



Physician Assistant Program Essential Functions

All candidates accepted into the Physician Assistant major must have 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 exteroceptive and proprioceptive senses must be sufficiently intact to enable them to carry out all activities required for a rigorous education. Candidates must have the functional motor capabilities to meet the demands of PA education and the demands of total patient care. In the pursuit of academic and clinical responsibilities, students must exhibit flexibility, sensitivity and interpersonal maturity.

Observation

Candidates must have sufficient sensory capacity to observe in the lecture hall, the laboratory, the outpatient setting, and the patient's bedside. Sensory skills adequate to perform a physical examination are required. Functional vision, hearing and tactile sensation must be adequate to observe a patient's condition and to elicit information through procedures regularly required in a physical examination, such as inspection, auscultation and palpation.

Motor

The ability to participate in basic diagnostic and therapeutic maneuvers and procedures (e.g. inspection, auscultation, palpation, and percussion) is required. Candidates must have sufficient motor function to execute movements required to provide routine and emergent care to patients. The strength and coordination necessary may include lifting patients and responding promptly to patients' needs in emergency situations. Candidates must be able to negotiate patient care environments and must be able to move between settings, such as the clinic, the classroom, and the hospital. Physical stamina sufficient to complete the rigorous course of didactic and clinical study is required. Long periods of sitting, standing, or moving are required in classroom, laboratory, and clinical internships.

Communication

Candidates must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively in both academic and health care settings. Candidates must show evidence of effective written, verbal, non-verbal, and electronic communication skills. A candidate should be able to effectively speak and listen to patients in order to elicit information; perceive nonverbal communications; and discuss changes in mood, activity and status. Students must be able to communicate with patients and their families concerning the patients' needs in a sensitive and professional manner. Communication via oral, written, and electronic form with faculty, supervisors, and the health care team must be open, effective and efficient.

Intellectual

Candidates must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize. Problem-solving, a critical skill demanded of Physician Assistants, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, candidates should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and understand the spatial relationships of structures. Candidates must be able to read, appraise, analyze, critique, and understand medical literature. A candidate must be able to collect, organize, prioritize, analyze and assimilate large amounts of technically detailed and complex information within a limited time frame. In order to complete the Physician Assistant degree, candidates must be able to then analyze, integrate, and apply this information appropriately for problem-solving and decision-making in patient care.

Behavioral and Social

Candidates must possess the emotional health and maturity required for full utilization of their intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the prompt completion of all academic and patient care responsibilities. The development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, supervisors and other members of the health care team are essential. A candidate must possess the qualities of adaptability and flexibility, and they must be able to function in the face of uncertainty. Candidates must have a high level of compassion for others, motivation to serve, integrity, and a consciousness of social values. A candidate must possess the necessary interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, all ethnic backgrounds, and all belief systems. Moreover, students must be able to accept feedback and criticism and respond professionally to faculty and supervisors, including an appropriate modification of behavior.

Request for Reasonable Accommodations

An individual who discloses a disability may request reasonable accommodation. Individuals will be asked to provide documentation of the disability in order to assist with the provision of appropriate reasonable accommodations. The college will provide reasonable accommodations but is not required to substantially alter the requirements or nature of the program or provide accommodations that inflict an undue burden on the college. Requests for reasonable accommodations should be directed to Penn College Disability Services.