

School of HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Course Descriptions Academic Year 2026-2027

Physician Assistant Program Course Descriptions

PA Program Didactic Phase Courses

Anatomical Sciences I (HPANA-66101)

This course is designed to provide students with an extensive background in the fundamentals of human anatomy through lectures, small group laboratories, and independent study formats. Subjects taught include central nervous system anatomy, basic embryology, anatomy of upper and lower extremities, cardiovascular and pulmonary systems, abdomen, and pelvis. All course content is delivered through several learning modalities, including didactic lectures, laboratory sessions utilizing cadavers, radiographic images, anatomical models, in-class review sessions, and practice practical exams. The in-class review sessions and practice practical exams will allow for consolidation of the course material and an opportunity to test established knowledge prior to comprehensive exams. The course emphasizes the location, identification, function, and relationships of pertinent structures. The course is intended to provide an anatomical basis for understanding the physical examination, clinical diagnoses and treatment, and pathological changes associated with illness and injury of each major organ and body system.

Credit: 6 semester hours

Course Director: [Adi Pinkas](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 1, 2, 3

Anatomical Sciences II (HPANA-63102)

This course is designed to provide students with an extensive background in the fundamentals of human anatomy utilizing lectures, small group laboratories, and independent study formats. Anatomic structures of the head and neck are described and illustrated in lecture followed by laboratory experiential learning to include location and identification as well as function and relationships of structures using cadavers, bone specimens, models, and radiographic images. The course is intended to provide an anatomical basis for understanding the physical examination and structural changes associated with illness and injury of each major organ and body system.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Adi Pinkas](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 1

Behavioral Dynamics (PABDN-62431)

A lecture and discussion course designed to provide the student with an overall view of the normal and abnormal characteristics of human psychological development and behavior in the pediatric, adult and geriatric patient populations.

Credit: 2 semester hours

Course Directors: [Ali Asghar](#) and [Sean Hurdiss](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Terms 2

Clinical Biochemistry (HPBIO-63121)

The course is designed to provide the student with the basics of clinical biochemistry in order to prepare them for their further studies. The course reviews basic organic chemistry pertinent to understanding metabolic pathways. Learning modules focus on aspects of clinical biochemistry including structure and function of proteins, enzyme kinetics, cell energy in the fed and fasted state and the metabolism of carbohydrates, lipids and amino acids. The course also covers nutritional needs of humans, including vitamins and their functions, and discusses disease states of biochemical origins.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Kristina Hulten](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 1, 2

Clinical Genetics (HPGEN-61141)

The genetics course introduces students to the basics of clinical genetics in order to prepare them for their further studies and practice in primary care. The course will build on fundamental genetic concepts and principles as they relate to clinical genetics and human disease phenotypes. Emphasis will be placed on recognizing common chromosomal disorders, single gene conditions, and inborn errors of metabolism based on clinical presentation. The course will emphasize the importance of determining if family members are at risk (patterns of inheritance), and discerning the different types of genetic testing available for clinical care, including the differentiation between screening and diagnostic studies.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Lorraine Potocki](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 3

Clinical Medicine I (PACMD-61501)

This module introduces the basic principles cell injury, adaptation and death, acute and chronic inflammation, cell regeneration and fibrosis, hemostasis, thrombosis and shock, immune-mediated injury, benign and malignant neoplasms, atherosclerosis along with an introduction to the mechanisms underlying viral, bacterial, and fungal pathogens to include innate host defense mechanisms prior to studying organ system pathophysiology.

Credit: 0.5 semester hour

Course Director: [Dave Paris](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 1

Clinical Medicine II (PACMD-61502)

This module introduces pathophysiology, clinical manifestations differential diagnosis, and treatments of acute and chronic disease involving the cardiovascular system. Critical Thinking Sessions are used to integrate and apply the knowledge acquired from lectures and readings.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Eric Martinez](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 2

Clinical Medicine III (PACMD-63503)

This module introduces pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, differential diagnosis, and treatments of acute and chronic disorders involving the pulmonary, renal and integument systems. Critical Thinking Sessions are used to integrate and apply the knowledge acquired from lectures and readings.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Dave Paris](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 3

Clinical Medicine IV (PACMD-63511)

