PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

COLLEGE OF APPLIED SCIENCES AND ARTS

Graduate Faculty:

DiCocco, Margaret, Assistant Professor, M.S. University of Texas, San Antonio, 1998. Research design, statistical analysis and interpretation and evidence-based medicine.

Kelly, Cheri, Assistant Professor, M.S., Southern Illinois University, 1990, 1990. Clinical medicine, clinical anatomy, medical physiology, autism spectrum disorders, internal medicine topics.

Ryznyk, Laurie, Professor, MSPA, University of Nebraska Medical Center, 2001, 1995. Problem-based learning, rural and family medicine, clinical medicine, infectious disease, spirituality and medicine, mentoring.

Smith, Sidney, Clinical Assistant Professor, M.D., F.A.A.P, Northwestern University School of Medicine, 1965. Pediatrics.

Waldyke, Kathryn, Clinical Assistant Professor, M.D., Michigan State University, 1990; 2011. Family Medicine, Women’s Health, Dermatology, Orthopedics, Preventive and Complementary Medicine, Mental Health.

The Physician Assistant Program is offered by the School of Allied Health in the College of Applied Sciences and Arts in collaboration with the Department of Family and Community Medicine of the School of Medicine. The Program utilizes a problem-based learning curriculum and clinical rotations to prepare primary care physician assistants to practice medicine with physician supervision. The PA Program also offers a Master's degree Completion Program (MCP) for Bachelor’s degree prepared PAs who wish to earn a Master's Degree. (See information about the Completion Program after the professional program information.)

The physician assistant is often the first health care provider to see a patient and perform a variety of tasks including collecting historical and physical examination data from the patient and ordering appropriate laboratory and diagnostic tests. The physician assistant synthesizes patient information and participates in formulating and executing a treatment plan to meet the patient’s needs. A physician assistant can evaluate psychological aspects of a patient’s health, counsel when appropriate, and teach patients about primary health problems. The physician assistant makes referrals when indicated and can perform procedures, such as EKGs, venipuncture, casting, suturing, and injections. The physician assistant prescribes medications as delegated by the supervising physician, according to state law. Graduates of the PA Program are trained as primary care providers and awarded the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPA) degree.

Admission

To be considered for enrollment in the Physician Assistant Program, prospective students must be admitted to the Graduate School, complete the Program prerequisites and other requirements. This Program requires a nonrefundable $50.00 application fee (subject to change without notice by the SIU Board of Trustees) that must be submitted with the application for admissions to graduate study in the Physician Assistant Program. Applicants may pay this fee by credit card if applying electronically or by personal check, cashier’s check, or money order made out to SIU, and payable through a U.S. Bank. MSPA students will not receive the border state decrease adjustment to their tuition and fees. Therefore, all out-of-state students will pay a higher tuition rate. No advanced placement is awarded towards completion of PA Program courses, even if the applicant is licensed as a medical doctor.

Degree Requirements

Prospective students must have completed all of the following prerequisite courses: Medical Terminology- one semester or proficiency; Chemistry or Biochemistry or Organic or Inorganic-two semesters with labs; Psychology one semester; Human Physiology-one semester (higher level preferred); Human Anatomy--one semester (higher level preferred with cadaver); Microbiology-one semester; General Biology for science majors, Cell and Molecular Biology, Genetics -one semester; Statistics-one semester; English Composition-one semester; Speech or Oral Communication-one semester; CPR for Healthcare Providers. Anatomy and Physiology must be completed within the last five years of matriculation. Graduate Record Examination, the Miller’s Analogy Test and MCAT scores must have been taken within the past five years and should be submitted with application materials. Applicants must have successfully completed all the required prerequisites by the fall term prior to matriculation.

Students who have completed or will soon complete a Bachelor's degree and prerequisite course requirements should contact the Academic Advisor at the Physician Assistant Program for application information. Enrollment in the Physician Assistant Program is limited and based on a competitive process. Applicants will be evaluated on the overall submitted application package including GPA,
academic potential, motivation, familiarity with the PA role, oral and written communication skills, inter-personal skills, and potential for success in the SIUC PA Program and the PA profession. Preference will be given to applicants from rural or medically underserved areas. Students will be selected by the Admissions Committee for an interview with a maximum of 30 being admitted to the professional sequence. The MSPA program is extremely rigorous and outside employment while in the Program is discouraged.

