

  
**VALPARAISO UNIVERSITY**  
**NURSING & HEALTH**  
**PROFESSIONS**

**5 Year Physician Assistant Program**

Essential Functional Eligibility Requirements (Technical Standards) for  
 Admissions, Promotion, and Graduation

The Valparaiso University Physician Assistant Program is a rigorous curriculum where students acquire the general knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors required for the practice of medicine. The Valparaiso University Physician Assistant Program considers it essential for all physician assistant graduates to have the ability to function in a variety of clinical situations and to provide a wide spectrum of patient care. Essential Functional Eligibility Requirements (Technical Standards) are defined as the attributes considered necessary for students to complete their education and training and subsequently enter clinical practice. An individual must be able to independently demonstrate capabilities to meet these minimum standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, for successful completion of degree requirements. Reasonable accommodation will be offered for persons with disabilities in conjunction with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. The following requirements have been adopted for admissions, promotion, and graduation from the PA Program.

**Essential Skills and Functional Abilities for Physician Assistant Students**

Students must possess the intellectual ability to learn, integrate, analyze and synthesize data. They must have functional use of the senses of vision, hearing, equilibrium, and taste. Their exteroceptor (touch, pain, and temperature) and proprioceptor (position, pressure, movement, stereognosis, and vibratory) senses must be sufficiently intact to enable the student to carry out all the activities required to complete the functions described below.

<b>Functional Ability</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Examples of Required Activities</b>
<p><u>Observation</u></p> <p>Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation and is enhanced by the sense of smell</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to perceive, using senses and mental abilities, the presentation of information through lectures, small groups, one-to-one interactions, demonstrations, experiments, and written and audiovisual materials</li> <li>• Ability to accurately observe a patient near and at a distance, noting nonverbal, as well as verbal signs</li> <li>• Ability to observe and differentiate changes in body movement, observe anatomic structures, discriminate among numbers and patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe and actively participate in demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, visual presentations in lectures and laboratories, laboratory diagnostic procedures, microbiologic cultures, and microscopic investigations of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathological states</li> <li>• Detecting and identifying changes in color of fluids, skin, culture media, visualizing and discriminating findings on x-rays and other imaging tests, and reading written and illustrated materials</li> <li>• Discriminate among numbers and patterns associated with diagnostic tests such as electrocardiograms</li> </ul>

Functional Ability	Standard	Examples of Required Activities
<p><u>Communication</u></p> <p>Communication includes speech, hearing, reading, writing and computer literacy skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication in oral and written form must be effective and efficient</li> <li>• Ability to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, perceive non-verbal communication, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture</li> <li>• Ability to communicate effectively, sensitively, professionally, and civilly with patients, instructors, preceptors, other students, and all members of the health care team while conveying transparency, compassion and empathy</li> <li>• Ability to express and exchange ideas by means of the spoken word. Students must demonstrate excellent verbal and written communication in the English language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give verbal directions to, or follows verbal direction from, other members of the healthcare team; participate in health care team discussions of patient care</li> <li>• Process and communicate information regarding the patient's status accurately and in a timely manner to the other members of the healthcare team</li> <li>• Convey information to patients and others as necessary to teach, direct, and counsel individuals in an accurate, effective, and timely manner</li> <li>• Elicit and record information about health history, current health state, and responses to treatment from patients or family members within timeframe of the patient care experience</li> <li>• Establish and maintain effective working relations with patients and coworkers</li> <li>• Recognize and report critical patient information to other appropriate health care providers</li> <li>• Accurately and legibly record observations and plans in legal documents, such as the patient record</li> </ul>
<p><u>Motor</u></p> <p>Motor skills are essential abilities for the practice of medicine in various clinical settings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Motor function sufficient to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion and other diagnostic maneuvers as well as to perform technical procedures involved in the practice of medicine and surgery</li> <li>• Motor skills sufficient to perform treatments, administration of medication, management and operation of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR), administration of intravenous medications, application of pressure to arrest bleeding, opening an obstructed airway, suturing wounds, application of splints and casts, and assisting with obstetrical maneuvers</li> <li>• Perform basic laboratory tests such as slide preparation,</li> </ul>

