

**Mercy College of Ohio**  
**Masters of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS)**  
**Course Descriptions**

**DIDACTIC PHASE COURSES**

**Semester I (Summer)**

**PAS 500 PA Professional Issues and Medical Ethics (1 credit hour)**

This course is designed to introduce the PA student to the PA professional issues and Medical Ethics. Topics include the history of and current trends for the PA profession, its organizations, PA roles and responsibilities, professionalism, HIPAA, credentialing and licensure, as well as medical ethics.

Prerequisite: Matriculation into the PA program.

**PAS 505 Health Care Policy and Systems (1 credit hour)**

This course introduces the structure and function of the US healthcare delivery system. Topics include the US health delivery system, public health and health promotion issues, health care policies, and inequality to accessing health care.

Prerequisite: Matriculation into the PA program.

**PAS 510 Basic Sciences Foundations (6 credit hours)**

This course is designed to provide a foundation in the basic sciences for the structure and function of the human body covering introductory clinically relevant genetics, medical physiology, and an in-depth study of human anatomy.

Prerequisite: Matriculation into the PA program.

**PAS 520 Pharmacology (3 credit hours)**

This course is an introduction to the pharmacology of commonly used drugs for treating human disease with a focus on indication, mechanism of action, pharmacodynamics, pharmacokinetics, adverse effects, and drug interactions.

Prerequisite: Matriculation into the PA program.

**PAS 531 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I (2 credit hours)**

This is the first of a series of four skills-based lecture and lab courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. In this first course, the emphasis is on the medical interview, the art of communication in medicine, the proper documentation of clinical encounters, and obtaining BLS certification.

Prerequisite: Matriculation into the PA program.

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**PAS 541 Clinical Diagnostics-I (1 credit hour)**

This is the first of a series of three courses in which students learn to order and interpret commonly used diagnostic studies for the application of clinical testing in the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases encountered in Primary Care Practice. This first course covers the theory and practice of common laboratory techniques including urinalysis, hematology, and clinical chemistry panels as well as OSHA regulations.

Prerequisite: Matriculation into the PA program.

**Semester II (Fall)**

**PAS 521 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics I (10 credit hours)**

This is the first of three Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics courses for the systematic study of the diagnosis and management of common acute, emergent, rehabilitative, and chronic medical disorders across the lifespan. This course series is designed to study the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations signs and symptoms, diagnosis and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic management as well as disease prevention, patient education, follow-up care, course of disease, and prognosis. The course series collectively covers all major systems: infectious diseases, dermatologic, neurologic, cardiovascular, eyes, ears, nose, and throat, hematologic, pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal/nutritional, musculoskeletal psychiatry/behavioral, genitourinary, and reproductive.

Prerequisites: PAS 510 Basic Sciences Foundations, PAS 520 Pharmacology, PAS 531 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I, PAS 541 Clinical Diagnostics-I: Diagnostic Labs

Co-Requisite: PAS 532 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II, PAS 542 Clinical Diagnostics II

**PAS 532 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II (3 credit hours)**

This is the second of a series of four skills-based courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. In this second course, the emphasis is on the performance and documentation of a basic “head to toe” physical examination.

Prerequisite: PAS 531 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I

**PAS 542 Clinical Diagnostics II (2 credit hours)**

This is the second of a series of three courses in which students learn to order and interpret commonly used diagnostic studies for the application of clinical testing in the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases encountered in Primary Care Practice. This second course covers interpretation of 12-lead electrocardiograms and pulmonary function testing.

Prerequisite: PAS 541 Clinical Diagnostics-I: Diagnostic Labs

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**PAS 551 Evidence Based Practice-I (1 credit hour)**

This two-course Evidence Based Practice (EBP) series provides the foundation for the development of skills for critical interpretation of medical literature to formulate answers to clinical questions related to diagnosis, therapy, prognosis, and harm and for future clinical quality improvement projects or research. Topics in EBP-I include identification of a research problem and formulation of a research question, research ethics, sampling methods and study designs. Students will initiate a scholarly inquiry project with a study proposal and literature review. The scholarly inquiry will continue in the EBP-II and Scholarly Inquiry I, II, and III courses. *Pass/Fail grade option only*

Prerequisites: PAS 531 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills-I

**PAS 561 Clinical Integrations and Decision Making I (2 credit hours)**

This is the first in a series of three team based learning courses in which PA students engage in problem-solving, take responsibility for professional roles, cultivate skills, and partake in reflective/self-assessment experiences. Students will utilize knowledge from previous and concurrent coursework for application to case studies, interprofessional education opportunities, preclinical patient contact, and simulation/standardized patients.