Students will be selected for the professional sequence to begin study only in the summer session. Those accepted into the Program will be notified of acceptance by the spring semester prior to the summer of entry. The curriculum is a 26 month sequence with the first 12 months (Phase I) consisting of problem-based learning activities, basic science and clinical medicine courses, and clinical experiences. The next 14 months consist of clinical rotations with seminars (Phase II) and a summer preceptorship (Phase III). Students must complete a Master's Project before graduation. During the clinical rotation phase, students may be required to relocate to other locations, called Hubsites, throughout Illinois. These include, but are not limited to: Carbondale/Delta Region, Decatur, Mattoon, Olney, Pekin, Quincy, or Springfield. More information can be obtained from the PA Program Academic Advisor at: paadvisement-L@listserv.siu.edu

Requirements for Major in Physician Assistant Studies Program

First Year Sequence (Phase I) ..................54

Second Year (Phase II & Phase III) .............36
Physician Assistant 545, 551, 580, 581, 582, 583, 596, 599

Total ................................................................90

Curricular Guide

**PHASE I**

**SEMESTER 1 – SUMMER (UNIT 1) – 10 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 500-1 Introduction to the Profession
PA 501-3 PBL, Unit 1
PA 511-1 Pharmacology
PA 521-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Science
PA 531-2 Patient Evaluation
PA 547-1 Research Methods

**SEMESTER 2 – FALL (UNITS 2 & 3) – 22 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 502-3; PA 503-3 PBL, Units 2 and 3
PA 506-1 Patient Education/Behavioral Science
PA 507-1 Diversity in Medical Practice
PA 512-1; PA 513-1 Pharmacology II, III
PA 522-2; PA 523-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences II, III
PA 532-2; PA 533-2 Patient Evaluation II, III
PA 550-2; Clinical Mentoring - Phase I
PA 599-2 Master’s Seminar

**SEMESTER 3 – SPRING (UNITS 4 & 5) – 22 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 504-3; PA 505-3 PBL, Units 4 and 5
PA 506-1 Patient Education/Behavioral Science
PA 514-1; PA 515-1 Pharmacology IV, V
PA 524-2; PA 525-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences IV, V
PA 534-2 Clinical/Procedural Skills
PA 535-2 ACLS/EKG
PA 536-1 Introduction to the Surgical Setting
PA 550-2; Clinical Mentoring – Phase I
PA 599-2 Master’s Seminar

**PHASE II**

**SEMESTER 4 – SUMMER – 6 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 551-1 Clinical Mentoring – Phase II
PA 580-1 PBL Tutor Group – Phase II
PA 581-3 Clinical Rotations I
PA 599-1 Master’s Seminar

**SEMESTER 5 – FALL – 12 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 551-2 Clinical Mentoring – Phase II
PA 580-2 PBL Tutor Group – Phase II
PA 582-6 Clinical Rotations II
PA 599-2 Master’s Seminar

**SEMESTER 6 – SPRING – 12 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 551-2 Clinical Mentoring – Phase II
PA 580-2 PBL Tutor Group – Phase II
PA 583-6 Clinical Rotations III
PA 599-2 Master’s Seminar

**PHASE III**

**SEMESTER 7 – SUMMER – 6 CREDIT HOURS**
PA 545-3 Health Care Systems
PA 596-3 Preceptorship

A limited number of electives are also available to MSPA students:

**PA Elective Courses:**
PA 508 1-3 Holistic Medicine
PA 585 1-6 Independent Study

**PA Continuing Enrollment:**
PA 601-1

Used to complete the Master’s Project if all other Program requirements are met.
**Master's Completion Program**

**(30 credit hours, 12 months)**

This option is for those students who are PAs and hold a Bachelor's degree from an accredited PA Program. Interested candidates must be admitted to the Graduate School and complete an application to the Master's Completion Program (MCP) available through the PA Program Academic Advisor at paadvisement-L@listserv.siu.edu.

