



MACON & JOAN BROCK VIRGINIA HEALTH SCIENCES

Physician Assistant

AT OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY

ADMISSIONS GUIDEBOOK

APPLICATION CYCLE | 2025-2026

MATRICULATION | January 2027



Revised August 2025

Community focus. World impact.

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INTRODUCTION

This resource is intended to serve as a definitive guide for potential and current applicants to the Macon & Joan Brock Virginia Health Sciences Master of Physician Assistant Program at Old Dominion University (VHS). It contains specific admissions criteria and application data related to the current application cycle. It should be considered an adjunct to the Physician Assistant (PA) Student Handbook, which contains information regarding the program and related policies for matriculated students.

VHS conducts a thorough, holistic review of every eligible candidate for consideration for admission to our demanding program.

Applicants are encouraged to explore our [website](#), including the [Frequently Asked Questions](#), for more information about the Master of Physician Assistant (MPA) Program and VHS.

All questions/updates regarding applications and admissions must be done through your [Personalized URL](#) (PURL). Applicants who email the program or program director will be directed to connect with an admissions representative through their [PURL](#).

The information herein is subject to periodic review and revision as deemed necessary by the program. Changes will be indicated by the publication/revision date. **Ultimately it is the applicant's responsibility to be aware of all application requirements and comply with admissions deadlines for the current application cycle to ensure a successful application.**

OUR COMPETITIVE APPLICATION PROCESS

Our competitive admissions process welcomes all applicants from diverse backgrounds with different life and career experiences. We seek the best candidates and give preference to those who come from communities such as:

- Educationally disadvantaged
- Virginia residents
- United States military

Because our curriculum is rigorous, we place value on an applicant's prior academic history. We value a strong cumulative GPA and also evaluate each candidate's GPAs in the following categories:

- Overall undergraduate GPA (3.43 average)
- Prerequisite GPA (3.86 average)
- Graduate GPA (3.67 average)

Healthcare experience, direct and indirect, and volunteer experience are other attributes of a successful candidate.*** While the program does not require a specific number of healthcare or volunteer hours, those who have been competitive and gained admission have earned:

- 2000-4000 total healthcare experience hours based on the last 3 cycles (combined [Patient Care](#) and [Healthcare Experience](#))

- 876 hours of **volunteer** experience
 - 95% of applicants have reported community service activity

****Meeting these qualifications does not guarantee an interview or admission to the program. Also, the PA program does not give advanced standing to any candidate for previous educational or clinical experience. Advanced standing means allowing credit based on previous studies (for example, nursing school or paramedic certification credits) or work experience (RN, EMT, etc).*

ADMISSIONS CONSULTATIONS

Due to the volume of applications we are processing, individual consultations are not offered. It is rare that most questions cannot be answered through the information provided online and in this document. It is recommended that applicants review our **Admissions Statistics** and critically evaluate the competitiveness of their application compared to the average matriculant. **Meeting the minimum application requirements does not guarantee an invitation for an interview.**

For specific questions about an application or clarification about information found in either location, please click [this link](#) to obtain a personalized URL (PURL) and be connected to an admissions representative. Applicants who email the PA Program or the Program Director will be directed to connect to an admission representative via their PURL.

NOTIFICATION AND COMMUNICATION

Upon submission of any of the application requirements, applicants will receive electronic notification of their application status from the Office of Admissions and Enrollment for the School of Health Professions (SHP). Due to the high volume of applications, use of a **personalized URL (PURL)** is the best mode of communication with the SHP Office of Admissions and Enrollment. **Please make sure to include your CASPA ID on any and all communication.** Applicants are required to regularly check the account associated with the e-mail address provided on their CASPA application and update the PA Program with regards to any e-mail address changes in a reasonable period of time. Check SPAM folders in case messages end up there. We recommend avoiding use of school email or Hotmail accounts since these may change or do not interface well with CASPA. Failure to respond to program requests in a timely manner may result in loss of eligibility for program admission.

