APPLICANT INFORMATION HANDBOOK

Physician Assistant Program

This program will prepare its graduates for careers as practicing Physician Assistants - trained healthcare provider professionals - trained in the art of medicine - helping to meet the region’s and nation’s growing healthcare needs. Successful graduates will earn national certification and become competent, compassionate professionals with sound ethical values.

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS)
Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania
11/2017
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The University

About Slippery Rock University
Slippery Rock University (SRU) of Pennsylvania has a long tradition of providing quality education to students. It opened its doors March 26, 1889 as Slippery Rock State Normal School with the primary purpose of training teachers. In 1926, the institution was purchased by the Commonwealth, renamed Slippery Rock State Teachers College, became a four-year teachers college and continued the tradition of teacher training. Slippery Rock State College was established in 1960 and for the first time, could award undergraduate and graduate degrees in the liberal arts and in the professions. Expanded curricular offerings and an increased number of degree programs created an appreciable rise in enrollment. It was granted university status in 1983.

Today, Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania is a four-year, public, coeducational, comprehensive university offering a broad array of undergraduate and select graduate programs to more than 8,500 students. The University has earned full institutional accreditation through the Middle State Commission on Higher Learning and discipline specific accreditations and is one of 14 state-owned institutions that comprise the State System of Higher Education of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This multi-purpose institution has approximately 135 programs in the College of Business, Information, and Social Sciences; College of Education; College of Health, Environment and Science; College of Humanities, Fine and Performing Arts and Graduate Studies and is characterized by its commitment to intellectual development, leadership and civic responsibility. SRU provides students with a comprehensive learning experience that intentionally combines academic instruction with enhanced educational and learning opportunities that will help them succeed in their lives, professional careers and be engaged citizens.

Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania is part of a safe, relaxed and friendly community situated in the borough of Slippery Rock in Butler County, Pennsylvania. The population of Slippery Rock at the 2000 census was 3,068. This number swells to more than 11,568 from August through May when Slippery Rock University is in session with the more than 8,500 students temporarily residing in the borough and township.

Rolling farmlands, forests and sparkling glacial lakes flank the Slippery Rock community. Historic and modern buildings blend a sense of tradition with the latest technologies. Recreational opportunities abound both on and off campus in a variety of settings. Slippery Rock's ideal collegiate atmosphere provides the perfect setting as you make lifelong friends and enjoy a once- in-a-lifetime experience.

Slippery Rock University Location
The 660-acre Slippery Rock University of Pennsylvania campus is located in Butler County in the rolling hills of western Pennsylvania, less than an hour north of downtown Pittsburgh, one hour south of Erie, and 45 minutes east of Youngstown, Ohio. Two major interstates, I-79 and I-80, intersect about seven miles north of the borough, making it easy to reach from the north, south, east or west.
The address is:
Slippery Rock University
1 Morrow Way
Slippery Rock, PA 16057

Click here for university campus and parking maps.

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**Slippery Rock University Vision and Mission**
Click here for university vision and mission statements.

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**Housing Options**
Graduate students are eligible to live on campus in the university residence hall system and in the university sponsored Rock Apartments on campus, but it is not guaranteed. Off-campus housing is also available in privately owned residence halls, apartment, rooming houses and mobile homes. Click here for more information on housing.

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**Dining Options**
The dining program at Slippery Rock University offers a variety of services throughout the campus for students and their guests. There are also a number of meal plan options available to Slippery Rock University students. Students residing in a university-managed residence hall sign a housing/food service contract. Meal contracts are optional for off-campus/commuter students.

Click here for more information on campus dining.

Click here for dining options available in the nearby community of Slippery Rock.

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**The Program**

**About the Physician Assistant Program**
The program starts a new cohort of 52 students every summer.

The program is a combination of academic and clinical instruction, blended course delivery (onsite and online), team instruction and collaborative outreach taught in unique learning environments. Academically and professionally qualified faculty, clinicians and experts provide a strong foundation in evidence-based practice, direct patient/client management and prevention and wellness services that focus on the life cycle needs of the U.S. population.

The program provides an emphasis on special needs populations, interwoven throughout academic and clinical years, making SRU’s Physician Assistant Program unique. The Program also focuses on the mental and physical well-being of its students, incorporating physical exercise and mental breaks into its curriculum. Students have university, program and faculty support as they grow academically, clinically and professionally.

