



## Physician Assistant FAQs

### Q: What should I major in?

A: Honestly, it doesn't matter. You should major in whatever subject interests you. There is no general, Pre-PA major offered at Texas A&M. Majors like Public Health, Psychology, and Biology are the most common for applicants because the prerequisite courses are included in your degree plan.

### Q: Can I take a course at a community college?

A: It is not recommended to take a prerequisite course at community college. Any non-science course is okay (History, Political Science, English, etc.). Know that while the grade earned at a community college does not count towards your TAMU GPA, it will be calculated into your overall GPA when you apply to PA school.

### Q: What is the GRE?

A: The Graduate Record Examinations, also known as the GRE, is a computer-delivered test taken by prospective applicants interested in pursuing a master's, MBA, JD, or doctoral degree. The GRE measures your verbal reasoning, quantitative reasoning, critical thinking, and analytical writing skills.

### Q: When should I take the GRE?

A: Students should take the GRE the spring that they apply to PA school. For students looking to begin their professional program immediately after graduation from TAMU, this would be the summer between junior and senior year. Some students take the GRE in the spring semester of their junior year. Visit [this website](#) for more information on the GRE.

### Q: Should I accept AP credit?

A: It depends. Talk to your academic advisor before accepting any AP credit. It is not recommended that you accept AP credit for any prerequisite course, because you will not be given a grade for the course. Non-science classes like history or English are generally ok to accept as they do not affect your science GPA. Note that once you accept AP credit, you cannot un-accept it.

### Q: What factors do PA school application committees consider other than my GPA when I apply?

A: Besides GPA, PA experience is the next significant element of your application. PA schools want to see that you have spent time shadowing, volunteering, or working with a PA. You need at least 50 hours of shadowing experience, but competitive applicants often have more than 200 hours. PA schools want to see that you have had significant patient contact. A competitive application will also include leadership skills demonstrated through on and off campus involvement, community service and involvement, and academic achievements and awards.

### Q: How do I get shadowing hours?

A: Seek opportunities over the summer or winter breaks to shadow a PA from your hometown. It is often easier to get hours this way due to the large number of students pursuing limited spots in College Station. Volunteer programs at hospitals are a common way to get shadowing hours.

Professional School Advising  
209 John J. Koldus Building  
1233 TAMU  
College Station, TX 77843-1233

Tel. 979.847.8938  
opsa@tamu.edu  
opsa.tamu.edu