This module introduces pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, differential diagnosis, and treatments of acute and chronic disorders involving the gastrointestinal, genitourinary, musculoskeletal, and rheumatologic systems. Critical Thinking Sessions are used to integrate and apply the knowledge acquired from lectures and readings.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Katherine Erdman](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 1

Clinical Medicine V (PACMD-63512)

This module introduces pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, differential diagnosis, and treatments for acute and chronic disorders involving the ears, eyes, and central and peripheral nervous systems, coupled with disorders affecting older adults, and introduces pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, differential diagnosis, and treatments in geriatrics. Critical Thinking Sessions are used to integrate and apply the knowledge acquired from lectures and readings.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Katherine Erdman](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 2

Clinical Medicine VI (PACMD-63513)

This module introduces the pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, differential diagnosis and treatments for conditions presenting in emergency care, and for acute and chronic disorders involving the endocrine and hematologic systems and the management of clinical infectious disease including HIV infection. Critical Thinking Sessions are used to integrate and apply the knowledge acquired from lectures and readings.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Eric Martinez](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 3

Clinical Prevention (PACLP-62301)

This course introduces students to the history, underlying theory, basic concepts, and interplay associated with public health, lifestyle medicine, and clinical prevention in the United States. Strategies for illness prevention, risk characterization, early screening for asymptomatic disease, risk stratification, and the reduction of risk at the individual and community level will be addressed. The content within the course is designed to provide a foundation for parallel learning experiences in Health Behavioral Counseling, Clinical Medicine, Genetics, and Health Research Methods. The need to identify health behaviors and risks will be reinforced within the Physical Diagnosis course through patient write-ups and through this course using case integrations.

Credit: 2 semester hours

Course Director: [Sarah Keyes](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 1, 2

Communications and Perspectives in Healthcare I (PACC-61401)

The course introduces students to basic concepts of non-medical drivers of health that pertain to the delivery of health care for a practitioner in a clinical setting. Lectures, discussions, small group activities, and community engagement are used to teach and reinforce course content. The course will focus on identifying and examining basic concepts associated with non-medical drivers of health and understanding clinical relevance. In addition, the impact of religious beliefs, alternative health care practices and family roles on the delivery of health care will be explored with the intent to prepare practitioners to provide competent care to all patients.

Credit: 1 semester hours

Course Director: [Elizabeth Elliott](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 1, 2

Diagnostic Testing (PADIA-61701)

A course designed to acquaint students with the principals involved in and the clinical evaluation of radiographic and clinical laboratory diagnostic studies. The emphasis within the radiology section is placed on normal radiographic findings and their comparison to the abnormalities visualized in disease processes. In the laboratory medicine section, the lectures are designed to survey and relate the results of tests to clinical situations. Lectures will also introduce the techniques of more important laboratory tests to include specimen acquisition and handling.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Anna Shafer](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 1, 2, 3

Electrocardiography (PAECG-62711)

This course is designed to present a systematic and standardized approach to ECG evaluation and interpretation. Each session covers a specific topic or topics and builds on the previous ones. After completing each session, the student will work through ECG tracings to review and apply the knowledge acquired.

Credit: 2 semester hours

Course Director: [Elizabeth Elliott](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 3

Health Behavioral Counseling I (HPHBC-61201)

This course introduces health counseling and behavioral science theories, skills, and tools to enhance learners' communication skills, empathy, and understanding of the process of health behavior change. Behavior change processes are introduced using the Transtheoretical Model, Self-Determination Theory, and Health Belief Model, with a focus on applying Motivational Interviewing, Brief Action Planning, and Shared Decision Making to clinical scenarios through lecture, role play, simulation, peer observation, and self-reflection.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Beth Garland](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 2, 3

Human Physiology I (HPPHY-64221)

This course provides a comprehensive understanding of human physiology from the cellular level to integrated organ system function. Emphasis is placed on the regulatory mechanisms that maintain homeostasis and the normal function of muscle, nerve, blood, hemostasis, cardiovascular, respiratory, renal, and gastrointestinal systems, as well as fluid balance and temperature regulation. Clinical correlations are incorporated to demonstrate how alterations in normal physiological processes contribute to disease states commonly encountered in medical practice.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Irrum Niazi](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 2, 3

Human Physiology II (HPPHY-61222)

This course provides a continued comprehensive study of human physiology with emphasis on the endocrine and reproductive systems, energy metabolism, musculoskeletal and bone physiology, and the physiology of pregnancy and development. Students will examine the mechanisms that regulate normal body function and how disruptions in these processes lead to pathophysiologic conditions. Clinical applications are integrated throughout the course to reinforce the relevance of physiological principles to patient assessment and management in clinical practice.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Irrum Niazi](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 1

Immunology for Health Professions (HPIMM-62131)

This course will provide an overview of basic immunological concepts including components of the immune system, innate and adaptive immune responses. The immune responses against infectious microbes as well as immunologic diseases will also be addressed.