Prerequisites: PAS 510 Basic Sciences Foundations, PAS 520 Pharmacology, PAS 531 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills I, PAS 541 Clinical Diagnostics-I: Diagnostic Labs

Co-requisites: PAS 521 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics I, PAS 532 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II, PAS 542 Clinical Diagnostics II

**Semester III (Spring)**

**PAS 522 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics II (10 credit hours)**

This is the second of three Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics courses for the systematic study of the diagnosis and management of common acute, emergent, rehabilitative, and chronic medical disorders across the lifespan. This course series is designed to study the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations signs and symptoms, diagnosis and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic management as well as disease prevention, patient education, follow-up care, course of disease, and prognosis. The course series collectively covers all major systems: infectious diseases, dermatologic, neurologic, cardiovascular, eyes, ears, nose, and throat, hematologic, pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal/nutritional, musculoskeletal psychiatry/behavioral, genitourinary, and reproductive.

Prerequisite: PAS 521 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics I

Co-Requisite: PAS 533 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III, PAS 543 Clinical Diagnostics III

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**PAS 533 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III (3 credit hours)**

This is the third of a series of four skills-based courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. This third course concentrates on the performance and documentation of problem-focused medical interviews and physical examinations.

Prerequisite: PAS 532 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills II

**PAS 543 Clinical Diagnostics III (2 credit hours)**

This is the final of a series of three courses in which students learn to order and interpret commonly used diagnostic studies for the application of clinical testing in the diagnosis and treatment of common diseases encountered in Primary Care Practice. This third course covers ordering and interpretation of common imaging studies and pulmonary function tests.

Prerequisite: PAS 542 Clinical Diagnostics II

**PAS 562 Clinical Integrations and Decision Making II (3 credit hours)**

This is the second in a series of three team based learning courses in which PA students engage in problem-solving, take responsibility for professional roles, cultivate skills, and partake in reflective/self-assessment experiences. Students will utilize knowledge from previous and concurrent coursework for application to case studies, interprofessional education opportunities, preclinical patient contact, and simulation/standardized patients.

Prerequisites: PAS 561 Clinical Integrations and Decision Making I

Co-requisites: PAS 522 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics II, PAS 532 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III, PAS 542 Clinical Diagnostics III

**Semester IV (Summer)**

**PAS 523 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics III (5 credit hours)**

This is the final of three Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics courses for the systematic study of the diagnosis and management of common acute, emergent, rehabilitative, and chronic medical disorders across the lifespan. This course series is designed to study the epidemiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations signs and symptoms, diagnosis and pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic management as well as disease prevention, patient education, follow-up care, course of disease, and prognosis. The course series collectively covers all major systems: infectious diseases, dermatologic, neurologic, cardiovascular, eyes, ears, nose, and throat, hematologic, pulmonary, endocrine, gastrointestinal/nutritional, musculoskeletal psychiatry/behavioral, genitourinary, and reproductive.

Prerequisite: PAS 522 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics II

Co-requisites: PAS 534 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills IV

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**PAS 534 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills IV (3 credit hours)**

This is the final of four skills-based courses in which students acquire and practice various diagnostic and therapeutic clinical skills, such as performing basic and advanced health histories and physical exams, clinical procedures including suturing and splinting, and basic and advanced cardiac life support. In this final course, the emphasis is on common diagnostic and therapeutic procedures including an orientation to the operating room, the continuation of specialty-focused medical interviews and physical examinations across the lifespan from pediatrics to geriatrics including the unique healthcare needs for women, diverse patient populations, and patients with disabilities, and completion of advanced cardiac life support training.

Prerequisite: PAS 533 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills III

**PAS 552 Evidence Based Practice-II (1 credit hour)**

This is the second of the two-course Evidence Based Practice (EBP) series which provides the foundation for the development of skills for critical interpretation of medical literature and quality improvement or research projects. Evidence Based Practice II topics include descriptive and inferential statistics, selecting the appropriate statistical test, and hypothesis testing. Students will draft quantitative and/or qualitative analysis methods for their proposed scholarly inquiry project data collection. The scholarly inquiry will continue in the Scholarly Inquiry I, II, and III courses. *Pass/Fail grade option only*

Prerequisites: PAS 551 Evidence Based Practice I

**PAS 563 Clinical Integrations and Decision Making III (3 credit hours)**

This is the final in a series of three team based learning courses in which PA students engage in problem-solving, take responsibility for professional roles, cultivate skills, and partake in reflective/self-assessment experiences. Students will utilize knowledge from previous and concurrent coursework for application to case studies, preclinical patient contact, and simulation/standardized patients.

