

# PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES PROGRAM



UNIVERSITY OF  
**SOUTH DAKOTA**  
SCHOOL OF HEALTH SCIENCES



**2012—2013**  
**Admissions Guide**

**University of South Dakota  
Physician Assistant Studies Program  
Admissions Guide—Printable Version 2012-13**

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## Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the University of South Dakota Physician Assistant Studies Program. This guide is designed to answer the most commonly asked questions about the Program. We hope it will be a useful reference.

The latest and most complete information regarding the USD Physician Assistant Studies Program including admissions, curriculum and other academic information, may be found on the Program's home page:

[www.usd.edu/pa](http://www.usd.edu/pa)

Specific questions related to requirements or the application/admissions process should be directed to:

Janet Fulk  
Program Assistant II  
414 E. Clark, Rm 121  
Ph: 605-677-6719  
email: [Janet.Fulk@usd.edu](mailto:Janet.Fulk@usd.edu)

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414 E. Clark, Rm 120  
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## Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy

In accordance with the South Dakota Board of Regents Policy 1:19, the institutions under the jurisdiction of the Board of Regents shall offer equal opportunities in employment and for access to and participation in educational, extension and other institutional services to all persons qualified by academic preparation, experience, and ability for the various levels of employment or academic program or other institutional service, without discrimination based on race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, citizenship, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, or disability.

The Board reaffirms its commitment to the objectives of affirmative action, equal opportunity and non-discrimination in accordance with state and federal law. Redress for alleged violations of those laws may be pursued at law or through the procedures established by the provisions of 1:18 of this policy.

Admission decisions at the U are made without regard to disabilities. All prospective students are expected to present academic credentials at or above the minimum standards for admission and meet any technical standards that may be required for admission to a specific program. If you are a prospective student with a disability and need assistance or accommodations during the admission/application process, please contact the Director of Disability Services, 119B Service Center North, USD, Vermillion, SD 57069.

Phone: 605-677-6389 Fax: 605-677-3172 E-Mail: [disabilityservices@usd.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@usd.edu)

Federal Law prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability (Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act). The University has designated Ms. Roberta Ambur, Vice President of Administration & ITS, as the Coordinator to monitor compliance with these statutes. Section 504 obligates USD and Ms. Ambur to provide equal access for all persons with disabilities. Ms. Ambur can be reached at Room 209, Slagle Hall, Phone: 605-677-5661.

## History of the Program

The University of South Dakota Physician Assistant Studies Program was developed following action of the 1992 South Dakota Legislature and approved by the South Dakota Board of Regents to offer Certificate/Bachelor's degree in Physician Assistant Studies in June of 1993. The Physician Assistant Studies Program is housed within the University of South Dakota School of Health Sciences. The first class of students matriculated in August of 1993 as the inaugural class of 1995. The USD PA Program has been nationally accredited since 1995 through the ARC-PA.

In June, 2003, the South Dakota Board of Regents approved the conversion of the baccalaureate program to a graduate-level program. The Graduate School awards the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS). The conversion to a graduate program phased out the baccalaureate degree.

## Description of the Profession

A physician assistant (PA) is a health professional licensed by a state or credentialed by a federal employer to practice medicine as delegated by and with the supervision of a physician. Upon graduation from an accredited program, PAs are eligible to take the national certifying examination administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). Only those passing the test can use the title "Physician Assistant-Certified (PA-C)." PAs keep up with medical advances through continuing medical education courses (CME). In order to maintain national certification, PA's must complete 100 hours of CME every two years and take the recertification exam every six years.

A hallmark of physician assistant practice is that PAs provide a broad range of medical and surgical services as part of a team with their supervising physicians. As part of the physician/PA team, PAs diagnose and treat illness and injuries, and exercise a degree of autonomy in their decisions. Physician Assistants perform physical examinations, order and interpret diagnostic tests, prescribe medications and provide patient education and preventative health care counseling. They also perform therapeutic procedures such as suturing lacerations, etc. A particular PA's responsibilities vary with training, experience, state law, and what is delegated by the supervising physician. PAs are recognized throughout the nation as quality health care providers.

PAs are employed in virtually all types of health care settings—hospitals, clinics, private physician offices, schools, and HMO's. PAs can be found in communities of all sizes, from the smallest rural town to major metropolitan areas, and in virtually every medical and surgical specialty. Although the majority of PAs work in primary care medicine—family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, and obstetrics and gynecology—many also work in specialty medicine, such as cardiothoracic surgery and orthopedics.

