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| <b>Policy:</b> Admissions Policy         | <b>Applicability:</b> PA Sciences Program Students   |
| <b>Policy Owner:</b> PA Sciences Program | <b>Approved By:</b> Dean, School of Graduate Studies |
| <b>Effective Date:</b> February 25, 2026 | <b>Last Reviewed:</b> March 6, 2025                  |
| <b>Next Review:</b> February 25, 2027    | <b>Contact:</b> (615)321-2933                        |

**PURPOSE:** To detail the process by which applications to the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences (MMC PAS) program are screened and selected for review by the Physician Assistant Admission Committee (PAAC).

**POLICY:** Meharry Medical College’s Physician Assistant Sciences Program is committed to using a holistic approach to recruit, accept, educate, and graduate a diverse group of qualified individuals from a variety of backgrounds and experiences.

**DEFINITIONS:**

Delay – Postpone or defer an action or event.

**PROCEDURE:** Applicants must meet all program application requirements and submit all required documents before the program application deadline to be considered for review. The initial screening of the application and supporting material is completed by the Chair of the PA and/or the program staff on the PA Admissions Committee (PAAC).

The PAAC Chair and/or program staff will screen all applications to verify all program requirements have been met, including:

- U.S. citizen or international student in a legal status to study in the U.S., meeting the English proficiency requirements.
- Prerequisite courses have been completed, with a minimum grade of “B” prior to submission of the CASPA application
- For courses that have been repeated, the program will consider and accept the higher of the two grades when evaluating the applicant’s academic record.
- A minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 3.5 (on a 4.0 scale)
- Completion of the Casper assessment
- Applications must be submitted and *verified* by CASPA by August 1<sup>st</sup> of the year prior to matriculation.
- Anatomy and Physiology must be completed within five (5) calendar years of the application submission.
- Applicants must have earned a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited U.S. college or university prior to submission of the application.
- Official transcripts from every university or college attended. International transcripts must be evaluated by one of the following and have the course-by-course report sent to the MMC PA Program: [International Education Services \(IES\)](#), [World Education Services \(WES\)](#), [Global Credential Evaluators \(GCE\)](#), or [Educational Credential Evaluators \(ECE\)](#).
- Three (3) Letters of reference. From any of the following: supervisor, professor, PA-C, MD/DO, other healthcare professionals, and/or academic advisor. Letters of reference



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must be current and no older than one year at the time of the CASPA submission. References from family members will not be accepted.

After the minimum application criteria have been met, faculty will be assigned to review a selected number of applicants. Each CASPA application will have a total score calculated from the holistic admissions process, and interviews for admission or denial into the PA Sciences Program will be conducted.

**Applicant Preferences:**

- Graduated from a Historically Black College and University (HBCU)
- Attended public high school > 30% free/reduced lunch
- Military veterans with an honorable discharge (must produce a DD214 / DD256 or equivalent)
- Shadowed a PA
- Direct patient care
- Community service/volunteer experience, especially in underserved communities
- First-generation college student
- Received Pell Grant in college
- Resided in a federally designated Medically Underserved Area/Population during high school ([Click here](#))
- Completion of recommended coursework

**Incomplete Applications:**

Applicants will be able to track the status of their application via CASPA application portal. Applications that are incomplete at the time of submission or not verified by August 1<sup>st</sup> will not be reviewed. The applicant is encouraged to reapply during the next application cycle once all requirements for the application are met. The applicant will be required to resubmit all required application materials. The MMC PAS Program does not save any documents submitted by the applicant for any prior application cycles.

**Grade Point Average (GPA):**

The program requires applicants to have a minimum overall undergraduate grade point average (GPA) of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale. This GPA represents the overall academic performance across all undergraduate coursework completed at accredited institutions and serves as a baseline criterion for admission consideration.

**Graduate GPA Exception**

Applicants to the Meharry Medical College Physician Assistant Sciences program must have a minimum overall undergraduate GPA of 3.5. In limited circumstances, applicants who do not meet this minimum requirement may still be considered for admission through the Graduate GPA Exception.