Prerequisites: PAS 562 Clinical Integrations and Decision Making II

Co-requisites: PAS 523 Clinical Medicine and Therapeutics III, PAS 533 Patient Assessment and Clinical Skills IV

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**CLINICAL PHASE COURSES**

**Semesters V-VII:**

The PA program's clinical phase covers three semesters. The Clinical Phase Seminar and Scholarly Inquiry course series are first presented by semester as these run concurrent with the supervised clinical practice experiences which are assigned on a rotating basis over these three semesters.

**CONCURRENT DIDACTIC COURSES during the Clinical Phase**

**Semester V**

**PAS 651 Scholarly Inquiry I (1 credit hour)**

This is the first of a series of three Scholarly Inquiry courses in which students plan and carry out an evidence-based medicine, clinical practice improvement, primary research or another approved scholarly inquiry project. During the Scholarly Inquiry series, students submit a formal scholarly inquiry proposal, collect and evaluate data, and appropriately communicate and defend conclusions in oral and written formats. By the conclusion of the Scholarly Inquiry-I course, students complete a scholarly agenda proposal and apply for Institutional Review Board approval as needed for the project type.

Prerequisite: PAS 552 Evidence Based Practice II

**PAS 671 Clinical Phase Seminar I (1 credit hour)**

A series of three Clinical Phase Seminar courses are interwoven into the experiential phase of the PA Program to expose and reinforce an array of relevant issues to a practicing PA. Topics include PA employment, medicolegal aspects of clinical practice, patient safety and error reduction measures, reimbursement issues, healthcare policy and systems issues, and public health issues. Students also present interesting patient cases encountered during supervised clinical practicum experiences and prepare for the end of program clinical summative evaluation and board examination.

**Semester VI**

**PAS 652 Scholarly Inquiry II (1 credit hour)**

This is the second course of a series of three Scholarly Inquiry project courses in which students plan and carry out an evidence-based medicine, clinical practice improvement, primary research or another approved scholarly inquiry project. During the Scholarly Inquiry-II course, students are expected to collect their data, and commence data analysis and interpretation of analyses.

Prerequisite: PAS 651 Scholarly Inquiry I

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**PAS 672 Clinical Phase Seminar II (1 credit hour)**

This is a continuation of the three Clinical Phase Seminar courses interwoven into the experiential phase of the PA Program to expose and reinforce an array of relevant issues to a practicing PA. Topics include PA employment, medicolegal aspects of clinical practice, patient safety and error reduction measures, reimbursement issues, healthcare policy and systems issues, and public health issues. Students also present interesting patient cases encountered during supervised clinical practicum experiences and prepare for the end of program clinical summative evaluation and board examination.

Prerequisite: PAS 671 Clinical Phase Seminar I

**Semester VII**

**PAS 653 Scholarly Inquiry III (2 credit hours)**

This is the third and final course of a series of three Scholarly Inquiry project courses. By the conclusion of the Scholarly Inquiry- III course, students are expected to complete their scholarly project and present and defend their findings before peers, PA program faculty and other members of the healthcare community.

Prerequisite: PAS 652 Scholarly Inquiry II

**PAS 673 Clinical Phase Seminar III (2 credit hours)**

This is the final of the three Clinical Phase Seminar courses interwoven into the experiential phase of the PA Program to expose and reinforce an array of relevant issues to a practicing PA. Topics include PA employment, medicolegal aspects of clinical practice, patient safety and error reduction measures, reimbursement issues, healthcare policy and systems issues, and public health issues. Students also present interesting patient cases encountered during supervised clinical practicum experiences and prepare for the end of program clinical summative evaluation and board examination.