The months of January to March and July to September are the busiest in the SHP Office of Admissions and Enrollment, which may limit the ability of staff to respond to individual questions about the admissions process or an individual application. Updates to an application status may also be slower during this period due to the influx of applications.

GENERAL REVIEW PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Completed and verified CASPA applications are made available to the program by CASPA beginning in July. Although we accept applications earlier to accommodate individuals submitting applications to other programs, the Admissions Staff

will not begin processing applications for the current cycle until the fall. Our program does not have rolling admissions, and there is no benefit to submitting an application earlier in the cycle. It is best to apply to our program shortly after completing all 8 prerequisite courses and once all final grades are listed on your transcript.

Following the receipt of all required documents, the SHP Office of Admissions and Enrollment and designated staff evaluate an application file for completeness and consistency. The PA Program Application Review Committee performs a second review for compliance with program requirements and selection for a personal interview. Please see the table below for more information.

Date	Requirements
7/1/2025	CASPA application cycle opens
3/1/2026	CASPA application completed All prerequisite courses satisfactorily completed, and transcripts submitted via CASPA TOEFL completed (if applicable)
9/2025 - 5/2026	Applications reviewed for completeness by SHP Office of Admissions and Enrollment
1/2025- 5/2026	Applications reviewed by PA Program Application Review Committee
6/2026	Interview offers made to selected applicants
7/1/2026	Bachelor's degree completed
7/2026	Interviews conducted
8/2026	Offers of admission extended
Within 10 days of offer	Applicants send acceptance of admission offer
8/2026-1/2027	Waitlist offers of admission extended (if needed)
1/2027	Matriculation
5/2029	Expected graduation

EARLY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

College freshman interested in applying to VHS's Early Assurance Program (EAP) should review the information and requirements provided [online](#) and reach out to the EAP advisor at their undergraduate institution for more information.

ADVANCED STANDING

The PA Program does not accept transfer credits for advanced standing in the curriculum sequence. **No summative exams (GRE, MCAT, USMLE Step Tests, etc.) will count towards credit or advanced standing in the curriculum.**

GENERAL ADMISSIONS REQUIREMENTS

Application reviews are holistic and include a review of qualifying GPAs as described in section 3, Academic rigor, and undergraduate and post-graduate performance. The Admissions Committee strongly discourages online courses to fulfill prerequisite requirements, except in extraordinary circumstances (i.e. military deployment overseas).

1. COMPLETED CASPA APPLICATION

To complete an application, please submit all required information through the [CASPA website](#). A “complete” application includes all official transcripts received from all educational institutions included on your application, at least two letters of reference listed as “completed”, a paid CASPA application fee, and the application Status Menu reads as “Materials Received > Verifying” for VHS. The PA Program reserves the right to verify credentials documented in the applicant’s application. Applicants must review and adhere to the CASPA [Admissions Code of Cooperation & Policy Regarding Investigations and Violations](#). Visit the [CASPA Applicant Help Center](#) for questions about completing the CASPA application.

Waiver of Fees: If the CASPA fee is prohibitive to applying, applicants should review the "Fee Waiver Division" information on the CASPA website to determine if they qualify for this service (See CASPA FAQ section). This waiver is offered by CASPA and with limited funding. Waivers are granted until funding is depleted. Please [contact CASPA](#) for more information.

2. CITIZENSHIP

Applicants must be United States citizens or permanent residents (Green Card). Despite recent advances of the PA concept in other countries, and interest in PAs practicing internationally, it is a unique profession to the United States healthcare environment. As such, our program trains PAs to work within the U.S. healthcare system and wants to ensure graduates of the PA Program are eligible to continue in the U.S. upon completion of their training.

3. GPAs

QUALIFYING GPA

All applications must have one of the three qualifying GPAs described below at 3.20 **or better** (on a 4.0 scale as calculated by CASPA) for consideration. Information on how CASPA calculates GPA can be found [here](#). **Meeting the minimum application requirements does not guarantee an invitation for an interview.**

The highest of the following three possible GPAs will be scored:

- 1) Actual undergraduate GPA (applicants with foreign education are considered on a case-by-case basis – see section on applicants with foreign education),
- 2) Cumulative GPA, or
- 3) Completed U.S. graduate degree GPA.

