PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Master of Science-Physician Assistant

The M.S. in Physician Assistant is a three-year, full-time, ninety-five-credit program that begins each fall. One class is admitted per year. The program is cohort-based, meaning that students have a predetermined course schedule each semester and move along in the program with the same group of peers. As a result, students are able to support each other and work and study in a community-like atmosphere. Classes are held at the Monmouth University Graduate Center in Monmouth Park Corporate Center. At its March 2017 meeting, the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) placed the Monmouth University Physician Assistant program sponsored by Monmouth University on Accreditation-Probation status until its next review in March 2019. Probation is a temporary status of accreditation conferred when a program does not meet the Standards and when the capability of the program to provide an acceptable educational experience for its students is threatened. Once placed on probation, programs that still fail to comply with accreditation requirements in a timely manner, as specified by the ARC-PA, may be scheduled for a focused site visit and/or risk having their accreditation withdrawn. Specific questions regarding the Program and its plans should be directed to the Program Director and/or the appropriate institutional official(s).

The mission of the Monmouth University physician assistant program is to educate physician assistants to provide compassionate, patient-centered, quality healthcare in a variety of settings. Program graduates will possess clinical skills to serve a diverse patient population and have the ability to advance the profession through leadership and research.

Our goals are to prepare physician assistants who:

- Function as high-quality physician assistants providing primary care in a variety of medical or surgical specialties.
- Learn how to integrate critical thinking and clinical reasoning into an evidence-based approach to patient management.
- Understand the importance of delivering high-value, cost-conscious care while adding quality improvement to a practice setting.
- Develop professional skills in order to work as collaborative members of the healthcare team.
- Understand and respect diversity with interpersonal skills that allow effective communication with patients, their families, physicians, and other healthcare professionals.
- Develop an intellectual curiosity by engaging in critical evaluation of the practice of medicine through research and publishing.

The program consists of two phases: the didactic phase and the clinical phase. The didactic phase is forty-two weeks consisting of classroom and clinical skills laboratory instruction, with hospital and clinic experiences. The clinical phase consists of sixty weeks of clinical clerkships, in which students are assigned to preceptors at various hospitals and physician offices. Course descriptions are located in the course description section of this catalog. Please refer to the Admission section of this catalog for the admission requirements. Students must successfully complete all courses and clinical clerkships in order to be eligible to graduate from the program.

Upon acceptance to this program, students will be required to meet health and immunization requirements and complete a background check. More information can be found in the Physician Assistant Student Handbook, posted on our Web site. (http://www.monmouth.edu/pa)

Programs

Masters

M.S. in Physician Assistant (http://catalog.monmouth.edu/graduate-catalog/marjorie-k-unterberg-nursing-health-studies/physician-assistant-ms)

Faculty

Gina Lamandre, Specialist Professor.
Interim Director of the Physician Assistant Program. B.S., The College of New Jersey; PA-C, M.S., University of Massachusetts; M.S., University of Medicine and Dentistry. Emergency and family medicine. gilamandre@monmouth.edu

Stephanie Lynch, Specialist Professor. B.S., Arizona University; PA-C, M.S., George Washington University. Experience in occupational medicine, OBGYN, urgent care, and internal medicine. Professor Lynch is nationally certified as a physician assistant and is licensed in New Jersey. slynch@monmouth.edu

Erin O'Donoghue, Specialist Professor. B.S., Montclair State University; M.S., Seton Hall University. Spine pathologies, care of patients with pain related to neurologic, rheumatologic, orthopedic, and infectious conditions. eodonogh@monmouth.edu

Courses

PHA-601 Human Anatomy Credits: 5
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Anatomy is a central focus of basic science education. During this course the student is introduced to gross anatomy presented by the regional approach. The student becomes familiar with the back, chest, upper extremity, abdomen, pelvis, lower extremity, neck, head, the central nervous system, and internal viscera. Instruction is primarily in lecture and lab format. However, atlases, computer programs, and other visual aids are available. Student performance is evaluated in both written and practical examinations.

PHA-602 Human Physiology Credits: 3
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Provides a basic understanding of human physiology while covering the processes of how the body functions. This lecture-based class will lead to an understanding of how the body responds to stimuli and how it maintains homeostasis while exposed to a varying environment.
PHA-603  Introduction to Patient Assessment  Credits: 5
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Students will be introduced to basic history taking and physical examination techniques, psychosocial development and behavior, and the effective relationship between the physician assistant, other health professionals, and the patient. Techniques of physical examination and use of examining equipment are introduced. Students are assigned to preceptors for the purpose of taking complete histories and performing a complete physical examination on patients.