Students are awarded the MSPA degree upon satisfactory completion of all requirements. Students enrolled in the Master's Completion Program may complete the program via distance education with periodically scheduled seminars on campus, as required by the course syllabi. See descriptions of individual courses below.

**Requirements for Master’s Completion Program**

**First Year Sequence** ...........................................22
- Physician Assistant 540, 547, 548, 549, 599

**Second Year Sequence** ......................................8
- Physician Assistant 545, 599

**Total** .................................................................30

**MASTER’S COMPLETION PROGRAM CURRICULAR GUIDE**

**SEMESTER 1 – FALL - 10 CREDIT HOURS**
- PA 547-4 Research Methods and Evidence-Based Medicine
- PA 548-4 Medicine in Practice
- PA 599-2 Master's Seminar

**SEMESTER 2 – SPRING - 12 CREDIT HOURS**
- PA 540-4 Ethical Issues in PA Practice
- PA 549-4 Medicine in Practice
- PA 599-4 Masters Seminar

**SEMESTER 3 – SUMMER - 8 CREDIT HOURS**
- PA 545-3 Health Care Systems
- PA 599-5 Master’s Seminar

A limited number of electives are also available to MCPA students:

**PA Elective Courses:**
- PA 508 1-3 Holistic Medicine
- PA 585 1-6 Independent Study

**PA Continuing Enrollment:**
- PA 601-1 Used to complete the Master's Project if all other Program requirements are met.

For information about problem-based learning and more information on either degree option offered by the Physician Assistant Program, visit our web site at: [www.paprogram.siuc.edu](http://www.paprogram.siuc.edu) or email the Program Academic Advisor.

**Courses (PA)**

**500-1 Introduction to the PA Profession.** This course is designed to provide students with an understanding of professional issues of the Physician Assistant. Students are introduced to physician assistant history, standards of quality assurance, credentialing and licensure, regulations governing practice, business issues, and contract negotiation. Students explore opportunities in professional organizations and ways to strengthen their professional development. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

**501-3 Problem Based Learning Group, Unit 1.** This course is designed to focus on medical topics in cardiology and gastroenterology. Problem-based learning is utilized with emphasis on expanding the student's knowledge base, enhancing the student's critical reasoning skills and self-directed learning, and improving interpersonal communication skills among students and patients. Six to nine students are allowed per section. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

**502-3 Problem Based Learning Group, Unit 2.** This course is designed to focus on medical topics in respiratory medicine, dermatology, urology, and infectious disease. Problem-based learning is utilized with emphasis on expanding the student's knowledge base, enhancing clinical reasoning skills and self-directed learning, and improving interpersonal communication skills among students and patients. Six to nine students are allowed per section. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

**503-3 Problem Based Learning Group, Unit 3.** This course is designed to focus on internal medicine topics in neurological and psychiatric diseases. Problem-based learning is utilized with emphasis on expanding the student's knowledge base, enhancing the student's critical reasoning skills and self-directed learning, and improving interpersonal communication skills among students and patients. Six to nine students are allowed per section. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

**504-3 Problem Based Learning Group, Unit 4.** This course is designed to focus on health concerns, physiological and psychosocial issues of obstetrics, gynecology, urology, and pediatric gastroenterology.
Problem based learning is utilized in expanding the student's knowledge base, clinical reasoning skills, self-directed learning, and improving interpersonal communication skills. Six to nine students allowed per section. Prerequisite: PA 503.

505-3 Problem Based Learning Group, Unit 5. This course is designed to focus on medical topics related to endocrinology, renal disease, and metabolism. Problem-based learning is utilized with emphasis on expanding the student's knowledge base, enhancing the student's clinical reasoning skills and self-directed learning, and improving interpersonal communication skills among students and patients. Six to nine students allowed per section. Prerequisite: PA 504.

