

Pathway to Physician's Assistant Programs

BS in Biology

A BS in Biology from Young Harris offers all prerequisite courses typically required by Physician Assistant (PA) programs. Graduates will also benefit by meeting additional qualifications, specifically a substantial number of hours in patient care. This pathway details the steps to take in developing a competitive resume and application, based on the observations of faculty who have successfully mentored accepted students. Please note that these requirements and recommendations are based on those of PA programs in Georgia and the region.

Recommendations for admission to PA programs:

- Community volunteer hours and PA shadowing hours that are not counted as patient care experience
- Additional coursework related to Biology, such as Cell Biology, Molecular Biology, and Immunology
- Experiences that show leadership potential and community involvement
- Demonstrated written and verbal communication skills

Common prerequisites for admission to PA programs:

- One year of General Biology courses with 2 semesters of labs
- One year of General Chemistry and one year of Organic Chemistry with 2 semesters of labs
- One year of Anatomy and Physiology courses with 2 semesters of labs
- Advanced coursework in Biology that includes Microbiology and Genetics
- 9+ hours of Social Sciences (i.e. Psychology, Sociology, History, etc.)
- 6+ hours of Math, including Statistics
- Letters of recommendation with at least one from a physician, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner
- Recent GRE exam score
- A strong GPA, higher than 3.0
- A minimum number of hours of direct patient care experience
- For more information, visit www.yhc.edu/academics/math-science/biology.

The Biology Department at YHC offers three BS programs in Biology, Environmental Science, and Environmental Education & Leadership. Graduates have pursued careers in medicine, nursing, physical therapy, veterinary sciences, physician's assistant, wildlife biology, ecology, zoology, environmental health and more. For more information, contact the Department Chair, Dr. Andrea Kwiatkowski (alkwiakowski@yhc.edu).

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Freshman (1st) Year Recommended Courses

- BIOL 1107 Introductory Biology I
- BIOL 1108 Introductory Biology II
- CHEM 1211 General Chemistry I
- CHEM 1212 General Chemistry II
- PSYC 1102 Introduction to Psychology

Summer: Begin collecting relevant experience. This can include shadowing physician's assistants, summer internships, and fellowships.

Junior (3rd) Year Recommended Courses

- BIOL 3101 Genetics
- BIOL 3102 Cell Biology
- BIOL 1121 Human Anatomy and Physiology I
- BIOL 1122 Human Anatomy and Physiology II
- PSYC 3010 Abnormal Psychology
- Additional BIOL coursework as offered*

Spring: Complete GRE exam in the spring prior to submission of application. Apply to summer internships and fellowships. Begin completing the application for admission to PA programs. Solicit letters of recommendations from faculty and physician's assistants.

Summer: Complete PA program application for submission in the fall. Continue shadowing to gain experience, diversifying experience as much as possible.

Sophomore (2nd) Year Recommended Courses

- CHEM 2211 Organic Chemistry I
- CHEM 2212 Organic Chemistry II
- PHYS 1111 College Physics I
- PHYS 1112 College Physics II
- MATH 2000 Elementary Statistics
- PSYC 2001 Human Growth and Development

Spring: Apply to summer internships and fellowships. Application are often due in January and February and require a letter of recommendation from a faculty member.
Summer: Participate in an internship or fellowship or continue shadowing and volunteering.

Senior (4th) Year Recommended Courses

- BIOL 4980 Independent Research
- BIOL 4990 Senior Research Capstone
- Additional BIOL coursework as offered*

Fall: Submit application to PA programs. Conduct independent research project with a faculty member.
Spring: Begin planning for a possible gap year before admission. Apply to internships and fellowships seeking graduating seniors. Set up shadowing to gain further experiences.

Summer: Collect additional experience through shadowing, volunteering at hospitals and clinics, internships, lab assistant positions, etc. Reapply to PA programs according to application deadlines.

*Many BIOL 3000+ courses are offered once every two years. Students should enroll in any relevant course when offered during the junior and senior years.