Credit: 2 semester hours

Course Director: [Vanaja Konduri](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 2

Medical Ethics (PAETH-61421)

This course provides physician assistant students with a comprehensive understanding of medical ethics essential for professional practice. Through lectures, learning modules, and small group case discussions, students will explore fundamental ethical principles and their application in the clinical setting. Topics include confidentiality, informed consent, decision-making capacity, surrogate decision making, pediatric ethics, reporting requirements, reproductive ethics, end-of-life ethics, and resource allocation. Emphasis will be placed on acquiring a broad baseline of knowledge on these topics, developing critical thinking skills, applying a framework to ethical decision making, and fostering sensitivity to diverse patient populations. This course aims to equip students with the knowledge and skills necessary to navigate complex ethical dilemmas encountered in healthcare settings, focusing on professionalism and compassionate patient care.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Holland Kaplan](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 2

Medical Humanities (PAMHM-81101)

The Medical Humanities course utilizes the curriculum of The Healer's Art course to enable the formation of a genuine community of inquiry between students and faculty that encourages an in-depth sharing of experience, beliefs, aspirations and personal truths. Students and faculty participate together in a discovery model that transcends the divisiveness of expertise to explore service as a way of life. The process-based curriculum takes a highly innovative, interactive, contemplative and didactic approach to enabling students to uncover and recognize the personal and universal meaning in the daily work of medicine.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Katherine Erdman](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 2

Pediatrics (PAPED-62531)

The Pediatrics course is designed to introduce students to the most common health problems affecting the pediatric patient from the newborn period through adolescence. The lectures focus on health promotion, disease prevention and screening, pathology identification and management, education and counseling, and injury prevention for the pediatric patient and family. The laboratory components focus on skills and knowledge needed in caring for pediatric patients.

Credit: 2 semester hours

Director: [Elizabeth Elliott](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 3

Pharmacology I (PAPRM-63801)

This course provides Physician Assistant students with a foundational understanding of the general principles of pharmacology and the clinical application of these principles in patient care. Students will examine the mechanisms of action of medications across major therapeutic classes and understand how pharmacologic treatment relates to the pathophysiology of diseases commonly encountered in clinical practice. Emphasis will be placed on indications, contraindications, common adverse effects, significant drug interactions, monitoring parameters, and patient safety considerations. Students will also develop skills in utilizing evidence-based drug information resources, identifying first-line therapies for common conditions, and recognizing medications associated with serious or potentially life-threatening adverse effects.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Irrum Niazi](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 2, 3

Pharmacology II (PAPRM-61811)

This course continues the comprehensive study of pharmacology with a focus on medications affecting the central nervous system, psychiatric disorders, gastrointestinal disorders, endocrine diseases, bone and joint conditions, reproductive health, oncology, and immunologic disorders. Students will examine the mechanisms of action, therapeutic uses, adverse effects, contraindications, and clinically significant drug interactions of major medication classes within these systems. Additional topics include prescription writing, legal and regulatory policies related to prescribing, and principles of safe and responsible medication management. Clinical correlations and case-based learning are integrated to strengthen readiness for future clinical practice.

Credit: 1 semester hours

Course Director: [Irrum Niazi](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 1

Physical Diagnosis I (PAPHD-66601)

The first semester of this course focuses on developing skills to perform a complete history and physical examination on patients over the spectrum of ages and clinical situations that a physician assistant may encounter in clinical practice. The learning experiences emphasize the principles, skills, routines and special tests appropriate for the assessment of disease involving the cardiovascular and respiratory systems. A secondary aim of this course is the development of skills in formulating an appropriate diagnosis and treatment plan derived from information taken in the history and identified from the physical exam. The course will stress the accurate presentation of information in both written and oral forms.