Additional information about the profession may be obtained from the American Academy of Physicians Assistants.

American Academy of Physician Assistants  
950 North Washington Street  
Alexandria VA 22314  
Phone: 703-836-2272  
[aapa@aapa.org](mailto:aapa@aapa.org)

Web: <http://aapa.org/>

## **Degree Offered**

Upon successful completion of the physician assistant professional program at the University of South Dakota, students receive a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) degree.

## **Accreditation**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). Graduates from the Program are eligible for the national certification examination administered by the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

## **Administration**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program is part of the University of South Dakota located in Vermillion, South Dakota. The Program is administered by the School of Health Sciences. While the Program has its own administrative policies for PA students, they are governed by the same general regulations and share in the same privileges that apply to all students on the USD campus. PA students derive many benefits from the Sanford School of Medicine including access to the University Libraries, Wegner Health Science Center Library, instruction from the Sanford School of Medicine faculty, opportunities to learn from a broad range of clinical and research oriented activities, and the opportunity for interaction with students from many different health care professions.

## **Mission**

The Physician Assistant Studies Program at The University of South Dakota provides a comprehensive primary care education that prepares graduates to deliver high quality healthcare to meet the needs of South Dakota and the region.

To accomplish this mission, the USD PA Program:

- Promotes and supports the ideal of a competent, caring, and compassionate physician assistant
- Promotes and supports excellence and professionalism
- Fosters an evidence-based approach to patient care
- Expects students to be accountable for individual learning
- Expects faculty and students to be partners in the educational process within an environment of mutual respect
- Empowers students to be lifelong learners
- Selects individuals likely to practice in South Dakota and the surrounding region
- Fosters interest in primary care to rural and underserved populations
- Selects individuals who have the interpersonal aptitudes and maturity that are necessary for successful practice as a physician assistant

Physician Assistants and students should demonstrate the following core beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors at all times:

- Professional and personal ethical behavior
- Honesty and integrity
- Compassion
- Service to those in need
- Advocacy for a team approach to healthcare
- Commitment to lifelong learning
- Sensitivity to cultural and individual differences
- Promotion of the physician assistant profession and its ideals

The following is offered as a guide only. The course schedule is subject to change.

<b>Tentative Course Schedule</b>			
<b>Course</b>		<b>Credit Hours</b>	<b>Semester Hours</b>
<b>Semester I— August to December</b>			
ANAT 711	Gross Anatomy	8	16 credits
ANAT 712	Embryology	2	
PHYG 730	Physiology	3	
PAST 710	Introduction to Clinical Medicine I	3	
<b>Semester II—January to May</b>			
PAST 714	Medicine I	7	18 credits
PAST 718	Research Perspectives	3	
PAST 720	PA Professional Issues	3	
PHAR 720	Pharmacology	5	
<b>Semester III—June to December</b>			
PAST 712	Introduction to Clinical Medicine II	3	22 credits
PAST 716	Medicine II	6	
PAST 788	Masters Project	1	
PAST 760	Family Medicine I (clinical rotation)	6	
PAST 763	Internal Medicine (clinical rotation)	6	
<b>Semester IV—December to May</b>			
PAST 751	Surgery	6	18 credits
PAST 753	Pediatrics	6	
PAST 757	Behavioral Health	6	
<b>Semester V—May to August</b>			
PAST 752	OB/Gyn	6	12 credits
PAST 754	Emergency Medicine	6	
<b>Semester VI—August to December</b>			
PAST 758	Rural/Underserved Family Medicine	6	18 credits
PAST 764	Elective I	6	
PAST 765	Elective II	6	

## Requirements for Admission

Prior to entrance into the program applicants must have completed a bachelor's degree at an accredited college or university. The undergraduate program of study must have included required course work in specific disciplines as shown below. All required course work must be satisfactorily completed by **June 1** of the year of intended enrollment.

- Applicants must be a US Citizen or permanent resident
- Required course work graded Pass/Fail, and survey courses will not be accepted for any of the hours.
- No grade lower than a "C" is accepted for any prerequisite coursework.
- We do not accept CLEP or AP credits—an exception for General Psychology is allowed only by approval of the Program Director.
- Clinical and work experiences **will not** be accepted in place of coursework.
- It is highly recommended that all courses are taken in the 10 years prior to application.
- A minimum cumulative and prerequisite grade point average of 2.7 (A=4.0) is required by the Graduate School, however, those invited for interview have a significantly higher GPA (see Selection Criteria on page 8)
- We do not require the GRE at this time.