PHA-604  Behavioral Medicine  Credits: 2
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Provides an overview of psychiatric concepts and an introductory approach to the evaluation of patients with behavioral issues. Includes a discussion of various psychiatric syndromes, with a review of causal factors and clinical presentation. Provides an overview of normal human behavior development over the life span. The impact that psychological problems have on the total health care of the patient will be emphasized.

PHA-605  Health Promotion  Credits: 3
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Designed to prepare students to provide healthcare and patient education using a patient-centered approach. Students will receive in-depth instruction in the principles of the patient-provider relationship, disease and the illness experience, health promotion and disease prevention. Includes an overview of basic nutrition standards and guidelines, fundamentals of nutrition assessment, and nutrition throughout the life cycle.

PHA-606  Physical Diagnosis  Credits: 4
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Continuation on the focus of Introduction to Patient Assessment on developing physical examination skills and the process of clinical data collection. Introduces the process of clinical reasoning and decision making. Attention will be provided to the recognition and appropriate description of common abnormal physical findings. Emphasis will be placed on the analysis and interpretation of clinical data that occurs during the process of formulating a differential diagnosis.

PHA-607  Diagnostic and Clinical Procedures  Credits: 5
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Instruction in interpretation of and indications for clinical laboratory tests, electrocardiography, and diagnostic radiography. Identification and understanding of normal and abnormal results, and correlation with medical cases will be emphasized. The final exam emphasizes critical thinking with case-based analysis.

PHA-608  Pharmacology for Physician Assistants  Credits: 2
Co-requisite(s): PHA-609
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Covers the most common classes of medications and their use in a variety of medical conditions. The primary focus of this course is the mechanism of actions of these drug classes and a description of different types of drug-receptor interactions. This basic pharmacology course allows the physician assistant student to better understand the clinical use of drugs covered in Clinical Therapeutics (PHA-609).

PHA-609  Clinical Therapeutics  Credits: 2
Co-requisite(s): PHA-608
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Designed to demonstrate the practical application of pharmaceutical science as utilized for the formulation of drug therapy decisions.

PHA-610  Pathophysiology  Credits: 3
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Focuses on the fundamentals of the pathologic changes that occur in different organs of the body. Gross and microscopic specimens are used to provide a clear understanding of the disease processes that affect the human body. Conducted as a lecture series that is supplemented by readings, lecture notes that will be emailed to the student, and a review of pathologic slides and specimens when appropriate. Provides an understanding of the pathologic process that leads to clinical signs and symptoms of diseases.

PHA-611  Neuroscience  Credits: 3
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Covers the basic structure, organization, and function of the central nervous system (CNS). Lectures and laboratories focus on understanding localization of function within specific structures and pathways of the brain and spinal cord, and typical syndromes associated with vascular accidents, trauma or diseases of the various parts of the CNS. Neuroscience is a foundational course addressing basic anatomy and physiology of the nervous system. Neuroscience incorporates the view that individuals actively use their bodies in typical and adaptive strategies to achieve mastery in life roles. Behaviors are learned and generated through normal functioning of the nervous system. With damage to the central nervous system, behavior-and therefore function-is altered. The central nervous system has the capacity to adapt or compensate behaviorally. Prepares students in programs of occupational therapy, physical therapy and physician assistant with knowledge about normal function, the effects of damage, and neural plasticity in preparation for clinical intervention.

PHA-612  Introduction to the Physician Assistant Profession  Credits: 1
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Introduces the student to the physician assistant profession and professional practice issues. Includes the history of the Physician Assistant profession, significance of the PA-physician team, professional organizations, professionalism, and professional development.

PHA-621  Topics in Medicine and Surgery  Credits: 5
Co-requisite(s): PHA-622
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Instructs students in the various disease entities in preparation for clinical internships. Students will develop their knowledge base in the etiology, clinical presentation, differential diagnoses, and therapeutic approach to disease processes. This course is composed of a series of lectures provided by primary care practitioners and specialists. Topics covered include a full-range of adult and pediatric health problems. An introduction to the fields of Obstetrics/Gynecology, Ophthalmology, and Surgery is included. Attention is focused on data collection, problem solving, clinical decision making, and the importance of incorporating patient education and preventive counseling in the clinical encounter.
**PHA-622 Clinical Management**  
Co-requisite(s): PHA-621  
Term Offered: Fall Term  
Course Type(s): None  
Using literature searches, critical analysis, and newly acquired medical information students study various clinical patient scenarios and apply basic medical knowledge in an effort to evaluate and recommend appropriate treatment. Students will employ all the tools acquired in previous courses to analyze these scenarios to develop realistic diagnoses, problem lists, and plans incorporating the proper ancillary clinical and diagnostic methods appropriate for supporting the diagnosis. The student will also be required to recommend therapeutic measures as deemed necessary. This is the first student effort to organize all of the knowledge gained to date and to exercise this knowledge in true patient management.