506-1 to 3 Behavioral Science/Patient Education. This course explores behavioral science and patient education as it applies to the practice of medicine, as well as maintenance of health and prevention of illness. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

507-1 Diversity in Medical Practice. Students examine issues that arise when delivering medical services to persons of diverse cultures, ethnicity, race, sexual orientation, gender, and socioeconomic status. Implications for providing medical services to persons who have experienced discrimination and disadvantage will be discussed. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

508-1 to 3 Holistic Medicine. This course is designed to explore the current research, practice and applications of Mind-Body-Spirit Medicine (MBSM). Students will explore the use of various techniques for use in clinical and therapeutic settings as well as for maintaining their own personal health. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

511-1 Pharmacology I. This course introduces students to the therapeutic agents most commonly used for treatment of disorders of the cardiovascular and gastrointestinal systems. The practical aspects of dosage, schedules, therapeutic effect, adverse reactions, metabolism, mechanism of action and excretion are investigated. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

512-1 Pharmacology II. This course introduces students to the therapeutic agents most commonly used involving the pulmonary and integumentary systems, as well as those medications used in infectious disease. The practical aspects of dosage, schedules, therapeutic effect, adverse reactions, metabolism, method of action and excretion are investigated. Prerequisite: PA 511.

513-1 Pharmacology III. This course introduces students to the therapeutic agents most commonly used in neurology and psychiatry. The practical aspects of dosage, schedules, therapeutic effect, adverse reactions, metabolism, method of action and excretion are investigated. Prerequisite: PA 512.

514-1 Pharmacology IV. This course introduces students to the therapeutic agents most commonly used in practice involving pregnancy, neonates, infants, sexually transmitted diseases, menopause, and prostate disorders. The practical aspects of dosage, schedules, therapeutic effect, adverse reactions, metabolism, method of action and excretion are investigated. Prerequisite: PA 513.

515-1 Pharmacology V. This course introduces students to the therapeutic agents most commonly used in treating diabetes, thyroid disorders, renal disease, and fluid disorders. The practical aspects of dosage, schedules, therapeutic effect, adverse reactions, metabolism, method of action and excretion are investigated. Prerequisite: PA 514.

521-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences I. This course involves the study of anatomical structures with cadaveric materials, clinical applications, physiology and pathophysiology of selected systems. Radiology, microscopy, and embryology issues will be included. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

522-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences II. This course involves the study of anatomical structures with cadaveric materials, clinical applications, physiology and pathophysiology of selected systems. Radiology, microscopy, and embryology issues will be included. Prerequisite: PA 521.

523-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences III. This course involves the study of anatomical structures with cadaveric materials, clinical applications, physiology and pathophysiology of selected systems. Radiology, microscopy, and embryology issues will be included. Prerequisite: PA 522.

524-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences IV. This course involves the study of anatomical structures with cadaveric materials, clinical applications, physiology and pathophysiology of selected systems. Radiology, microscopy, and embryology issues will be included. Prerequisite: PA 523.

525-2 Clinical Anatomy and Integrated Sciences V. This course involves the study of anatomical structures with cadaveric materials, clinical applications, physiology and pathophysiology of selected systems. Radiology, microscopy, and embryology issues will be included. Prerequisite: PA 524.

531-2 Patient Evaluation I. This course is designed to prepare the Physician Assistant student in taking a patient history and performing portions of the physical exam. Interview and communication skills, medical terminology, and recording patient information are also explored. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

532-2 Patient Evaluation II. This course is designed to build on student's knowledge of pertinent physical exam skills, and increase knowledge regarding the medical history and clinical procedures. Students continue to improve skills in areas of the patient interview, medical terminology, and recording patient information. Prerequisite: PA 531.

533-2 Patient Evaluation III. This course is designed to build on students' knowledge of physical exam skills, introduce new systems, and improve skills in areas of the
Students in this course develop and expand their skills in performance of clinical procedural skills needed for competency in office and hospital-based practice. Topics will include central line placement, IV therapy, EKG, lumbar puncture, venipuncture, casting, suturing, and thoracentesis. Prerequisite: PA 533.