PREREQUISITE GPA

A prerequisite GPA will also be calculated and will contribute to the overall application score (See [Prerequisite Courses](#)).

4. PREREQUISITE COURSES

All eight (8) prerequisite courses must be equal to a minimum of 3 semester credits (4.5 quarter credits) and completed at an accredited U.S. institution with a B- or better grade. For lab courses with a separate grade, the lab and lecture course grades will be averaged to obtain the course GPA; **both lab and lecture must individually meet the minimum grade requirement**. Five (5) specific prerequisites must be completed within a certain time frame of application. Please refer to the [Minimal Standards Section](#). Satisfactory completion of prerequisite coursework is documented via official transcripts submitted through CASPA. **Prerequisite coursework must be completed and transcripts submitted to CASPA prior to the March 1st application deadline. Applications with outstanding prerequisite courses will not be eligible for review.**

*****Please note: Anatomy AND Physiology OR A&P I AND A&P II will need to have 4 semester hours / 6 quarter hours per semester and need to be completed within 5 years of the application deadline.*** Secondary proof of completion (e.g. student copy of transcript or course final grades) may be accepted while awaiting official transcripts. See [Updating the CASPA Application](#)

NOTE: Quarter system credit hours are converted to semester system by dividing by 1.5 (e.g. 6 quarter credits/1.5 = 4 semester credits).

There will be no exceptions to these requirements.

ONLINE COURSES

Applicants are strongly discouraged from taking online courses to fulfill prerequisite requirements except in extraordinary circumstances (i.e. military deployment overseas). If you have taken online courses to fulfill prerequisite requirements, please explain the extraordinary circumstances on your CASPA application.

SURVEY COURSES

Survey courses are not accepted as prerequisite courses, as the depth of content is not adequate.

AP, CLEP, & PASS/FAIL COURSES

No more than two (2) prerequisites will be accepted without a traditional letter grade, i.e. Pass/Fail or via acceptance of AP credit, CLEP exam completion or Credit by Exam completion. AP credit, college-level coursework completed in high school which transfers to a college transcript, may be accepted in place of course scores for the general prerequisites (general chemistry, intro to psychology, and math). Passing one of the following CLEP exams will also meet prerequisite requirements: Chemistry (considered for general chemistry), Introduction to Psychology, Human Growth & Development (considered for a psychology course), College Mathematics, College Algebra or Calculus. Credit by Exam is offered by a few institutions and is similar to CLEP exams; course credit is offered based on the student's performance on a single exam that covers the material in the course. Search online for "credit by exam" or "challenge exam" for more information.

GRADE SUBSTITUTIONS

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In the case where an applicant does not have a satisfactory grade in a general prerequisite (chemistry, math or psychology), the highest grade from another higher-level course may be substituted from within the same discipline. *Example:* You received a C in General Chemistry 1 but continued taking courses to complete a chemistry minor. A better grade from an additional, higher-level inorganic chemistry course may be used to fulfill the general chemistry prerequisite.

COURSES FROM OTHER DISCIPLINES

Courses from other disciplines (Nursing courses, Health Science courses, etc) often do not cover the prerequisite material adequately. Please contact the Admissions department to ensure the acceptance of these courses.

