

PATHOLOGISTS' ASSISTANT – M.H.S.

Program director

Meghan Dorrell

Clinical Coordinator

Natalie Martinez

Medical director

Jeremy Deisch

Loma Linda University offers a professional course of study leading to the M.H.S. degree in pathologists' assistant. This degree prepares students for a career as mid-level health-care professionals in hospital pathology laboratories, private laboratories, universities, and industry.

Program learning outcomes

By the end of the program, the graduate should be able to:

1. Perform appropriate anatomic pathology techniques for the preparation, gross description, and dissection of human surgical tissue specimens.
2. Perform appropriate autopsy pathology techniques for the recovery, preparation, gross description, and dissection of human organs and tissue specimens.
3. Communicate effectively verbally and in writing.
4. Administer a pathology laboratory/autopsy service successfully.
5. Train other clinical health professionals using appropriate pedagogy.

Accreditation

Pathologists' Assistant Program accreditation

In April, 2018, the Pathologists' Assistant Program was granted a five-year accreditation, with no citations or concerns, from the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Science (NAACLS). Continuous accreditation has been maintained since 2018, and the program is in good standing.

NAACLS is the premier accreditation for pathologists' assistant programs. Strict standards required for this accreditation ensure quality education and preparation for the certification examination and competence in the field as a pathologists' assistant. Loma Linda University School of Medicine's Pathologists' Assistant Program will adhere to required standards to produce high-quality and competent pathologists' assistants. For further information, contact the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences, 5600 North River Road, Suite 720, Rosemont, IL 60018-5119; 847/939-3597 or 773/714-8880; website: <http://www.naacls.org>.

Admissions

The annual application period is November 1-March 31. Applications and all supporting documents (e.g., transcripts, recommendations) must be received by the March 31 deadline. Dates are strict for acceptance of application materials. The class will include 18 students. Accepted applicants will be notified by May 15 to begin the Autumn Quarter (late September).

In addition to Loma Linda University (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/about-university/admission-policies-information/#admissionrequirements>), the applicant must all fulfill the following requirements:

1. A baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution
2. A preferred cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher
3. Interview—Only select applicants will be invited for an individual interview (no group interviews).
4. All prerequisite courses must be completed at an accredited college or university in the United States prior to admission; coursework from international institutions is not accepted.
 - Biology with laboratory (12 quarter units/8 semester units)
 - General chemistry with laboratory, complete sequence (12 quarter units/8 semester units)
 - Organic chemistry, complete sequence (12 quarter units/8 semester units)
 - Microbiology with laboratory (4 quarter units)
 - College algebra or higher (3 quarter units)
 - English composition (complete sequence)
 - Strongly recommended: medical terminology and conversational Spanish
5. Three letters of recommendation—Recommendations from family members or friends are NOT acceptable. DO NOT ask the pathologists' assistant (PA) with whom you've shadowed for a recommendation.
 - a. Suggestions:
 - A laboratory professional (clinical or research) with whom the applicant has worked
 - An undergraduate professor
 - A work supervisor who can address the applicant's work ethic and dependability
 - b. Recommendations:
 - Speak with the persons from whom you are requesting recommendations and be sure they know you well, understand the program to which you're applying and why. Make certain they can speak to your abilities; not just that you are a nice person.
 - Be sure the persons supplying the recommendations understand that NO PAPER RECOMMENDATIONS ARE ACCEPTED! All recommendations must follow electronic procedure. If the recommender does not have an email account, help them create a free email account on yahoo or google
6. Proof of shadowing—During the interview the applicant will be asked to relate what a PA does during a normal working day. While there is no required number of hours to shadow, the applicant must be interactive, asking questions to learn the duties of a PA (ASCP). Contact information of the PA with whom you shadowed must be provided.
7. The GRE, or any other pre-graduate school standardized testing, is not required.

NOTE: There are no transfers of credit into the Pathologist's Assistant program. All courses in the curriculum must be completed at Loma Linda University.

The Pathologist's Assistant program follows the LLU Nondiscrimination Policy (<http://llucatalog.llu.edu/introduction/nondiscrimination-policy/>).

Program requirements

First Year

Autumn Quarter

		Units
ANAT 544	Human Embryology Lecture	2
IBGS 501	Biomedical Communication and Integrity	2
IBGS 604	Introduction to Integrative Biology Presentation Seminar	0
PATH 501	Anatomy and Pathology I	4
PATH 521	Anatomical Techniques I	3

Winter Quarter

AHCJ 515	Curriculum Development in Higher Education	3
IBGS 604	Introduction to Integrative Biology Presentation Seminar	0
PATH 502	Anatomy and Pathology II	4
PATH 522	Anatomical Techniques II	3
PHSL 588	Pathophysiology	4

Spring Quarter

IBGS 604	Introduction to Integrative Biology Presentation Seminar	1
PATH 524	Clinical Microbiology for Pathologists' Assistants	3
PATH 551	Disease Mechanisms I	3
PATH 581	Basic Pathologic Microanatomy	2
RELE 505	Clinical Ethics	3

Summer Quarter

PATH 534 ¹	Civic Engagement and Poverty: Service Learning	1
PATH 552	Disease Mechanisms II	3
PATH 564	Biomedical Photography	1
PATH 582	Advanced Microanatomy	2
PATH 598	Clinical Laboratory Management	2
PATH 644	Clinical Pathology Seminar	2

Second Year

Autumn Quarter

PATH 741	Pathology Review I	2
PATH 761	Pathologists' Assistant Practicum I	9

Winter Quarter

PATH 742	Pathology Review II	2
PATH 762	Pathologists' Assistant Practicum II	9

Spring Quarter

PATH 743	Pathology Review III	2
PATH 763	Pathologists' Assistant Practicum III	9

Summer Quarter

PATH 744	Pathology Review IV	2
PATH 764	Pathologists' Assistant Practicum IV	9

Total Units: 92

Noncourse Requirements

- Will Alexander Lecture Series: Attendance at the Will Alexander Wholeness Series is mandatory in PGY1. The series extends from Fall to Spring Quarters, once a month, Wednesday evenings for one hour. The lecture series includes topics on wholeness, personal/professional development, care of creation, diversity, and service.

Normal time to complete the program

Two (2) years (24 months) – full-time enrollment required

¹ Fulfills service learning requirement

Multiple clinical rotations are assigned by the program director to ensure a varied and comprehensive clinical experience for each student. Rotations will include surgical pathology in academic and community settings, private laboratories, pediatric pathology, medical examiners offices and hospital autopsy services.