Prerequisite: PAS 672 Clinical Phase Seminar II

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**SUPERVISED CLINICAL PRACTICE EXPERIENCES I-VIII**

**PAS 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667 & 668**

**6 semester credit hours each 6 week SCPE period**

In the clinical phase of the PA Program, students are assigned into a series of supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPE) in a variety of settings on a rotating schedule. The supervised clinical practice experiences are divided into 8 periods of approximately 6 weeks each spanning three semesters. Required 6-week experiences include Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Emergency Medicine and General Surgery/Surgery. Experiences in Women's Health, Pediatrics and Behavioral Health are required 3-week experiences that may be integrated throughout the clinical experiences. Elective rotations are available in a variety of clinical practice areas, pending preceptor/site availability and prior rotation experience. Electives can be in a new discipline or an augmentation of a required discipline. Students are to average 45 hours a week at the clinical experiences. The Program reserves the right to assign rotations or supplemental activities to ensure that students meet all Program requirements for the supervised clinical practice experiences. The SCPEs are competency based with Pass/Fail grading. Students must pass the PA program didactic phase to enter the clinical phase.

**FAMILY MEDICINE EXPERIENCE**

In this required 6-week clinical experience, under the supervision of a family medicine preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage patients in family medicine settings. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories and physical examinations and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education, for a diverse population over the lifespan are incorporated into the care of acute and chronic diseases.

**INTERNAL MEDICINE EXPERIENCE**

In this required 6-week clinical experience, under the supervision of an internal medicine preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage adult and geriatric patients in internal medicine settings. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories and physical examinations and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education, for a diverse adult population are incorporated into the care of acute, chronic, and emerging diseases.

**EMERGENCY MEDICINE EXPERIENCE**

In this required 6-week clinical experience, under the supervision of an emergency medicine preceptor, PA will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage patients presenting to Emergency Department and urgent care settings with urgent, emergent and life-threatening conditions. Students are expected to appropriately



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triage and stabilize patients, interact properly with patients' families, perform rapid and accurate health histories and physical examinations, order laboratory tests and other diagnostic studies to assist in formulating diagnoses and treatment plans, and make appropriate referrals. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education are incorporated into the care of patients with acute conditions and acute exacerbations of chronic conditions, for a diverse population over the lifespan.

**GENERAL SURGERY EXPERIENCE**

In this required 6-week clinical experience, under the supervision of an emergency medicine preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage patients with common surgical disorders in pre-operative, intra-operative, and post-operative settings. Students are expected to interact properly with patients and patients' families, perform appropriate health histories and physical examinations, and order laboratory and other diagnostic studies to formulate diagnoses and treatment plans including to determine if there is a surgically amenable condition and if the patient is a surgical candidate. Exposure to surgical techniques and surgical assisting are included. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education are incorporated into the care of patients with surgical conditions for a diverse population over the lifespan.

**WOMEN'S HEALTH EXPERIENCE**

In this 3-week equivalent required clinical experience, under the supervision of an obstetrician/gynecologist preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage gynecological and reproductive issues, prenatal care, and women's health issues. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories, physical examinations, and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans with possible opportunities for surgical techniques and surgical assisting. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education are incorporated into the care of acute, chronic, and emerging diseases seen in women's health.

**PEDIATRIC EXPERIENCE**

In this 3-week equivalent required clinical experience, under the supervision of a pediatric medicine preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage newborns, infants, children, and adolescent patients. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories and physical examinations to assess patients for normal growth and development, acute, chronic and emerging disease and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education are incorporated into the care of pediatric patients including interpretation of immunization schedules.

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**BEHAVIORAL HEALTH EXPERIENCE**

In this 3-week equivalent required clinical experience, under the supervision of a behavioral medicine preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage patients with behavioral health or psychiatric disorders. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories, physical examinations, and psychiatric assessments and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education, are incorporated into the care of patients with a psychiatric or behavioral health condition, for a diverse population over the lifespan.

**SAMPLE OF ELECTIVES:**

**CARDIOLOGY ELECTIVE EXPERIENCE**

In this elective clinical experience, under the supervision of a cardiology preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage patients in cardiology settings. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories and physical examinations and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education, for cardiology patients are incorporated into the care of acute, emerging, and chronic cardiology diseases.

**OTHER ELECTIVE EXPERIENCE (NOT OTHERWISE SPECIFIED)**

In this elective clinical experience, under the supervision of an elective preceptor, PA students will apply the attitudes, knowledge, and skills developed during the didactic phase to evaluate and manage patients in this elective setting. Students will gain experience performing appropriate health histories and physical examinations and ordering and interpreting laboratory and other diagnostic tests to formulate diagnoses and effective treatment plans. Health promotion, disease prevention, and patient education, for patients presenting to the elective setting are incorporated into the care of acute, emerging, and chronic diseases across the lifespan as relevant to the discipline.