MINIMAL STANDARDS

See table below for the minimal standards for each prerequisite

Prerequisite Courses with No Time Limit for Completion

Prerequisite Course	Minimal Standards	Credit Hours
Intro to Psychology	Any college-level introductory psychology course offered in the psychology department that focuses on the understanding of human psychological development Courses offered in other departments (e.g. Sociology, Anthropology, etc.) will not be accepted.	Three (3) Semester Credit hours OR Five (5) Quarter Credit Hours
General Chemistry	Any college-level general inorganic chemistry course Survey courses will not be accepted.	Three (3) Semester Credit hours OR Five (5) Quarter Credit Hours
College Math or Physics OR College Statistics	Any college-level math, physics or statistics course Survey courses will not be accepted.	Three (3) Semester Credit hours OR Five (5) Quarter Credit Hours

Prerequisite Courses that Must be Completed within a certain time frame

Prerequisite Course	Minimal Standards	Credit Hours	Time Frame
Anatomy AND Physiology OR A&P I AND A&P II	Combination of college-level anatomy and physiology courses that cover the structure and function of all the major human body organ systems, including the musculoskeletal, nervous, circulatory, respiratory, digestive, urinary, endocrine and reproductive systems It is highly recommended that both Anatomy and Physiology prerequisite courses be completed at the same institution.	Four (4) Semester Credit hours OR Six (6) Quarter Credit Hours To include lab	Within 5 years of application deadline Completed as of January 1, 2021
Organic Chemistry OR Biochemistry	Any college-level organic chemistry or biochemistry course Survey courses will not be accepted.	Three (3) Semester Credit hours OR Five (5) Quarter Credit Hours	Within 10 years of application deadline Completed as of January 1, 2016
Microbiology OR Cell Biology	Any college-level microbiology or cell biology course Survey courses will not be accepted.	Three (3) Semester Credit hours OR Five (5) Quarter Credit Hours	Within 10 years of application deadline Completed as of January 1, 2016

Prerequisite Course	Minimal Standards	Credit Hours	Time Frame
Advanced Psychology Course*	<p>Any college-level course in the psychology department beyond an introductory psychology course that focuses on the understanding of human psychological development (Abnormal, Lifespan or Developmental recommended)</p> <p>Courses offered in other departments (e.g. Sociology, Anthropology, etc.) will not be accepted.</p> <p>*Part II of Introduction to Psychology will not be accepted</p>	<p>Three (3) Semester Credit hours OR Five (5) Quarter Credit Hours</p>	<p>Within 10 years of application deadline Completed as of January 1, 2016</p>

WAIVER OF PREREQUISITE TIME LIMIT WINDOW

No more than two (2) prerequisites may be granted a time limit window waiver. In order to request a time limit waiver, the minimum grade and credit hour requirements must be met in the initial course that was taken. There are two ways to meet the requirements for a waiver.

- 1) Teaching the topic in its full breadth as described in the course descriptions above as a professor at a college level for >5 years within the last ten years.
- 2) Working as a practicing professional specifically in the fields of chemistry, physics or psychology that covers required content for >5 years within the last ten years.

These exceptions may be accepted only at the discretion of the Admissions Committee. All requests must be submitted through the applicants' PURL. There will be no exceptions, and proof that one of the requirements above has been met may be requested for a waiver to be granted.

5. BACHELOR'S DEGREE

Applicants must have completed all undergraduate degree requirements and have been issued a bachelor's (or higher graduate) degree prior to July 1st of the year prior to the anticipated matriculation. If the bachelor's degree was issued by a U.S. college or university, as a general rule it should be from a regionally accredited institution, however, the PA program may grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis depending on the institution's accrediting agency. Official transcripts from the awarding institution must specify the date upon which the degree was issued.

Applicants with a foreign education should also navigate to [Applicants with Foreign Education](#).

6. ADDITIONAL TESTING

MCAT/GRE/PA-CAT

These tests are not required for application or admission to the VHS PA Program.

TOEFL

See [Applicants with Foreign Education](#).

7. PATIENT CARE AND HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE

Although not required to apply, patient care and healthcare experience is desirable and rewarded in the application review process. Patient care experience is preferred over healthcare experience; however, credit is given for both types of experience. The description of duties will ultimately determine how the admissions committee categorizes an experience. Still, we encourage applicants to use the guidance below when categorizing their own experiences on the CASPA application.