### Pre-requisite Courses

Course	Semester Hours	Quarter Hours
2 semesters of Biology with lab	8	12
General Chemistry I with lab	4	6
General Chemistry II with lab (or Organic Chemistry)	4	6
Biochemistry **	3	5
Microbiology with lab	4	6
General Psychology	3	5
Abnormal Psychology	3	5
2 semesters of Anatomy and Physiology w/lab*	8	12

**\*If Anatomy & Physiology are taken separately, a minimum of one lab is required if not offered with both courses**

**\*\* Combined Organic/Biochemistry are not recommended, however, if taken must be at Junior level or above**

The following additional academic courses are encouraged, but not required: Organic Chemistry, Immunology, and General Statistics.

### Advanced Placement

The USD Physician Assistant Studies Program does not grant advanced placement to any applicant admitted to the Program. No program courses will be waived, and no advanced credit for any previous course work will be given even though it may be similar or identical to course work in the Program. All courses are designated as required and must be taken by every student.

## Requirements for Admission—(Continued)

### Selection Criteria

The requirements described in the previous section are *minimum* requirements for admission. Because admission is competitive, the Program has identified a number of “Selection Criteria” for applicants. In considering applicants for admission, the Admissions Committee will give preference to applicants who possess the following:

- An overall grade point average (as calculated by CASPA) of 3.2 or higher (on a 4.00 scale) .
- A science grade point average (as calculated by CASPA) of 3.2 or higher (on a 4.00 scale).
- It is highly recommended that all prerequisite courses be completed during the 10 years prior to application.
- Direct patient care experience is expected with the average admitted student having more than 1,000 hours
- Desire for future practice in primary care or in a medically underserved area
- Significant extracurricular, professional, or service organization involvement and activity
- Motivation to become a physician assistant based on a thorough understanding of the PA profession.
- Ability to communicate effectively as demonstrated in the personal written statement, in the application and in the interview.
- Personality and motivational characteristics that are conducive to success as a Physician Assistant, student and practicing provider
- Personal qualities related to maturity and professionalism as demonstrated in the interview and letters of recommendation.
- Resident and non-resident students are selected for admission
  - ◊ Over half of the matriculants are South Dakota residents
  - ◊ Non-resident applicants include, but are not limited to, those who can demonstrate ties to the state of South Dakota (e.g., if one or both parents are SD resident, if you graduated from a high school in SD, if you are a member of a federally recognized tribe from a bordering state, etc.)

### Graduates of Foreign Institutions

Applicants who are US Citizens or permanent residents who have earned college/university credit outside of the U.S. must complete an Application for Evaluation of Foreign Educational Credentials. The PA Program requires a course-by-course evaluation (**including verification of lab components where required**) to be completed by World Education Services (WES). Reports from Educational Credential Evaluators will not be accepted. To submit your application please visit <http://www.wes.org/index.asp>. Admission will not be considered and credit will not be reviewed for possible transfer acceptance until a report is received.

**Test Of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL):** see <http://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/international-admissions.cfm>

Additional items for admissions may be required. Please contact the International Graduate Admissions office at 605-677-6287 or visit their website <http://www.usd.edu/graduate-school/international-admissions.cfm> for further requirements.

## **Requirements for Admission—(Continued)**

### **Health Care Experience**

Previous healthcare experience, while not required is expected, and regarded as one measure of the applicants interest in healthcare. In addition, such experience offer a means by which the applicant can better understand the role of the PA within the healthcare delivery system and appreciate the relationships between health providers.

Direct patient care would include roles in which you are responsible for things like taking vital signs, administering medication, charting, drawing blood, tending to personal care, dressing wounds, etc. Some positions which may allow an applicant to accumulate these hours would be CNA, PCA, Phlebotomist, and EMT as examples. (Average direct patient care of accepted students is more than 1,000 hours)

For a profile of the admitted applicant, please see the following link:

<http://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/physician-assistant/upload/QA-2011.pdf>

### **References**

References should include persons who are acquainted with the applicant's actual abilities, talents, personality and academic performance. References from college teachers who can comment on academic potential from first hand knowledge, physicians, PAs and other health professionals who have worked with the applicant or know the applicant well are preferred.