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Applicants seeking consideration under the Graduate GPA Exception must demonstrate a minimum level of undergraduate academic performance. To be eligible for review under the Graduate GPA Exception, an applicant's overall undergraduate GPA cannot be lower than 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale). Applicants with a graduate science degree and an overall undergraduate GPA below 3.3 (on a 4.0 scale) are not eligible for consideration under the Graduate GPA Exception.

Completion of a graduate-level science or health-science degree, as defined by the program, with strong academic performance (graduate GPA of 3.5 or higher), may be considered by the Admissions Committee as evidence of academic growth, the ability to master advanced scientific content, and readiness for the academic rigor of the PA curriculum.

Applicants may be eligible for consideration under the Graduate GPA Exception if the applicant has completed a graduate degree in a science or health-science field from a regionally accredited institution with an earned minimum cumulative graduate GPA of 3.5 or higher. Qualifying degrees include:

- Master of Health Science (MHS)
- Master of Biomedical Sciences (MBS)
- Master of Medical Science (MMS)
- Master of Biology
- Master of Science in Physiology
- Master of Science in Anatomy

Applicants reviewed under this exception will undergo a holistic admissions review. During this process, graduate academic performance will be considered alongside other components of the application, including but not limited to: prerequisite coursework, healthcare experience, letters of recommendation, and personal attributes. Eligibility for review under the Graduate GPA Exception does not guarantee admission. The Admissions Committee retains full discretion in all admissions decisions.

**Age of Course Work:**

Anatomy & Physiology must be complete within five (5) calendar years from the date of the application submission to the MMC PAS Program.

**Prerequisites:**

The following prerequisites are required and must be completed with a "B" or better:

1. Medical Terminology (1 credit hour)



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2. General or Inorganic Chemistry I & II, with lab (8 credit hours)
3. General biology I & II (6 credit hours)
4. Microbiology (3 credit hours)
5. Genetics (3 credit hours)
6. Human Anatomy or Anatomy and Physiology I, with lab (4 credit hours)
7. Human Physiology or Anatomy and Physiology II, with lab (4 credit hours)  
Standalone Anatomy or Physiology courses may not be combined or paired with integrated Anatomy and Physiology I and II courses to meet the admission requirements.
8. General Psychology (3 credit hours).  
Abnormal or Developmental Psychology will be accepted.

The following coursework is highly recommended, and a preference is given to applicants for each course with a "B" or better:

1. Immunology (3 credit hours)
2. Biochemistry (3 credit hours)
3. Organic Chemistry I, with lab (4 credit hours)
4. Organic Chemistry II, with lab (4 credit hours)
5. Statistics (3 credit hours)

All coursework, whether required or highly recommended for admission, must be completed prior to submitting the application to CASPA.

### English-Proficiency Requirements

All applicants born outside the United States are required to provide a TOEFL score of 100 or better on the internet-based test or secure a TOEFL waiver by the application deadline (TOEFL Code 1458).

- Waivers are automatically granted for applicants with a high school diploma, bachelor's degree, or graduate degree from an accredited U.S. Institution.

### Letters of Recommendation:

- Letters of recommendation should be from individuals who have directly supervised or worked with the applicant within the last three (3) years, such as:
  - Licensed healthcare providers (MDs, DOs, PAs, APRNs),
  - Academic faculty,
  - Work supervisors, or
  - Volunteer coordinators.
- Letters from family members will not be accepted
- Letters should be no older than one (1) year at the time of CASPA submission

### Advanced Placement/Transfer Students:



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All MMC PAS Program courses must be successfully completed in the curriculum, and no advanced placement options are offered. The Program does not accept transfer students from other PA Programs.

**Delayed or Deferred Admissions:**

The MMC PAS Program does not offer delayed matriculation/deferred admission. However, the PAAC will evaluate special circumstances on a case-by-case basis. The admitted student who fails to matriculate in the class selected must reapply for admission. Past success in admission to the Program does not confer a likelihood of admission in future applications.