**PHA-625 Research Methods I**  
Term Offered: Spring Term  
Course Type(s): None  
An exploration in the fundamental concepts of research in the health sciences. Problem finding, formulation of a research question, research methodology, design, and data collection and interpretation will be addressed. Ethical considerations in research will be discussed. Published research articles will be critically analyzed. At the conclusion of the course, the students will have developed the framework of an original study, which will be further developed in PHA-626.

**PHA-626 Biostatistics for Physician Assistant's Research**  
Term Offered: Spring Term  
Course Type(s): None  
The goal of this course is to enhance each student’s understanding and effective use of the techniques used to describe and analyze data in health sciences. The intention is not to produce the sophistication in statistics, computer programming, or psychomotor application needed to develop and carry out major research projects. Rather, it is an introductory-level course with the objective of developing students’ competence in the application of the basic statistical techniques used to explore, describe, and analyze information for research or evaluation purposes.

**PHA-632 Biomedical Ethics**  
Term Offered: Fall Term  
Course Type(s): None  
The application of human and professional values, judgments, and choices to selective ethical dilemmas that arise in clinical practice. Traditional and contemporary approaches to resolving professional dilemmas will be discussed as well as ethics related to the delivery of healthcare.

**PHA-633 Epidemiology for Physician Assistants**  
Term Offered: Fall Term  
Course Type(s): None  
Provides a basic understanding of the epidemiologic method of identifying disease-causing agents. Emphasizes the generation of hypotheses based on descriptive epidemiologic data, the testing of hypotheses by analytical epidemiologic research, the determination of causality, and the value of epidemiologic research in developing disease-prevention programs.

**PHA-635 Research Methods II**  
Prerequisite(s): PHA-625  
Term Offered: Spring Term  
Course Type(s): None  
Many of the tasks of this course are related to the completion of the research study which was begun in Research Methods I (PHA-625). Much of the work of this single-credit course is accomplished through small group activities outside of formal class sessions. Class sessions for the course are infrequent. These will be lecture-discussion sessions in which we will meet to discuss topics designed to facilitate the completion of the research study and to enhance knowledge of medical research in general. Reading assignments should be completed prior to these meetings so that class discussions can be meaningful. Lecture notes, assignments and announcements will be posted on the e-Campus course site. Students should check both class and Web-based discussions.

**PHA-636 Healthcare Policy**  
Term Offered: Spring Term  
Course Type(s): None  
The overall goal of this course is to provide the student with information regarding the various topics related to the U.S. healthcare delivery system. The student will also be made aware of the impact that healthcare policy and managed care has on the total health of a patient. The course is given during the final semester of the third professional year so the student can incorporate clinical skills with an analytical perspective on those issues that drive the current health care system. Classes will be conducted as a series of group discussions supported by the required textbook readings, e-Campus posted articles, and small group-led discussions on those articles with analysis focused on how each affects cost, quality, and access to medical care. Attention will be given to the current events surrounding the issue of healthcare reform. Additionally, the course will be augmented by occasional guest lecturers.

**PHA-651 Clinical Clerkships I**  
Term Offered: Fall Term  
Course Type(s): None  
Clinical Clerkship year 1 is the first of two years of clinical clerkships providing the physician assistant student with the real-time patient/clinician exposures across required core and elective clinical experiences. In all experiences the student will be a member of either a health care delivery team and/or paired with a licensed practitioner in each medical discipline or service. Students are at all times held to the highest standards of professionalism and personal integrity.

**PHA-652 Clinical Clerkships II**  
Term Offered: Spring Term  
Course Type(s): None  
Clinical Clerkship year 2 is the second clinical clerkship providing the physician assistant student with the real-time patient/clinician exposures across required core and elective clinical experiences. In all experiences the student will be a member of either a healthcare delivery team and/or paired with a licensed practitioner in each medical discipline or service. Students are at all times held to the highest standards of professionalism and personal integrity.
Clinical Clerkships III  PHA-653
Credits: 10
Term Offered: Fall Term
Course Type(s): None
Clinical Clerkship year 3 is the third clinical clerkship providing the physician assistant student with the real-time patient/clinician exposures across required core and elective clinical experiences. In all experiences the student will be a member of either a healthcare delivery team and/or paired with a licensed practitioner in each medical discipline or service. Students are at all times held to the highest standards of professionalism and personal integrity.

Clinical Clerkships IV  PHA-654
Credits: 12
Term Offered: Spring Term
Course Type(s): None
Clinical Clerkship year 4 is the fourth clinical clerkship providing the physician assistant student with the real-time patient/clinician exposures across required core and elective clinical experiences. In all experiences the student will be a member of either a healthcare delivery team and/or paired with a licensed practitioner in each medical discipline or service. Students are at all times held to the highest standards of professionalism and personal integrity.