Credit: 6 semester hours

Course Director: [Eric Rasch](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Terms 1, 2, 3

Physical Diagnosis II (PAPHD-63611)

The second semester continues to develop skills in performing a complete and problem-specific history and physical examination on patients over the spectrum of ages and clinical situations. The learning experiences focus upon the principles, skills, routines and special tests appropriate for the assessment of diseases involving the eyes, ears, nose, throat, gastrointestinal, genitourinary, dermatological, musculoskeletal, and nervous systems. This semester will continue the development of an appropriate differential diagnosis and plan for the further evaluation and management of an identified problem with accurate presentation of information in both written and oral forms.

Credit: 3 semester hours

Course Director: [Jayne Chirido-Taylor](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Terms 1, 2, 3

Problem Solving in Medicine I (PAPSM-61901)

This course assists students to develop their skills at differential diagnosis and problem identification through the integration of information presented in the Clinical Medicine, Physical Diagnosis, and other courses. Multiple critical thinking sessions using individual and team learning techniques are used to explore problems involving the heart and lungs.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Stephanie DeSandro](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 3

Problem Solving in Medicine II (PAPSM-62911)

This course assists students to develop their skills at differential diagnosis and problem identification through the integration of information presented in the Clinical Medicine, Physical Diagnosis, and other courses. Multiple critical thinking sessions using individual and team learning techniques are used to explore problems involving the abdomen, kidney, lower urinary tract, ear, nose and throat, musculoskeletal, special sensory, central and peripheral nervous systems, and the hematopoietic system.

Credit: 2 semester hours

Course Director: [Stephanie DeSandro](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Terms 1, 2, 3

Professional Role Issues I (PAPRI-61411)

This course provides students a historical perspective of the evolving professional, clinical and intra-professional roles carried out by physician assistants through a study of the organizational, political, legal and socioeconomic forces that have and continue to shape the profession.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Carl Fasser](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Term 1

Therapeutics I (PATHR 61101)

This course is designed in a case-based, flipped-classroom format, providing students with practical, real-world scenarios in which to apply their knowledge of pharmacological and non-pharmacological therapeutic management. It promotes an understanding of the general principles of rational therapeutics and the application of these principles to patient care situations. Students will learn the latest therapeutic guidelines and evidence-based practices, will develop skills in selecting and managing appropriate therapeutic interventions for various medical conditions, and will practice critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the context of therapeutic management.

Credit: 0.5 semester hours

Course Director: [Katherine Erdman](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Terms 2, 3

Women's Health (PAWHI-62521)

The course focuses on the normal physiologic and sexual development of women, health maintenance concerns of women at various life stages, and serves as an introduction to gynecologic/obstetric history taking and physical examination skills. The manifestation, evaluation, management, and treatment of common disease entities along with routine care for both gynecologic/obstetric patients are also addressed. The course facilitates the use of critical thinking skills along with appropriate clinical decision-making strategies so that students can provide a sensitive approach to preventive and therapeutic healthcare, recognize common gynecologic and obstetric problems, understand appropriate therapeutic interventions, and effectively provide patient education.

Credit: 2 credit hours

Course Director: [Anna Shafer](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 2

PA Program Research Phase Courses**Research I (PARS1-71531)**

This faculty-guided seminar series is devoted to examining and applying principles central to the practice of evidence-based medicine. Students will develop an understanding of how to access and critically review medical literature, design a research study, apply epidemiologic methods to assess test quality and disease risk, approach data generation and analysis, address quality assurance concerns, and adhere to ethical, legal, and regulatory issues involved in human-subject research. Exercises in inductive reasoning include article search-and-retrieval, annotated bibliography generation, and manuscript abstractions. On-line assignments that reinforce critical content will be completed in small groups.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Carl Fasser](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2, Terms 1AB-2AB

Research II (PARS2-74541)

This faculty-guided research seminar is devoted to the refinement of strategies for the evidenced-based search and interpretation of scientific literature; critique of study designs for IRB-approved student research projects involving the prospective and retrospective collection and analysis of data; resolution of questions surrounding database construction and data entry verification; draft of the introduction, background and methods sections of the Master's Paper; and the development of skills at the oral presentation and defense of research results. Critical review and interpretation of the scientific literature initiated during Research 1 is extended in this seminar course. Without clinical responsibilities, students devote their undivided attention to their Master's Paper research.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Carl Fasser](#)

Course Offered: Spring 2, Terms 3B-5B and Fall 3, Terms 6A-6B

Research III (PARS3-74551)