Functional Ability	Standard	Examples of Required Activities
<p><u>Motor (continued)</u></p> <p>Motor skills are essential abilities for the practice of medicine in various clinical settings</p>	<p>diagnostic and therapeutic equipment in the routine and emergent care of patients</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to respond promptly to emergencies within the hospital or practice setting, and must not hinder the ability of her or his co-workers to provide prompt care</li> <li>• Ability to learn to perform basic laboratory tests</li> <li>• Possess the physical and mental stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, and physical exertion required for satisfactory performance in the clinical and classroom settings</li> </ul>	<p>glucose monitoring, and urinalysis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Operate diagnostic equipment such as a slit lamp</li> <li>• Possess the physical and mental stamina to assist in the operating room during extended procedures such as bowel surgery, joint replacement, or coronary artery bypass graft</li> </ul>
<p><u>Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative, and Quantitative Abilities</u></p> <p>Critical thinking and clinical judgement are essential abilities of the physician assistant. These abilities include measurement, calculation, analysis, synthesis, and reasoning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ability to solve problems involving measurement, calculation, analyzing, synthesizing, and recalling materials, rapid problem-solving, and rational thought</li> <li>• Ability to collect information, synthesize knowledge, and integrate the relevant aspects of a patient's history, physical findings, and diagnostic studies to reach logical conclusions</li> <li>• Ability to use information to develop a diagnosis and to monitor treatment plans and modalities</li> <li>• Ability to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures</li> <li>• Ability to demonstrate independent decision-making skills while operating as part of the larger medical team</li> <li>• Ability to react effectively in an emergency situation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collect data, prioritize needs, and anticipate reactions</li> <li>• Develop pharmacologic plan of care including appropriate drug selection and dosage</li> <li>• Comprehend spatial relationships, adequate to conduct complete physical examinations and surgical procedures</li> <li>• Recognize an emergency situation and respond effectively to safeguard the patient, family, and other caregivers</li> </ul>

Functional Ability	Standard	Examples of Required Activities
<p><u>Behavioral, Emotional and Social Attributes</u></p> <p>Empathy, integrity, honesty, compassion, good interpersonal skills, interest in people, cultural sensitivity, and motivation are all required personal qualities for the physician assistant</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possess the emotional health required for full use of the student’s intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities associated with the diagnosis and care of patients</li> <li>• Capacity for development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships in diagnosis and care of patients</li> <li>• Ability to understand the basis and content of medical ethics and demonstrate ethical behavior</li> <li>• Ability to monitor and react appropriately to her or his own emotional needs</li> <li>• Ability to develop appropriate professional relationships with colleagues, staff and patients with honesty, civility, integrity and non-discrimination</li> <li>• Ability to provide comfort and reassurance to patients and protect patient confidentiality</li> <li>• Possess the endurance to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress</li> <li>• Ability to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the practice of medicine</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish rapport with patients and colleagues</li> <li>• Work effectively with teams and work groups</li> <li>• Abilities sufficient for interaction with individuals, families and groups from various social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds</li> <li>• Maintain balanced demeanor and good organization in the face of long hours, fatigued colleagues, and dissatisfied patients</li> <li>• Display emotional skills sufficient to remain calm and maintain decorum in emergent and stressful situations</li> <li>• Adapt rapidly to environmental changes and multiple task demands</li> <li>• Accept responsibility for own actions</li> <li>• Accept suggestions and criticisms and, if necessary, respond by modifying her or his behavior</li> <li>• All students are, at times, required to work for extended periods of time, occasionally with rotating schedules</li> </ul>

**Reasonable Accommodation**

The Valparaiso University Physician Assistant Program will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with a disability. Determining what is a reasonable accommodation is an interactive process between you, the student, the Access and Accommodations Resource Center, and the PA program. Please contact the Access and Accommodations Resource Center at 219-464-5206 if you believe you have a disability that might require a reasonable accommodation.