ELG/ACLS is designed to provide the knowledge and skills needed to read EKGs and to evaluate and manage the first ten minutes of an adult ventricular fibrillation/tachycardia arrest. Students learn to manage ten core ACLS cases, a respiratory emergency, four types of cardiac arrest, four types of pre-arrest emergencies, and stroke. May substitute for two credit hours of 549. Prerequisite: PA 533 or consent of school.

During this course, the student will be exposed to the various aspects of the general surgical setting. Fundamentals to be introduced include pre- and post-operative care, sterile technique, gowning and gloving, and the identification of surgical instruments. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

This course is primarily for the Master’s Completion student and focuses on ethical principles (beneficence, autonomy, nonmaleficence, justice, and autonomy) and the application of these to ethical dilemmas encountered in medical service provision and medical research. The student will examine federal and state legislation, policies, and practice guidelines as related to the practicing Physician Assistant. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

This course is designed to cover the following topics: delivery of health care, standards of care and guidelines as they affect practice issues, cost and effectiveness, economics of health care, insurance and health care, indigent medical care, the health workforce, access to care, health policy, and technology (electronic medical records, email, telemedicine). Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

This course is designed to focus on scientific inquiry within the Physician Assistant practice, covering the application of basic research methodology including problem formation, research designs, sampling, measurement, data analysis technical writing and dissemination of research results, and research ethics. Students will also focus on developing evidence-based medicine (EBM) skills. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

Students in this course study evidence-based principles and apply them to clinical practice. They also expand their knowledge of clinical procedures and therapeutics. Students log clinical hours as well as complete didactic assignments throughout this course. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

Students in this course continue to build upon the study of evidence-based medicine principles learned in previous courses and apply them to clinical practice. They will also expand their knowledge of clinical procedures and therapeutics. Students log clinical hours as well as complete didactic assignments throughout this course. Prerequisite: PA 501, PA 548.

Students gain clinical experience in the community setting by participating in a one-half day per week continuity clinic in Family Medicine with a designated mentor. Students register for this course during the first fall semester of the program. They register again for this course in the spring semester, until Phase II. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

Students continue to gain clinical experience in the community setting by participating in a one-half day per week continuity clinic in Family Medicine with a designated mentor. Students register for this course during the second semester of the program. They register again for this course in subsequent semesters, until the Preceptorship. Maximum hours per term are two. Prerequisite: PA 550.

Phase II students participate in a one-half day per week problem based learning tutor group, in which they engage in the Barrowsian method of problem-based learning at respective Hubsites. This course is designated to foster independence in clinical reasoning and knowledge synthesis by working through patient problems, as well as improving the application of knowledge to clinical practice. Restricted to Physician Assistant major.

This is the first (summer semester) in a three course sequence of supervised clinical experience in a variety of settings and nine specialty areas. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

This is the second course (fall semester) in a three course sequence of supervised clinical experience in a variety of settings and nine specialty areas. Prerequisite: PA 581.

This is the third course (spring semester) in a three course sequence of supervised clinical experience in a variety of settings and nine specialty areas. Prerequisite: PA 582.

Directed independent study in selected areas of Physician Assistant studies. Restricted to Physician Assistant majors.

The eight week preceptorship simulates the role of the Master’s prepared graduate Physician Assistant, with supervision by the clinical preceptor. This is generally completed in a primary care area of medicine. Prerequisite: PA 551.

This is a longitudinal course taken over several semesters in which students
work on proposal design, development, construction, research, writing, and project presentation. The Master's Seminar culminates in defense of a Grand Rounds Presentation, Community Project Presentation, or a published Problem-Based Learning Module and Tutor Guide. Prerequisite: Limited to Physician Assistant majors. Students in Phase I must register for section 1; those in Phase II and MCP students must register for section 2.

601-1 Continuing Enrollment. For graduate students who have not completed the Program and are in the process of their Master's project. The student must have completed all other program requirements to be eligible to register for this course. Concurrent enrollment in any other courses is not permitted. S/U or DEF grades only. Prerequisite: Completion of all program coursework except PA 599.