This faculty-guided seminar builds upon the student's understanding of the evidence-based interpretation of literature, research design, data collection, scientific writing, and oral presentation. The focus is on the statistical analysis and interpretation of quantitative data and qualitative information using appropriate methods; generation of tables, charts, graphs, and images as indicated; draft of the results, discussion, and conclusion sections of the Master's Paper; and the refinement of oral presentation skills and the defense of research results. Critical review of student project results is carried out in collaboration with each student's expert faculty mentor followed by the oral presentation of the drafted poster for student research day. Students do not carry clinical responsibilities during this four-week time-period.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Carl Fasser](#)

Course Offered: Fall 3, Terms 6B-6E

Master Paper (PAMPP 74800)

Practice-based learning and improvement using evidence constitutes one of six core competencies that should be exhibited by future entry-level PA providers. The intent of the longitudinal Master's Paper Project is to provide students with knowledge of study designs and statistical methods needed to understand clinical information, the ability to locate, critically appraise, and integrate evidence from scientific studies into clinical practice activities, to use technology to analyze and manage information on a longitudinal basis, and to review practice experiences using a systematic method in concert with other team members as a means of improving the outcomes of care.

Course Credits: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Carl Fasser](#)

Course Offered: Fall 3

PA Program Clinical Phase Courses - Core Rotations**Emergency Medicine (PAERM-74681)**

The core Emergency Medicine rotation provides an in-depth exposure to the illnesses and injuries sustained by children, adults, and the elderly that necessitate emergency care. The educational experiences emphasize the focusing of interview and examination skills and performing of techniques and procedures essential to the proper management of surgical illness and injury.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: Eric Martinez

Course Coordinator: [Eric Martinez](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2, Spring 2

Internal Medicine – Inpatient (PAIMI-78621)

During this core rotation the student will learn to apply basic medical knowledge to the evaluation of problems encountered on a general medicine service. The formulation of an understanding of the various medical disorders in adults and elderly is accomplished during the accurate collection of data, the identification of problems, and the development of a plan for each problem. The student likewise learns to view the patient in a broader context because of the emphasis given to the emotional and social needs of the individual.

Credit: 8 semester hours

Course Director: [Eric Rasch](#)

Course Coordinators: [Alexandria Fornerette-Harris](#); [Cody Moore](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

Internal Medicine – Outpatient (PAIMO-74631)

During this core rotation, the student will develop the ability to apply fundamental medical knowledge through assessing medical conditions ambulatory clinic setting. This involves understanding various preventive, acute, and chronic medical conditions in adults and elderly patients. This will be achieved through precise data collection, obtaining an appropriate history and physical examination, and the formulation of problem-specific plans. Additionally, the student will cultivate a holistic perspective by prioritizing the emotional and social well-being of the individual patient.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Dave Paris](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

Gynecology/Obstetrics (PAGYN-74641)

The core Obstetrics & Gynecology (OB/GYN) rotation exposes students to the spectrum obstetrical (including prenatal) and gynecologic healthcare in the ambulatory and inpatient settings. The learning experiences emphasize family planning and contraception, sexually transmitted infection recognition and treatment, cancer detection, prenatal care, evaluation of common GYN problems, as well as exposures to delivery and the surgical management of OB/GYN disorders.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Anna Shafer](#)

Course Coordinator: [Tara Harris](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

Pediatrics – Inpatient (PAPDI-74751)

During this core rotation, the student learns to apply basic medical knowledge and skills to evaluating problems on a general pediatric service. The emphasis in this setting is on the provision of secondary and tertiary care to a child from birth through adolescence.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Kathleen Thompson](#)

Course Coordinators: [Sanghamitra Misra](#), [Tracy Thomas](#), Raymond Martin

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

Pediatrics – Outpatient (PAPDO-74761)

During this core rotation the student learns to apply basic medical knowledge and skills to the evaluation of emergent, acute, and chronic problems along with preventive care needs encountered in the pediatric practice setting. This setting emphasizes providing primary and secondary care to newborns, infants, children and adolescents.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Elizabeth Elliott](#)

Course Coordinators: [Stephanie Marton](#) and Laurin Villanueva

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

Psychiatry (PAPSY-74671)