The Program faculty not only have years of experience in the clinical setting, but also have training and experience to be effective PA educators. In addition, faculty members are engaged...
in research, presentations and publications.

Most classes are held at the PA Program facility in Harrisville, Pennsylvania. Cadaver Lab classes are held on main campus. Some lectures and labs will be held off campus. Some class sessions, special trainings and clinical opportunities may take place 15 miles from main campus at Butler Memorial Hospital in Butler, Pennsylvania (22 miles from PA Program location). Other practicums occur throughout the region with efforts to keep practicums within a 30-mile radius of main campus. The Program will work with students wishing to remain near Slippery Rock for their clerkships, as a majority of clerkship affiliations will be within an 150-mile radius. For students wishing international, Hawaii or other state clerkships, the Program works with such students to arrange such clerkships if Program does not already have affiliations in locations where students wish to complete their clerkships. Students are required to participate in additional training, assessment and evaluation for two days at end of every clerkship and for two weeks at end of clinical year.

Class sizes vary. Most lecture-based courses accommodate a full cohort of 52 students. Labs and breakout sessions vary from 8-28 students. There are also one-on-one clinical and learning experiences.

During the academic year, students are usually in class from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Occasionally, students are expected to attend evening, early morning or weekend class. Most lecture courses are associated with a lab to encourage active, hands-on learning. The curriculum is constructed to expose students to clinical experiences during both the academic year and clinical year. During the clinical year, students are immersed in patient healthcare or special needs populations for approximately 40 hours a week. Some rotations may require night, weekend or evening hours and you may be asked to be on-call.

After 24 months of continuous education, students graduate in the spring with a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree, with the first cohort graduating May 2018.

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**Licensure/Certification Disclosure**

Slippery Rock University is approved to offer programs that may lead to licensure/certification in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. SRU cannot confirm that the PA program meets the requirements for licensure/certification in any other state or commonwealth. If you are considering enrolling in the PA program and being certified/licensed in a state other than Pennsylvania, please check the specific requirements for licensure in your state. If you are considering working as a PA in other states that may require certification/licensure, you should first seek guidance on your state’s requirements. For more information, please consult the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) on the specific state information.

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**Physician Assistant Program Location**

The Program is seven (7) miles from main campus in Harrisville, Pennsylvania in a newly renovated facility designed specifically to accommodate the Physician Assistant Program. The current PA Program address is:

Physician Assistant Program  
Slippery Rock University  
220 West Prairie Street  
Harrisville, PA 16038  

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Physician Assistant Program Mission
The program focus is to train and develop Physician Assistants, with a passion for special needs populations, to better meet medical needs. The program will aspire to promote life-long learners while advancing health needs of the regions served by the University. Graduates will have skills and leadership talents to make a difference in the quality of life in the health care environment in which they will work.

Physician Assistant Program Visionary Goals
The Slippery Rock University Physician Assistant Program bases its five primary program goals on the mission of the program. Evidence of program success in achieving its goals cannot be reported until graduation of the first cohort. What follows are the visionary goals and supporting information on how the Program will effectively work toward achieving these goals. As the PA Program becomes operational, goal assessment will commence in discrete time intervals relevant to each visionary goal to determine if the Program is successfully achieving its goals.

1. Provide an affordable education in Physician Assistant studies
2. Graduate Physician Assistants with a special focus on special needs patient populations
   • Validated by completion of special needs population courses, practicums and clerkships
   • Validated by logging patient encounters classified as special needs populations
   • Evidenced by students earning a Letter of Completion in Special Needs Populations
3. Graduate Physician Assistants will be competent health care providers.
   • Validated by benchmark exams
4. Graduate Physician Assistants who will exhibit the highest level of honesty, interpersonal skills and interprofessional competencies while working as members of healthcare teams
   • Measured by preceptor evaluations, utilizing indicators for professionalism, interpersonal skills, and interprofessional competencies
5. Graduate skilled, competent Physician Assistants with a knowledge base that contributes to the provision of quality health care in nearby regions.
   • Evidenced by completion of Institute of Health care Improvement (IHI) Open School basic certificate in quality and safety.