### **Background Check**

The University of South Dakota Physician Assistant Program requires criminal background checks. Background checks will be performed only after the applicant has received notice of conditional admission. Understand that failure to disclose any previous convictions or charges pending at any point during the application process may lead to denial or revocation of admission. Felony convictions will result in denial of acceptance to the program and/or eligibility of licensure. Drug screening checks may be required for licensure and/or clinical placement while a student is in the program. Additional background checks may be required for programmatic clinical experiences.

## Application Procedure, Deadlines and Application Fees

The University of South Dakota Physician Assistant Studies Program, along with the majority of other physician assistant programs, participates in a centralized application service called the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). The service collates materials, computes grades point averages and transmits standardized information to the physician assistant program the applicant designates. CASPA takes no part in the evaluation, selection or rejection of applicants. The application and instructions be obtained from the CASPA website at <https://portal.caspaonline.org/>. **Deadline for submission is October 1.**

**While the deadline for submission of the CASPA application is October 1**, we highly recommend that you submit it, along with all the required materials to CASPA no later than September 1. Complete, verified CASPA applications must be received by the program no later that **November 15** in order to be considered for interview. We recommend that you check your application status on a weekly basis. CASPA will not review or forward your application to the Program until **all** requested information is received, therefore the Program is not responsible for applications not received by the above mentioned dates due to missing information.

Contact information for CASPA is:

Address: PO Box 9108, Watertown, MA 02471  
Phone: (617) 612-2080 E-mail: [caspainfo@caspaonline.org](mailto:caspainfo@caspaonline.org)  
Web site: <https://portal.caspaonline.org/>

### Additional Application Materials

All applicants are required to apply to The University of South Dakota Graduate School and pay a \$35 fee with this application. A link to this application can be found at <http://www.usd.edu/health-sciences/physician-assistant/admissions-process.cfm>. This application is due by October 1.

Any additional application materials deemed necessary by the program will be emailed to applicants upon the program's receipt of their completed CASPA application. Due dates for these materials will be included in the email and are subject to change based on program time constraints. **Failure to return all additional materials by the stated deadline will result in the withdrawal of the application from consideration for interview or acceptance.**

### Communication during the Admissions Cycle

The program communicates with applicants primarily via email throughout the admissions cycle. It is the applicants responsibility to ensure that the program has the correct email contact information. If you do not receive communication from our program within one week of the **submission** of your application to CASPA, it is possible that the email communication is being blocked by your service provider or is being placed in your junk mail.

Applicants who do not receive this communication should contact the program to ensure that future communications can be delivered. Failure to follow up with the program may result in withdraw of the application if requested materials are not returned by stated deadlines.

## Admission Process

**Step 1:** Submission of completed application materials to CASPA by **October 1**. These materials include:

- a. The CASPA application. (Available May 1)
- b. Official Transcripts from all colleges/universities attended.
- c. Three (3) letters of Recommendation submitted to CASPA.

\* Complete, verified applications must be received by the program no later than **November 15th**. Incomplete applications and those not meeting all requirements are not considered for further evaluation.

**Step 2:** Submission of additional application materials by **given deadline**. These materials include:

- a. Graduate School Application along with \$35 fee
- b. Any additionally requested materials

**Step 3:** Evaluation of CASPA application, Graduate School application and any additional application materials for selection of applicants for the on-campus interview.

**Step 4:** On-campus interview and completion of required assessment(s).

**Step 5:** Final selection process by the Admissions Committee.

**Step 6:** Admission decision letters sent to all applicants.

## Applicant Interviews

An interview with the Admissions Committee is required for admission. However, only the most qualified applicants are invited for an interview based on the Admission Committee's assessment of the application materials. The most competitive applicants who have or will have met all requirements and will have completed all required course work by June 1 of the year of intended enrollment are invited for an interview.

Admission to the PA Program continues to be highly competitive. Only one class of students is selected each year for admission. The most qualified applicants are selected for admission to the Program. Selection of applicants is based on the Admissions Committee's assessment of the application materials and the personal interview. Applicants not selected for admission in a given year may reapply in subsequent years.

## Understanding the Profession

Applicants are expected to have a thorough understanding of the PA Profession. Applicants should research the profession to learn how PAs work within the healthcare system, and understand the PAs role on the healthcare team. Applicants should get acquainted with and, if at all possible follow/shadow one or more practicing physician assistants on the job in order to thoroughly understand the functions the PA performs in the clinical setting (especially family medicine PAs).