This core rotation is designed to provide an understanding of the behavioral components of health, disease and disability. Exposure to adult and elderly patients with a variety of emergent, acute and chronic behavioral and mental health conditions are used to develop informed history taking and mental status examination skills to recognize and categorize behavioral and mental health conditions and techniques of early intervention and psychiatric referral.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Vicki Waters](#)

Course Coordinator: [Ali Abbas Asghar-Ali](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

Surgery (PASUR-74691)

This core rotation provides an orientation to patients of various ages with surgically manageable disease. The emphasis of the learning experiences is on the preoperative evaluation and preparation of patients for surgery; assistance during the intra-operative period to develop an understanding of team member roles and operative procedures; and the care of surgical wounds and post-operative complications.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Jayne Chirido-Taylor](#)

Course Coordinator: [Yesenia Rojas Khalil](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2 and Spring 2

PA Program Clinical Phase Courses - Integration Rotations**Community Family Medicine (PACFM-74731)**

This applied integration core rotation provides an exposure to the principles and practices of community-oriented primary care with an emphasis on disease prevention and health maintenance in youth, adults, and the elderly as well as the opportunity to further techniques in history taking, physical examination, and health behavior counseling. Students also gain insight to the socio-environmental factors effecting the provision of healthcare services.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Katherine Erdman](#)

Course Offered: Fall 3

Geriatric Medicine (PAGER-74721)

This integration rotation provides an opportunity to apply knowledge of the physiological, behavioral, psychological and sociological changes associated with aging to the multidimensional assessment of elderly individuals. The student acts as a member of an interdisciplinary team of health professionals managing preventive, acute and chronic disorders common to elderly individuals with particular attention to maintaining autonomy across alternative care settings. Each student will have clinical time designated for specific palliative care, inpatient/long term care, wound care, and ambulatory clinic experiences.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Vicki Waters](#)

Course Coordinators: [Michael Anderson](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2, Term 2AB, Spring 2, and Fall 3

Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (PAPMR-74781)

This clinical core rotation emphasizes medical rehabilitation in the adult population to enhance maintenance of independence in daily personal care and ambulatory household and community activities. It is designed to enable the student to develop skills in the examination of the spine and extremities; develop knowledge of basic kinesiology and biomechanics; and to begin to understand techniques of dynamic assessment. The student will perform comprehensive exams of the neurologic, muscular and skeletal system in young, mature and older adults while learning about the unique aspects of medical care of persons with major trauma, traumatic brain injury, amputation, and spinal cord injury.

Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Director: [Kathleen Thompson](#)

Course Offered: Fall 3

PA Program Clinical Phase Courses**Communications and Perspectives in Healthcare II (PACC-71521)**

This course builds on the students' effective communication with patients from different backgrounds through the exploration of individual perspectives, communication styles, belief systems, health care practices, family roles, and their impact on the clinical encounter using the skill of critical self-assessment.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Eric Rasch](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2, Spring 2, and Fall 3

Professional Role Issues II (PAPRI-71511)

This course introduces students to jurisprudence and professional practice issues. Through lectures, seminars, and individual assignments the student will learn about the healthcare marketplace, Texas medical jurisprudence, risk management, and professional practice issues to include employment and credentialing, insurance reimbursement, and medical coding. The course also addresses the alternative roles played by PAs in the community and the therapeutic uses for common drugs.

Credit: 1 semester hour

Course Director: [Sarah-Ann Keyes](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2, Spring 2, and Fall 3

Preparation for Clinical Practice (PAPCP 74551)

This integrated course provides an extended overview of the principles and practices of general medicine. This course will reinforce knowledge of the diseases and disorders physician assistants (PAs) encounter and the knowledge and skills related to tasks PAs perform when treating patients. This course is designed for BCM PA students in their integration phase of training who are preparing for the NCCPA PA National Certification Examination (PANCE). Credit: 4 semester hours

Course Directors: [Vicki Waters](#)

Course Offered: Fall 3

Health Behavioral Counseling II (PAHBC-71201)

This course is a follow-up to HPHBC 62201. This course includes physician assistant (PA) case-based application of Health Behavior Counseling (HBC) skills. Students will also use case reflections to self-assess opportunities for use of HBC skills including equipoise, brief interventions, and a review of skills from the HPHBC 62201 course, especially evoking for change talk. Credit: 0.5 semester hour

Course Director: [Beth Garland](#)

Course Offered: Spring 2

Therapeutics II (PATHR 61102)

This course continues the practical application of therapeutic management in clinical settings, building on the foundational knowledge obtained in Therapeutics I and in clinical rotations. Selected cases for class discussion will require more advanced critical thinking and problem-solving skills and allow students to further practice and refine their skills in therapeutic management.

