What does it mean to be Pre-PA at Northeastern?

Choosing Your Schools

Requisite courses are school-specific. Students should consider to which schools they might apply and meet with a Pre-Health Advisor to determine their course of study.

For detailed course requirements, please review:
- Physician Assistant Education Association Program Directory (PAEA)

Common courses may include:
- 2 semesters of Biology with labs
- 2 semesters of General Chemistry with labs
- 2 semesters of A&P with labs
- Genetics and Molecular Biology with lab
- Microbiology with lab
- 2 semesters of Math (incl. Stats)
- Additional coursework across disciplines is often required or recommended (e.g. Psychology, Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry, English, Spanish, Medical Terminology, etc.)

Clinical Experience

Students should review individual schools’ websites for more information on their clinical pre-requisites as they vary greatly program-to-program.

Many programs require an approximate number of hours of paid direct patient care experiences prior to applying. It is strongly recommended students obtain 2,000 hours of hands-on patient-care hours prior to applying. Examples of direct patient care positions include, but are not limited to, certified nursing assistant, PT aid, medical assistant, etc. Be mindful that some position hours (i.e. EMT transports) may not count toward your direct patient care hours as PA schools do not see these roles as 100% hands-on patient care experiences.

Clinical experience should also include shadowing hours with a licensed Physician Assistant. It is the quality of your shadowing experience, rather than number of shadowing hours, that allow you articulate your understanding of the profession.

Experiential Preparation

Campus Involvement: Explore extra-curricular activities and find a few that you truly enjoy. Join the Pre-PA Society, find clubs related to your major and/or future career, play a sport, and/or participate student government. Seek out leadership positions.

Community Service / Volunteer Experience: Community service doesn’t need to be healthcare related. Rather, it should follow your interests and demonstrate that you care about others! Choose opportunities to volunteer with people and directly serve diverse populations and their communities.

Laboratory / Research Experience: Though not required for PA school, research experience makes your application stand out among the applicant pool.

Entrance Exam

(If required by your program)

Graduate Record Exam (GRE)

Plan 2-3 months to study prior to taking the exam.

Questions? Book an appointment with a Pre-Health Advisor via MyNortheastern!