## **Financial Information**

Tuition and fee charges are subject to change, as determined by the South Dakota Board of Regents. Questions regarding residency status should be directed to the Office of the Registrar, University of South Dakota, 414 E. Clark, Vermillion, SD 57069, telephone 605-677-5339 or 1-877-COYOTES. The table below contains estimates based on 2012-2013 tuition & fees.

	Year 1 (2 semesters)	Year 2 (2 semesters)	Year 3 (2 semester)
Semester Hours	34	40	30
Resident Tuition *	6691.20	7872.00	5904.00
Nonresident Tuition **	19708.10	23186.00	17389.50
MN Resident Tuition ***	See Below	See Below	See Below
Course Fees (including Health Science Fee, university support fees, & general activity fees)	6250.80	8105.20	5475.00
Malpractice Insurance	35.00	35.00	35.00
Hospitalization Insurance	2021.00	2021.00	1010.00****
Life, Disability, AD&D	81.59	89.00	44.50
Books	2800.00	3000.00	1428.00
Medical Instruments	1200.00	0	0
Computer	2100.00	0	0

\* Resident Tuition: \$196.80 per credit hour

\*\* Non-resident Tuition: \$579.65 per credit hour

\*\*\* MN Resident Tuition: \$406.25 per credit hour (**Summer 2012 Only**). This rate will increase Fall 12

\*\*\*\*Proof of major medical health coverage is required—this is the amount allowed in your financial aid budget to obtain coverage.

\*\*\*\*\* Add these costs if you need vaccinations/titers

Students should also be aware of additional expenses for travel, lodging and meals during the clinical phase of the program. The amount of these expenses will vary depending on individual schedules. Tuition and fees and other costs are provided as **estimates only** and are subject to change without notice. Costs are based on the **2012-2013** academic year.

## **Financial Information—(Continued)**

### **Financial Aid**

The Office of Financial Aid is prepared to assist accepted students with their financial aid needs. It is very important for students to make sure all financial planning arrangements are complete prior to entering the Program.

Inquiries about financial assistance should be directed to Lindsay Miller in the Office of Financial Aid, University of South Dakota, 414 East Clark, Vermillion, SD 57069. Telephone (605) 677-5446.

Website: <http://www.usd.edu/financial-aid/>

### **Refund Policy**

The end of the drop/add period for standard (those that conform to the regular semester schedule) and non-standard courses offered in a semester shall be the date the first 10 percent of the term ends or the day following the first class meeting, whichever is later.

### **Refunds for Dropped Course**

A student receives a 100 percent refund of tuition and per credit hour fees for courses dropped within the drop/add period. Any course meeting during a standard semester which meets for less time than the standard semester shall be treated as a nonstandard semester course for refund purposes. No refund shall be provided for courses dropped after that time, except by administrative action. Courses offered during summer school session and correspondence courses are considered nonstandard courses.

Students who withdraw, drop out, or are expelled within the drop/add period receive a 100 percent refund of tuition and per credit hour fees. Students who withdraw, drop out, or are expelled after the drop/add period for the period of enrollment for which they are assessed may be entitled to a refund as set forth herein. The complete BOR policy can be found at [http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/5\\_FinanceBusiness/documents/5-7.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/5_FinanceBusiness/documents/5-7.pdf)

### **Refunds for Withdrawals**

Students who withdraw from the University may be entitled to a refund of tuition and fees and institutional charges calculated through 60 percent of an enrollment period. The refund shall be determined by computing the percentage of an enrollment period remaining after the date of withdrawal multiplied times the tuition and fees and institutional fees originally assessed the student. At no time will refunds be awarded after the 60 percent point of the enrollment period.

Students who receive a refund and are receiving Title IV aid may be required to repay the appropriate Title IV aid program from which they received assistance for any sums that have not been retained by the University for services rendered or that will no longer be required to support other ongoing expenses for attending the University. Specific information about possible repayment obligations may be obtained through the Financial Aid Office. Payment options are available through the Business Office. The complete BOR Policy can be found at [http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/5\\_FinanceBusiness/documents/5-7.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/policy/5_FinanceBusiness/documents/5-7.pdf)

## **Financial Information—(Continued)**

### **Withdrawal Policy**

Students who find it necessary to withdraw from the University (i.e., drop their only course or all courses in which they are enrolled in a term) may obtain the form for this purpose from the Office of the Registrar, Belbas Center 223. After completing the form, students must file it with the Registrar's or Financial Aid Office in the Belbas building in order to withdraw officially. Tuition and refundable fees are assessed or refunded as appropriate within the guidelines of the Board of Regents policy, according to the date of official withdrawal. (See Financial Information Section for further information.)