Because of the timing of our application process, we recognize that individuals who apply early in the application cycle may not have documented as much experience as those who apply later. Accordingly, our program's policy is to extrapolate hours for current experiences until the March 1st deadline. There is no need to update the program with information on positions that have already been included without an end date on an initial verified CASPA application. For positions acquired after applying, see [Updating the CASPA Application](#).

PATIENT CARE EXPERIENCE

Defined by CASPA as "experiences in which you are directly responsible for a patient's care."

Our program views direct responsibility for patient care as providing hands-on patient care, performing procedures, counseling/educating patients, and/or participating in clinical decision-making. Unpaid experiences are less likely to fall into this category. Healthcare professions with duties that typically fall into this category include: Athletic Trainer (ATC), Clinical/Medical Assistant, Clinical Psychologist, Clinical Research Assistant (with patient interaction), CNA (with clinical duties), Dietician, EMT/Paramedic, Medical Esthetician/Cosmetologist, Medical or Patient Care Technician (ex: cardiac, endoscopy, ophthalmic, OR/surgical, procurement, radiology, rehab, etc), Mental Health Aide/Professional, Military Corpsman/Medic, Nurse (RN/LPN), Nurse's Aide, Occupational Therapist or OTA, Phlebotomist, Physical Therapist or PTA, Respiratory Therapist, Surgical Assistant, etc.

HEALTHCARE EXPERIENCE

Defined by CASPA as "both paid and unpaid work in a health or health-related field where you are not directly responsible for a patient's care, but may still have patient interaction; for example, filling prescriptions, performing clerical work, delivering patient food, cleaning patients and/or their rooms, administering food or medication, taking vitals or other record-keeping information, working as a scribe, CNA (depending on the job description), medical assistant, etc."

Our program is generally in agreement with this definition, with some distinctions:

- Experiences providing supportive care only (feeding/delivering food, dressing, bathing/cleaning, comforting, transporting) are not rewarded as healthcare experience but may be counted as volunteer experience if applicable. This also applies to CNAs with only supportive care duties (generally in nursing home settings).
- Professions listed in the CASPA definition as generally acquiring healthcare experience (e.g. CNA or Medical Assistant) but with duties that demonstrate direct responsibility for a patient's care will be rewarded as patient care experience.

- Clerical work must be at the level of Medical/Unit or Office Secretary, where regular interaction with clinical professionals is described in the duties.
- Healthcare professions with duties that typically fall into this category include: Lab Tech (processing labs), Medical/Unit Secretary, Pharmacy Tech, Scribe, etc.

The following situations preclude an experience from being rewarded as Patient Care or Healthcare Experience:

- Experiences providing supportive care only (see Healthcare Experience above; may be counted as volunteer experience if applicable)
- Experiences outside the U.S. healthcare system (may be counted as volunteer experience if applicable)
- Experiences completed for academic credit or required for training programs, including internships (will **not** be counted as volunteer experience)
- Shadowing/observational experiences (will **not** be counted as volunteer experience). However, shadowing PAs is recommended for applicants not otherwise exposed to the PA profession in a clinical setting.
- Veterinary/animal care experience

8. LICENSES AND CERTIFICATIONS

Obtaining a certification in a healthcare field is often helpful in securing paid healthcare experience and is rewarded in the application review process. Some examples of accepted licenses and certifications include: Athletic Trainer (ATC), Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA), Corpsman, Dental Hygienist/Assistant, Dietician, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT), Home Health Aide, Lab Tech, Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN), Medical Assistant/Technician, Medical Doctor (MD/DO), Nurse Aide, Occupational Therapist/ OTA, Ophthalmology Assistant/Technician, Paramedic, Patient Care Tech, Pharmacy Tech, Phlebotomy, Physical Therapist/PTA, Radiology/X-ray Tech, Registered Nurse (RN), Surgical Assistant/Technician, Scribe, Social Worker, Tissue Bank Specialist, etc.

Licenses and certifications must be uploaded to the Program Level Documents in CASPA to receive credit.

Note: We do not give credit for CPR, BLS or ACLS certification. Annual maintenance testing or employment certifications (ie. Bloodborne pathogens, slips, trips, and falls, FEMA, OSHA courses) are not given credit.

9. VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

It is part of VHS' vision to be recognized as the most community-oriented school of medicine and health professions in the United States. Therefore, we reward applicants with a demonstrated commitment to community service. Experiences can be medical or non-medical, domestic or abroad, and we encourage applicants to invest their time in organizations and projects that fulfill them personally. For social organizations, some involvement in a leadership capacity will be expected. Emphasis will be placed on the longevity and quality of the investment rather than simply being a member of an organization or the sheer number of events listed on the application.

10. LETTERS OF REFERENCE

VHS requires two (2) letters of reference. References should be selected from individuals who are well acquainted with the applicant academically, personally, and/or professionally and who can evaluate the majority of categories included on the reference form. References should be from a variety of sources, whether MDs, PAs, other health professionals, colleagues, supervisors and/or patients or clients. References from family members are **strongly discouraged**. References should submit a signed letter on letterhead if feasible.

11. PERSONAL ESSAY

Applicants are asked to personally and individually write “a brief statement expressing your motivation or desire to become a physician assistant”, which should be written at a graduate level and demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the PA role and function. The use of AI or writing services will immediately disqualify the applicant for admission.

12. TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The abilities and skills applicants and students must independently possess in order to complete the education and training associated with PA education are referred to as Technical Standards. These abilities and skills are essential for clinical practice as a PA.

The Technical Standards listed on our website reflect five categorical areas - observation, communication, critical reasoning (intellectual), motor and sensory functions, behavioral and social attributes - and represent minimum competency levels. Each standard is defined on our website and is followed by examples of indicators of minimum competence in that area.

PA applicants must be prepared to independently meet the technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, in order to complete the program. These technical standards also serve as prerequisites for continuation, promotion and graduation from the PA Program. Students will be asked to indicate such ability prior to their matriculation into the program, when registering for each semester and prior to graduation. Applicants or students found to be non-compliant with the Technical Standards are at risk for dismissal from the program.

Requests for Reasonable Accommodation: Applicants or students who may have questions regarding these technical standards or who believe they may need to request reasonable accommodation in order to meet the standards are encouraged to contact the Officer of Disability Compliance (757.446.7261 | studentdisability@odu.edu). Revealing a disability is voluntary; however, such disclosure is necessary before any accommodations may be made in the learning environment or in the program’s procedures. Information regarding disabilities is handled in a confidential manner.

APPLICANTS WITH FOREIGN EDUCATION OR ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

Applications from applicants with foreign education may be considered on a case-by-case basis. All prerequisite coursework **must** be completed at an accredited U.S. institution with a B- grade or better in order to establish a track record of academic performance in this educational system. No foreign courses, degrees, work experience or other summative exams (e.g. GRE, MCAT, USMLE Step Exams, etc.) will substitute for prerequisite coursework. A written request **must** be submitted to the PA Program and provide **all** of the following for consideration:

- 1) An **official academic credential evaluation by World Education Services or Educational Credential Evaluators** of the foreign transcript. The evaluation must include the following components:
 - Analysis of credentials to determine equivalence to an accredited U.S. Bachelor’s degree
 - Course by course translation, including information on course name, grade & U.S. credit equivalency
 - Overall performance in comparison to the standard U.S. grading system (i.e. GPA)
 - Although multiple companies provide translation services, an English translation without the appropriate information above will not be accepted in place of an academic credential evaluation.
 - All coursework completed outside the U.S. must also be included on the CASPA e-transcript for our review. Although CASPA does not verify foreign transcripts, full disclosure of foreign coursework is expected for our internal review.
- 2) **Transcripts of all** coursework done in the U.S. educational system to date.
- 3) **TOEFL scores:** Due to the importance of communication in the English language for both learning and providing healthcare (see Technical Standards), the following applicants are required to provide acceptable TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) scores prior to the March 1 application due date:
 - All applicants with English as a second language
 - There is no time frame requirement for when this exam is completed with the assumption that if an applicant has met the cutoff score at any point in the past, their English proficiency will continue to improve.
 - To ensure an ability to function at the graduate level in a clinical healthcare program, the following are expected **minimal** scores:
 - Internet-based test (preferred): 85
 - Computer-based test: 220
 - Minimum of 25 in the speaking component

At the time of program interviews, if language issues are identified, further demonstration of English proficiency, to include repeat TOEFL testing, may be requested as a condition of acceptance.