Uniqueness of the Physician Assistant Program at Slippery Rock University
Interwoven through both years of curriculum are courses associated with special needs patient populations, making this PA Program unique among PA Programs nationwide and fulfilling a needed niche in the community, state and beyond. This uniqueness places this PA Program on the forefront of PA education, meeting the growing needs of these populations and showing how a PA Program can adapt to such changes and still produce PAs who are trained to meet the growing demand of primary and specialty care providers.

Students have a special needs populations’ course and practicum each semester during the academic year and two 3-week clerkships during the clinical year with an option to fulfill their elective with a 4.5-week special needs population clerkship as well.

The purpose of the special need populations’ courses is for students to learn about and increase awareness of the special needs populations they will encounter as medical care providers so they can become more comfortable with these populations, resulting in students becoming better medical care providers for these individuals. These courses are diversity rich. Populations
in which students are exposed to, are patients/clients with special healthcare needs includes individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities, victims of abuse, homeless, HIV+/AIDS, visual or hearing impairment, previously incarcerated, end of life, non-English speaking, migrant workers, low socioeconomic status, rural, urban, elderly, veterans and LGBTQIA populations.

Students gain unique and valuable assets from these experiences that allow them to become more comfortable with special-needs populations, becoming providers with skills needed to communicate and engage with such populations while providing medical care.

Practicums and clerkships occur at SRU's Therapeutic Equestrian Center; as well as other local sites, facilities and organizations. Students also have opportunities to complete practicums and clerkships at the regional, state, national and international levels.

**Curriculum**

The curriculum consists of 111.5 credit hours. Successful completion of the curriculum results in a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) degree, which was approved by the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Board of Governors January 22, 2015. The curriculum is designed to provide transparency and clarity. The first year consists of 60 hours (academic year) of courses and the second year (clinical year) consists of 56 hours. The courses provide Core Physician Assistant Competencies that are needed for students to become successful Physician Assistant professionals.

During the 3rd, 4th and 5th semesters of the program, students will take a course titled Practice-Based Learning and Improvement Experience. In this course, students learn how to be self-learners in their profession, are required to submit a research project as individuals or teams to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) conduct and analyze said research and present findings at a local, regional, state or national platform with the guidance and expertise of the PA Program faculty. In addition, in this course, students learn the practical information needed to become, maintain and grow in their careers as midlevel medical care providers.

There is an array of pedagogical teaching environments implemented from the standard lecture to student-centered to critical thinking to laboratory to clinical experiences to cooperative learning to simulations to grand rounds to team teaching and to collaborative learning. Face-to-face as well, distance learning and small groups will be employed when appropriate. PA faculty, other campus professors and educators, practicing clinicians and experts in the field of study utilized to provide students with a solid comprehensive education.

Multiple courses are offered to detail the needs of what it takes to create a solid medical care provider, to provide students with an exciting curriculum and to make assessment and faculty responsibilities clear. Practicums (didactic-year clinical experiences) and Clerkships (clinical-year internships) are intended to give the students opportunities to not only establish themselves as a primary care provider, but also to allow for specialization in a multitude of medical disciplines, as well as to provide exposure to special needs patient populations. Students also learn about the PA profession and learn how to make the transition from PA-student to PA-certified successfully. Students also have to pass a written and practical summative examination prior to graduation successfully. In addition, students are prepared to sit for the PA National Certifying Exam (PANCE) to become nationally certified as a PA.
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<td>PA 630</td>
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<td>PA 633</td>
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<td>PA 606</td>
<td>Healthcare Systems (Summer)</td>
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<td>PA 673</td>
<td>From Theory to Practice I (Summer)</td>
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<td>PA 683</td>
<td>From Theory to Practice II (Fall)</td>
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<td>PA 693</td>
<td>From Theory to Practice III (Spring)</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 694</td>
<td>Summative and PANCE Preparation (Spring)</td>
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### The Curriculum: Clinical Year Clerkships

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<td>PA 712</td>
<td>Internal Medicine Clerkship</td>
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<td>PA 713</td>
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<td>PA 714</td>
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<td>PA 715</td>
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### The Curriculum: Clinical Year Elective Clerkship Options*