The complete withdrawal policy may be found on the Board of Regents' online catalog at <http://catalog.usd.edu/content.php?catoid=7&navoid=291#>.

## TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PA STUDENTS

The granting of a Master of Science degree and Certificate of Completion to a physician assistant student signifies that the holder is an individual prepared for entry-level employment as a PA. In a professional role, the physician assistant must be able to provide medical services under a supervising physician within the scope and laws of medical practice. Thus, for the safety and welfare of patients, physician assistants must be able to demonstrate the technical knowledge and skills required for the delivery of health care services to a wide range of patients.

Candidates for the physician assistant profession must have the functional use of all five senses. A candidate's diagnostic skills would be lessened without the functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, equilibrium, smell, and taste. They must also have sufficient exteroceptive sense (touch, pain, and temperature), adequate proprioceptive sense (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory), as well as adequate motor skills necessary to carry out the activities described in the sections that follow. Candidates must also be able to integrate all information received by their senses to quickly and accurately function intellectually. This includes the ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data.

A candidate for the physician assistant profession must have the abilities and skills associated with observation, communication, motor, conceptual, integrative and quantitative, and behavioral and social skills. Adjustments can be made for some disabilities, but such a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

**I. Observation:** The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacologic demonstrations in animals, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and up close. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation. It is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell.

**II. Communication:** A candidate should be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.

**III. Motor:** Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should be able to do basic laboratory tests, carry out treatment and diagnostic procedures, and read EKGs and X-rays. A candidate should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment of patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physician assistants are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, the suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

**IV. Intellectual-Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities:** These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physician assistants, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition the candidate should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

**V. Behavioral and Social Attributes:** A candidate must possess the emotional health and stability required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admissions and education processes.

# Additional Information

## Employment While Enrolled in the PA Program

The PA Program is a very intense curriculum that demands a great deal of time. It is important that students remain well balanced by allowing sufficient time for social activities, recreation and rest.

- Students are advised to forego employment while in the didactic year.
- Employment during the clinical phase is **not** allowed. Students are encouraged to take advantage of financial aid opportunities or other loans or funding.

The PA Program does not follow the University schedule, and would make it difficult to maintain employment during the didactic and clinical year. Students may be assigned to sites that are distant and/or have irregular schedules including evenings, night call, and weekends. A conflicting work schedule will not be considered just cause for a change in schedule. Employment will not be considered an acceptable excuse for violation of the attendance policy

## Insurance Coverage

Health Insurance is a requirement. For those who have inadequate or no coverage, Health Affairs offers policies through Wellmark. More information is provided during orientation for those accepted into the program.

All students enrolled in the program are covered by a Blanket Professional Liability Policy through the Program while engaged in any clinical experiences. Additionally, students are enrolled in a Life, Disability, AD&D policy for the duration of their tenure in the program.

## Immunization Policy

Students enrolled in academic programs at USD must provide a medical history and evidence of certain vaccinations and/or immunities. All medical history forms shall be filed in the Student Health Office. Students shall be expected to provide proof of the following signed off by a health care provider. Detailed information can be obtained by contacting the Program at [pa@usd.edu](mailto:pa@usd.edu).

### **MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella):**

All students born after December 31, 1956 are required to have medically signed proof of TWO properly administered immunizations **OR** Immune titers for measles (rubeola), mumps, and rubella.

### **Hepatitis B Immunization: All students are required to receive this vaccination**

The first two doses of the three-dose series are required **prior** to the start of classes. The booster is recommended between 4 and 8 weeks after the third does. Additionally a titer is required. A positive Hep B titer without proof of vaccine dates is accepted if unable to obtain immunization dates.

### **Varicella (Chicken Pox) Immunity:**

This must be proven by one of two ways:

- (1) A Varicella Titer indicating immunity if the student has had the chicken pox ; **OR**
- (2) Two doses of varicella immunization if no history of the disease or if varicella titer is negative

### **Tdap:**

One time dose of Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria, adult pertusis) is required **IF** a tetanus/diphtheria toxoid has not been administered within the past 2 years. Td booster recommended every 10 years thereafter.

### **TB Skin Test and Annual TB Skin Test thereafter:**

Students must have a 2 step TB test before June 1st of the year of enrollment and be given an annual test. If a student is positive then a chest x-ray and proof of treatment will be required.