Credit: 0.5 semester hours

Course Director: [Katherine Erdman](#)

Course Offered: Spring 2

High Stakes and Summative Evaluations

Clinical Readiness Assessment (PACRE 60911)

The two-part CRA is a comprehensive exam designed to assess the student's ability to recognize the clinical manifestations of illness and injury using case vignettes and standardized patients. The vignettes cover the major body systems and encompass acute and chronic health problems seen in children and adults. The cases are often accompanied by color photographs that range from skin lesions to electrocardiograms. The patient scenarios are used to assess the student's ability to select and perform components of the physical exam pertinent to the differential evaluation and management of a clinical problem. Performance on the CRA is used to judge the student's readiness to enter the experiential learning phase of their training.

Credit: None

Course Director: [Stephanie DeSandro](#)

Course Offered: Spring 1, Term 3

PA Summative Evaluation (PAEA End of Curriculum Examination + Clinical Skills Assessment + Professionalism Evaluation + CFM Preceptor Practice Readiness Assessment) (PASUM 70700)

This four-component summative evaluation serves to meet the accreditation-required summative evaluation in the last four months of the Program. The summative evaluation includes the PAEA End of Curriculum exam, a case-based comprehensive written exam as well as a Clinical Skills Assessment (CSA). In addition, a summative Professionalism Evaluation (PROF) and Practice Readiness Evaluation (PPR) are completed by faculty and clinical preceptors. Performance on the Summative Evaluation (SE) is used to judge the student's readiness to enter clinical practice.

Credit: None

Course Director: [Kathleen Thompson](#)

Course Offered: Fall 3, Term 6

School of HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Course Descriptions Academic Year 2026-2027

Health Professions Pathway in Community Health Course Descriptions

Community Health for Health Professions (HPECH81101-DONLN)

This course is designed to build upon foundational content provided by each program's curriculum. The course consists of four modules: 1) non-medical drivers of health, 2) community engagement and outreach strategies, 3) scholarship and mentorship, 4) community health and outcomes. The course will utilize synchronous and asynchronous strategies—all modules will be delivered via Articulate RISE and self-paced/asynchronous. All journal clubs will take place via Zoom. At the end of this course, students will be prepared to define, describe, analyze, and propose strategies to address community health and factors which may contribute to health disparities, including socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and other demographic factors.

Co-Course Directors: [Ashley Mullen](#), [Amandi Rhett](#), and [Isabel Valdez](#)

PA Program Lifestyle Medicine Pathway Course Descriptions

Lifestyle Medicine Foundations (PALMF 81101)

This course builds upon the principles introduced in the Clinical Prevention course, offering PA students a deeper understanding of evidence-based lifestyle medicine (LM) approaches to preventing, treating, and reversing chronic disease. Students will continue exploration of the key LM pillars, including nutrition, physical activity, sleep, stress management, social connection, and avoidance of risky substances. Emphasis will be placed on developing practical skills through case-based learning and individualized learning. This course provides students with the opportunity to begin applying LM principles in clinical scenarios, laying the groundwork for future practice and certification in lifestyle medicine.

Credit: 0.5 semester hours

Course Director: [Sarah Keyes](#)

Course Offered: Fall 1, Spring 1

Lifestyle Medicine Practice (PALMP 81102)

This course builds on the foundational knowledge gained in *Lifestyle Medicine Foundations*, guiding PA students in the practical application of lifestyle medicine in clinical settings. Through structured LM Rounds, students engage in observation, case discussion, and interdisciplinary collaboration to reinforce clinical integration of lifestyle-based care. Asynchronous modules allow for deeper exploration of each pillar of lifestyle medicine—nutrition, physical activity, restorative sleep, stress management, social connection, and substance use reduction—while emphasizing clinical relevance and behavior change strategies. The course is designed to strengthen students' readiness to incorporate LM into patient care and progress toward eligibility for lifestyle medicine certification.

Credit: 0.5 semester hours

Course Director: [Sarah Keyes](#)

Course Offered: Fall 2, Spring 2, Fall 3