UPDATING THE CASPA APPLICATION

UPDATING TRANSCRIPTS

If applicants have already completed and submitted their CASPA application but have since completed in progress / planned coursework that is required by our program (i.e. degree requirements or pre-requisite requirements completed before March 1), they **must** update their CASPA application to allow for calculation of the prerequisite GPAs. Updates **must** be completed after the application is verified **and** before access to the application is removed by CASPA. **The final date for applicants to access and update a CASPA application is determined by CASPA and is usually within the first weeks of March. Courses updated via the Academic Update process will not be verified by CASPA and will not calculate into the CASPA GPA.** VHS does not accept any updates to the CASPA application after our March 1st deadline.

Once courses have been updated, applicants **must** submit proof of completion from the individual school(s) for VHS to verify the updated information. Unofficial or student copies of transcripts will be accepted initially, however if an offer for matriculation is made, official transcripts will be required.

UNOFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

Unofficial transcripts should be uploaded in the applicant's [Personalized URL \(PURL\)](#).

OFFICIAL TRANSCRIPTS

Official transcripts should be mailed to the following address:

School of Health Professions
 ATTN: Office of Admissions & Enrollment
 700 West Olney Road, Suite 1166
 Norfolk, VA 23501

UPDATING EXPERIENCES

Experiences should not be updated after submitting the CASPA application. For positions listed on the application without an end date, hours will be extrapolated out to the March 1 deadline. We recommend waiting to submit an application if a new job or position is expected. VHS does not accept any updates to the CASPA application after our March 1st deadline.

WITHDRAWING AN APPLICATION

Candidates who no longer desire to be considered by VHS or who have committed to another PA program are encouraged to submit the "Withdrawal Survey" on their PURL at their earliest convenience so that resources are not dedicated to a non-viable application and due consideration can be given to another qualified applicant for an interview slot.

Withdrawn applications are not processed further, and applicants are sent a short survey to capture their reasons for withdrawal, experience with our admissions process and personal ranking of our program.

INTERVIEWS

Competitive applicants will be invited to participate in an interview process conducted in mid-July to assess interpersonal and communication skills, maturity, and understanding and commitment to the PA profession and the VHS PA Program's missions and values.

Every effort will be made to provide at least two weeks' notice to facilitate the necessary arrangements to participate in the interview process. Our goal is to give at least four weeks' notice.

Applicants will have 72 hours to respond to the invitation, and failure to respond may mean the forfeiture of their interview slot.

A withdrawal from the interview automatically places the applicant in forfeiture of consideration for the next matriculating class. An uncommunicated absence from the interview automatically prohibits the applicant from being considered for future interviews with the Program. Due to the intricacies of interview planning, requests for alternate interview dates and formats cannot be accommodated.

The PA Program conducts a holistic interview process that includes individual and group interviews. The interviews are conducted by the program's faculty and community faculty. Questions related to various topics are asked so that faculty and our community faculty can get to know the applicant and determine if the applicant is the right fit for our rigorous program. A separate writing sample is also performed during Interview Day. After the interview process, the full-time faculty meet to discuss the interview candidates and finalize the admissions offers. Admissions decisions are based on a holistic process that includes all elements of the application and the interview.

AFTER INTERVIEWS

ACCEPTED STUDENT NOTIFICATION

Notification of acceptance will begin within two (2) weeks of the final interviews. Applicants offered a seat must acknowledge acceptance of the offer within ten (10) calendar days of their notification by providing the following:

- 1) An electronic response to the Admissions Offer & Conditions of Acceptance letter;
- 2) A non-refundable acceptance deposit (\$500) to hold a seat in the class and which will be applied toward tuition;
- 3) A completed criminal background check (will include checking sex offenses and crimes against minors or elderly).

