



GREAT IDEAS

GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

GREAT LEADERS



Making a difference in human-helping professions since 1885



DEPARTMENTAL CONTACT



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FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY, SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE HAS BEEN
A LEADER IN PROVIDING A BROAD AND BALANCED EDUCATIONAL
EXPERIENCE. HUMANICS, THE PHILOSOPHY THAT HAS INSPIRED
SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE FROM ITS BEGINNING, CALLS FOR
EDUCATING THE WHOLE PERSON—SPIRIT, MIND, AND BODY—
FOR LEADERSHIP IN SERVICE TO OTHERS.



GRADUATE PROGRAM IN PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT

WITH ADVANCES IN MODERN MEDICINE and increased health consciousness, our population is living longer and demanding better care. At the same time, the economic realities of the health care industry put a premium on speed and efficiency. But regardless of the circumstances, medicine remains a unique profession that requires its practitioners to make the right decision 100 percent of the time. After all, lives are at stake.

It is in this environment that the physician assistant has found an increasingly valuable role. A physician assistant, or PA, is a health professional who practices medicine in partnership with physicians. Within this relationship, the PA exercises various degrees of autonomy in providing a broad range of health care services in all disciplines of medicine. As part of a primary health care team, the PA is a first-line performer who must assess a problem quickly and carry out the appropriate course of action. Physician assistants perform physical examinations, diagnose illnesses, and develop and carry out treatment plans. They order and interpret laboratory tests, suture wounds, apply casts, assist in surgery, and provide patient education and preventative health care counseling. In fifty states, as well as Washington, D.C., and Guam, PAs are licensed to prescribe medication.

The physician assistant profession is growing fast. The U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics has predicted a 45 percent job growth rate through 2012.

While the personal and professional rewards are great, the responsibility is equally great. Proper training is critical to success. The Springfield College physician assistant master's program is an intense 27-month course of study that is designed to make sure students possess the knowledge, skills, and energy necessary to excel in this dynamic and demanding profession.

The course of study of the PA master's program is divided into two distinct phases: the academic—or didactic—year and the clinical year.

The program begins in the spring semester with courses in research methods, statistics, and medical ethics, as well as an independent research project and anatomy and physiology lab. These provide a foundation to prepare students for the challenging professional curriculum that follows. During the following summer, fall, and spring semesters, students study the science of medicine and develop the hands-on skills they will use in caring for their future patients. The coursework includes clinical medicine, human cadaver dissection, history taking and physical assessment, and pharmacology.

Students also learn applied clinical skills such as casting, suturing, IV techniques, operating room protocol, and more.

The program presents the curriculum in a sequence of modules that focus on specific parts and systems of the body and the medical conditions that affect them. This approach integrates all classes—clinical medicine, history and assessment, anatomy lab, and applied skills—into a single system of learning where classroom studies are constantly reinforced in a variety of learning situations.

FIELD-BASED TRAINING

The last year of the program consists of supervised on-site clinical training in family medicine, internal medicine, surgery, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, psychiatry, emergency medicine, and other specialties. Students are required to complete clinical rotations in all areas of medicine and follow-up with an elective rotation with a provider of their choice. This elective is typically within a specialty of particular interest to the student.

Each rotation lasts six weeks and demands a minimum of 40 hours per week. The training takes place in a number of clinical facilities, including offices of private physicians, community hospitals, community health centers, HMOs, and other health care facilities.

Students are required to maintain a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative grade-point-average (GPA) with individual course grades remaining at “B” or higher. Additionally, students are expected to uphold professional standards of conduct. Students who successfully complete the program earn a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree, and are eligible to take the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination. The Springfield College Physician Assistant program is fully accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant.

FACILITIES

- Four patient examination simulator rooms with two-way mirrors for instructor monitoring and coaching
- Physical diagnosis and clinical skills lab with state-of-the-art equipment
- First-class computer labs
- Human anatomy and physiology laboratory for cadaver dissection

“Getting my education at Springfield College is one of the best things I have done in my life. The physician assistant program trained me to be a successful and well-rounded professional. There is not a single day that goes by without my remembering the importance of ‘knowing the medicine,’ something instilled in me throughout my graduate work. Even more important, the greatest feeling comes with knowing that what I do allows my patients to continue to enjoy their lives.”

