

Physician Assistant (PA) Education

<p>Overview:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PAs are medical professionals who diagnose illness, develop and manage treatment plans, prescribe medications, and often serve as a patient’s principal healthcare provider in collaboration with physicians and other health care providers. 	<p>Admissions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Students entering the UND PA Program average over 12,000 hours of prior healthcare experience*. – Matriculants come from various previous professions to include paramedics, respiratory therapists, athletic trainers, physical therapists, radiology technicians, nurses, and nurse assistants, among others.
<p>Certification and Licensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – PAs must recertify at the national level every two years and take a recertification exam every 10 years. – One hundred hours of continuing medical education (CME) are required every two years. 	<p>Curriculum and Clinical Experience:</p> <p>PA education is full-time:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Six semesters over 24 months, – 90 credits, – 48 weeks of clinical rotations, – and includes an average of 1800 hours of direct patient contact*.

Pharmacology in PA Education

PA students are instructed on pharmacology and prescribing *throughout the entire 24 months*:

- **Semesters 1 & 2:**
 - Pharmacology I & II
 - 4 credits (soon to be 6 credits) with over **65 hours of classroom instruction**
 - Covered in these fundamental pharmacology courses are:
 - pharmacokinetics and pharmacodynamics,
 - pharmacogenetic concepts of the major drug classes,
 - drug regulations and narcotic schedules,
 - and drug interactions and contraindications.
- **Semesters 3, 4, 5, & 6:**
 - Pharmacology instruction is continued in the classroom and then **applied every day during clinical rotations and clerkships**.
 - Classroom instruction covers medications in all classes, including cardiology, pulmonology, endocrinology, ENT, gastrointestinal, renal, OB/GYN, neurology, infectious disease/antibiotics, psychiatry, urology, pain medicine, hematology, and oncology.
 - **Classroom instruction in pharmacology is over 150 hours during this phase***.
 - PA students are supervised by licensed physicians and physician assistants trained in the pharmacological management of medical conditions using evidence-based practices.
 - Students encounter an **average of over 1500 patients during their clinical rotations***.
 - Pharmacological management is addressed and applied in most of these patient encounters.

*Data based on the UND PA Program averages from the three most recent graduating classes
Source: UND PA Program, March 2021