A one-time extension of the response deadline may be granted upon request by the applicant.

ACCEPTED STUDENT HEALTH REQUIREMENTS

Students accepting the Admissions Offer and enrolling in the PA Program at VHS must submit documentation of proof of childhood immunizations and recent tuberculosis screening results. Full list of Incoming Students Health Requirements can be found [here](#). Completion of all program health requirements is required prior to November 15th.

ACCEPTED STUDENT ORIENTATION

Applicants who have accepted a seat in the program are required to complete the online pre-orientation requirements and attend orientation at the beginning of January. This event includes critical information about the institution and our program, providing students with the necessary means of accessing campus parking lots, buildings, computer network and other functions critical to a smooth transition into the academic schedule.

Noncompliance with the criminal background check, health requirements, or attendance at orientation may be cause for revocation of the admission offer.

WAIT POOL STATUS

Students who are not offered a seat in the program following the Interviews may be placed in a wait pool at the recommendation of the Admissions Committee and/or the Program Director, which is activated as necessary. A wait pool is valid from the close of the interview process through the first full week of classes for which the student applied.

Applicants in the wait pool who are not offered a seat are **not** considered for admission to the following class without reapplication. See section on [Reapplication](#).

DEFERMENT POLICY

Questions about deferment of admission are only entertained after unpredictable life circumstances may interfere with expected matriculation or success in the program. All requests for deferment should be submitted by modifying the “Accept your offer” form to “I would like to defer my offer” and completing the explanation. The program requires a statement from the applicant explaining why deferment has been requested, which will then be reviewed. The VHS PA Program reserves the right to determine if the request warrants deferment or if the candidate will need to reapply in a future admission cycle. Should deferment be granted, the deposit is still required at the time of deferral in order to hold a seat in the program. Deferments are only offered once to the applicant and are not renewed.

REAPPLICATION

Applicants who are not accepted to the PA Program are encouraged to self-evaluate their application (and interview, if granted) in order to identify areas that can be improved. Program [Admissions Statistics](#) will be updated in the weeks following the matriculation of a new class. The VHS PA Program encourages and rewards reapplication once a serious effort has been made to remedy any deficiencies. Such an effort by an applicant is viewed by the Admissions Committee as an indication of motivation and perseverance and highlighted in a subsequent application.

A webinar with Admissions staff will be held in the fall for applicants who were not accepted or interviewed. For those who were waitlisted but not accepted, a separate webinar will be held in the spring. Please await invitations, which will be extended automatically via email and PURL by Admissions.

If recycling the CASPA application for a subsequent admissions cycle, it is the applicant’s responsibility to ensure the resubmission accurately reflects their most recent preparation and status. Updating the transcripts, healthcare experience, certifications and personal essay are highly recommended.

ACCREDITATION STATUS

The PA Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA). Provisional accreditation was awarded on October 16, 1998 as the 109th accredited program in the US. Renewal of accreditation was obtained in 2005, 2009 and 2016, the most recent being awarded for the maximum period of 10 years. Our next accreditation review will be in 2026.

Graduates of accredited programs are eligible to take the national certifying examination offered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Most states require certification in order to practice.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

VHS does not discriminate in the recruitment and admission of students on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, age, sexual orientation, citizenship, religion, political affiliation or handicap as required by Title VI, Title IX and Section 504.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For specific questions about an application or clarification about information found on our website, please click [this link](#) to obtain a personalized URL (PURL) and be connected to an admissions representative.

Visit the [CASPA Applicant Help Center](#) for questions about completing the CASPA application.

Additional Contacts	Phone	Email
Financial Aid	757.446.5813	vhs-finaid@odu.edu
Community Health, Education and Training	757.446.5869	diversity@odu.edu
Disability Compliance	757.446.7261	studentdisability@odu.edu

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