Dilan Ramirez, PA-C, G’08

Program: Physician Assistant—School of Health Sciences & Rehabilitation Studies

Place of Employment: Mercy Medical Center—Internal Medicine, Springfield, Mass.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

Our graduates perform impressively on the national board examination, and job opportunities are tremendous. In fact, most students field job offers before they've even completed the program, and because of this, demand to get into the PA master's program is growing. Still, in order to provide students with the resources and individual attention they need, class sizes have to remain small. With only a limited number of seats available, admission is highly competitive. To be competitive for one of these positions, a candidate must have a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with an overall cumulative GPA of at least 3.0 and an overall science prerequisite GPA of at least 3.0. In addition, the following prerequisite courses must be completed by the end of the summer term prior to enrollment, with no more than two outstanding at the time of application. Those marked with an * must have been successfully completed within seven years of enrollment.

- General Chemistry with lab (8 credit hours)
- Biology with lab (8 credit hours)
- Statistics (3 credit hours)
- College Algebra (3 credit hours)

- Human Anatomy and Physiology with lab* (8 credit hours)
- Microbiology* (3 credit hours)
- Organic Chemistry* (3 credit hours)
- Biochemistry* with college-level biology or chemistry prerequisite (3 credit hours)

Students are also expected to be proficient in basic computer skills, including use of the Internet.

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

In addition to the academic requirements, candidates must have at least 220 hours of health care patient-related experience prior to applying to the program. They must also complete 30 hours of PA shadowing in a clinical setting and demonstrate knowledge of the PA profession. Personal references, submitted as part of the application process, must present the evidence of strong personal qualities, character, and intellectual ability necessary to succeed in the PA master's program.



FACULTY

Our clinical faculty is a close-knit group of accomplished practitioners, including physicians and practicing physician assistants. They each bring their own specialties and unique talents to the mix. Their dedication to the profession is evident in their hard work and generosity as teachers, advisors, and colleagues. Our clinical faculty consists of more than 200 practicing physicians and physician assistants. Helping others to heal is an incredible responsibility, but it's also a rare gift. In the same way, passing along our knowledge to our students is both a responsibility and a privilege.

ACADEMIC STANDING AND FINANCIAL AID

Graduate students must maintain a minimum 3.0 cumulative average in graduate-level coursework. Full-time students are expected to complete 18 credit hours per academic year. Academic reviews are conducted each semester. Students placed on or continued on probation as a result of their graduate academic record at the College are not eligible for College or federal financial assistance, including student loans. For more information, please write or call:

Springfield College
Office of Financial Aid
263 Alden Street
Springfield, MA 01109-3797
413 748 3108

“The faculty members who teach in our program are all physicians and physician assistants. All of our PA faculty continue to clinically practice and we all believe you need to ‘know the medicine.’ This allows us to relate to our students in an extraordinary way. When we go to our medical practice offices, we are accountable to many of the same things that our students will be accountable to once they officially enter into the field. This gives us a sense of humility and a sense of reality that we transfer to our students each and every day we walk into the classroom.”

Charles Milch, BS, MBA, MHP, PA-C
Department Chair





FOUNDED IN 1885, Springfield College is known worldwide as the Birthplace of Basketball® and for the guiding principles of its Humanics philosophy—educating students in spirit, mind, and body for leadership in service to others. Springfield College, with its foundation of academic excellence and rich athletic heritage, prepares students with real-world leadership skills for tomorrow’s careers that transform lives and communities. A range of undergraduate and graduate degree programs are offered in fields of health sciences, human and social services, sport management and movement studies, education, business, and the arts and sciences. Doctoral programs are in physical education and physical therapy. The College is ranked in the 2010 edition of “America’s Best Colleges” in the top tier of “Best Universities—Master’s—North Region” by *U.S. News & World Report*, and is designated a premier Leadership Development Center by the YMCA of the USA. More than 5,000 traditional, nontraditional, and international students study at its main campus in Springfield, Massachusetts, and at its School of Human Services regional campuses located in ten other U.S. locations.



Springfield College Office of Graduate Admissions

263 Alden Street, Springfield, MA 01109-3797

Tel (413) 748-3225 TTY (413) 748-3383

Learn more about our graduate programs at:

www.springfieldcollege.edu