disorders. Prerequisite: PAST 551, PAST 552.

**PAST 554. Clinical Skills for Physician Assistants. 4 Units.**

Introduces the basic skills and knowledge needed to evaluate and treat common illnesses and injuries. Safety, aseptic technique, ACLS, airway management, wound care, local anesthesia, injections, suturing, casting, splinting, use of various tubes and drains, basic emergency medicine skills, and basic surgical skills for physician assistants are covered. Includes participation in clinical simulations for enhanced skill development.

**PAST 556. Preventive Medicine and Health Promotion. 2 Units.**

Selected topics dealing with disease prevention. Includes relevance of statistics, epidemiology, research designs, and clinical trials; and, disease trends and lifestyle modification. Examines the roles of physical activity, nutrition, immunization, and public health as approaches in communicable disease prevention. Addresses clinical preventive services leading to tailored health maintenance plans for individual patients.

**PAST 558. Psychiatry for Physician Assistants. 3 Units.**

Focuses on diagnosis and treatment of major psychiatric and mental disorders. Topics include depression, anxiety, phobias, substance and eating disorders, somatoform, psychoses, neuroses, and personality disorders.

**PAST 571. Integrative Spanish for Physician Assistants. 3 Units.**

Reviews and evaluates strategies for providing culturally and linguistically competent care in clinical practice. Emphasizes care of the Spanish-speaking patient. Includes interactive language lab using Spanish-speaking subjects. Students perform a mock OSCE capstone in Spanish at quarters end.

**PAST 572. Culture and Community for Physician Assistants. 3 Units.**

Emphasizes health and medicine. Obtain cross-cultural experience while interacting with non-English-speaking patients, and gaining a greater understanding of patient culture. Requires completion of a community-based service project and immersion within local community.

**PAST 575. Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants I. 1 Unit.**

Addresses critical thought process needed for diagnosis and management of clinical problems.

**PAST 576. Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants II. 1 Unit.**

Teaches students to apply knowledge gained throughout the didactic curriculum via an interactive learning experience. Emphasizes the critical thought process needed for diagnosis and management of clinical problems. Prerequisite: PAST 575.

**PAST 577. Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants III. 1 Unit.**

Emphasizes critical thought process needed for diagnosis and management of clinical problems. Prerequisite: PAST 575, PAST 576.

**PAST 578. Clinical Correlation for Physician Assistants IV. 1 Unit.**

Emphasizes the critical thought process needed for diagnosis and management of clinical problems. Prerequisite: PAST 575, PAST 576, PAST 577.

**PAST 581. Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants I. 2 Units.**

Part one of a four-part sequence of lecture, demonstration, and practice in the art and science of obtaining a complete medical history and performing the physical examination.

**PAST 582. Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants II. 3 Units.**

Part two of a four-part sequence of lecture, demonstration, and practice in the art and science of obtaining a complete medical history and performing the physical examination. Prerequisite: PAST 581.

**PAST 583. Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants III. 2 Units.**

Part three of a four-part sequence of lecture, demonstration, and practice in the art and science of obtaining a complete medical history and performing the physical examination. Prerequisite: PAST 582.

**PAST 584. Physical Diagnosis for Physician Assistants IV. 2 Units.**

Part four of a four-part sequence of lecture, demonstration, and practice in the art and science of obtaining a complete medical history and performing the physical examination. Requires satisfactory completion of the comprehensive physical examination and the didactic year objective structured clinical examination (OSCE). Prerequisite: PAST 583.

**PAST 591. Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants I. 3 Units.**

Introduction to common medical disorders encountered in primary care and management of these disorders. Includes, clinical presentation, etiology, pathophysiology, diagnostic work-up, and management of the conditions studied. Based upon NCCPA blueprint standards.

**PAST 592. Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants II. 3 Units.**

Second of four courses that study common medical disorders encountered in primary care, as well as the management of these disorders. Includes the clinical presentation, etiology, pathophysiology, diagnostic work-up, and management of the conditions studied. Course objectives and specific learning objectives based on NCCPA blueprint. Prerequisite: PAST 591.

**PAST 593. Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants III. 3 Units.**

Third of four courses that study common medical disorders encountered in primary care, as well as the management of these disorders. Includes the clinical presentation, etiology, pathophysiology, diagnostic work-up, and management of the conditions studied. Course objectives and specific learning objectives based upon NCCPA blueprint. Prerequisite: PAST 591, PAST 592.

**PAST 594. Clinical Medicine for Physician Assistants IV. 2 Units.**

Fourth of four courses that study common medical disorders encountered in primary care, as well as the management of these disorders. Includes the clinical presentation, etiology, pathophysiology, diagnostic work-up, and management of the conditions studied. Course objectives and specific learning objectives based upon NCCPA blueprint. Prerequisite: PAST 591, PAST 592, PAST 593.

**PAST 601. Evidence-Based Medicine for Physician Assistants I. 2 Units.**

Introduces student to evidence-based practice, emphasizing the use of medical literature to evaluate and improve the practice of clinical medicine. Teaches student to assess medically oriented information online, as well as evidence-based medicine databases.

**PAST 602. Evidence-Based Medicine for Physician Assistants II. 2 Units.**

Application of evidence-based medicine to the development of a literature review on a selected topic in physician assistant practice. Begins in Winter Quarter with completion in the Summer Quarter. Preparation for the Capstone project. Prerequisite: PAST 601.

**PAST 603A. Capstone. 1 Unit.**

Investigation of topic related to area of interest within primary care or PA profession using evidence-based approach. Includes completion of capstone project and personal portfolio reflective of university values. Prerequisite: PAST 602.

**PAST 603B. Capstone. 1 Unit.**

Continues PAST 603A. Prerequisite: PAST 603A.

**PAST 701. Rotation I. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotations through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 702. Rotation II. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 703. Rotation III. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 704. Rotation IV. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 705. Rotation V. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 706. Rotation VI. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 707. Rotation VII. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.

**PAST 708. Rotation VIII. 6 Units.**

A required six-week rotation in outpatient and/or inpatient settings in any of the following areas of concentration: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, general surgery, emergency medicine, psychiatry/behavioral medicine; and elective rotation through a medical or surgical service of choice.