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<td>PA 726</td>
<td>Women’s Health (OB/GYN) Clerkship Elective</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 727</td>
<td>Emergency Medicine Clerkship Elective</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 730</td>
<td>Special Needs Population(s) Experience Elective</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 741</td>
<td>Cardiology Clerkship Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 742</td>
<td>Otolaryngology Clerkship Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 743</td>
<td>Orthopedics Clerkship Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 744</td>
<td>Neurology Clerkship Elective</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 745</td>
<td>Nephrology Clerkship Elective</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>PA 746</td>
<td>Oncology Clerkship Elective</td>
<td>4.5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Students have the opportunity to pick their elective clerkship in any area of medicine or Physician Assistant specialty field, based on clerkship availability. During elective rotations, students can learn to be PA educators or researchers, become involved in public or community health or healthcare policy, train in a medical specialty field, engage in opportunities to travel abroad on medical mission trips, create a new type of clerkship or repeat an enjoyable clerkship. Some students are offered jobs during their rotations and may want to do their elective clerkships at their future places of employment.

Course Descriptions
Click here for university graduate catalog PA program course descriptions.

Academic Credit
The Program consists of 111.5 credits with a 60-credit academic year and a 51.5-credit clinical year. The academic year consists of three semesters through summer (10 weeks), fall (15 weeks), and spring (15 weeks) with 18, 21 and 21 credits, respectively. The clinical year consists of 56 credits distributed through summer, fall and spring with 46 weeks of clerkships and 2 weeks of educational experiences and assessment at university at end of rotations. Students will complete 2 days of continuing education and assessment at the end of each clerkship. Clerkships consist of eight 5-week clerkships (4.5 credits per clerkship) and two 3-week clerkships (3 credits per clerkship). During the clinical year, students will take courses in addition to their clerkships: summer (4 credits), fall (2 credits), and spring (3.5 credits).

Estimated Costs
Tuition is based on Slippery Rock University’s graduate tuition cost per credit rate. Click here to find the most current tuition rates. Rates are subject to change.

The PA Fees go toward items, events and activities that collectively benefit students of the PA Program. Examples of such items include the White Coat Ceremony, awards and recognitions, student involvement related to PSPA and AAPA, various other student activities, ACLS and BLS certification, identification tags, and board preparation.
Preceptorship has undergone dramatic changes in recent years. Many medical facilities and practitioners are now requiring payment and/or services for clerkships due to the changing landscape in healthcare. In addition, recent changes to state regulations regarding crossing state borders for preceptorships have resulted in increased paperwork and costs. The Clinical Fee will go toward these costs and any other costs needed to enable the Program to secure and provide exceptional clinical experiences for students and to support student clinical needs.

**Costs Associated with PA Program Entrance**

Students are responsible for costs associated with Program entrance requirements and clearances, such as:

- Level 1 background check (includes fingerprinting ~$75)
- Child abuse clearance (~$10)
- Drug screening (price can vary, based on medical insurance coverage)
- Physical examination (price can vary, based on medical insurance coverage)
- Immunizations/titers (price can vary, based on medical insurance coverage)
- TB testing (price can vary, based on medical insurance coverage)

**Slippery Rock University Application Fee**

At this time, there IS NO supplemental application and NO SRU fee to apply to the Program; however, you will be asked to answer additional questions on the CASPA application.

**Financial Aid**

Click here for university information on financial aid.

**Tuition and Fees Refund Policies and Procedures**

The PA Program will follow the university’s policies and procedures for refunds of tuition and fees. Click here for university refund policy under “Policies and Tax Information.”

**Student Employment Policy While Enrolled in the Program**

The Program does not prohibit students from being employed while in the Program; however, due to the intensity and time demands associated with the Program, students are strongly discouraged from working while in the Program.

Classes occasionally meet in the evening, early morning and weekends as is necessary. Students should make themselves available to attend all classes as scheduled.

The Program strives to make as few changes as possible to the established schedule, but cannot guarantee there will be no changes, as some contributing variable factors are not within control of the Program. Tentative schedules are provided at the beginning of each semester.

Students are required to commit approximately 35-60 hours a week during clerkships. Days, hours, shifts and geographical location varies from clerkship to clerkship, making employment very difficult during the clinical year. Students are expected to conform to the schedule set forth by the clinical site and preceptor. Students are never to ask a clinical site or preceptor to alter or accommodate a schedule on their behalf.
The Program understands that students may need to meet financial obligations and trusts the decisions made by its students to prioritize as needed and to take responsibility for decisions that can affect their educational achievements and their future career as a PA.

**Transportation**
Students are expected to have their own transportation during the didactic and clinical years.

During the didactic year, students need transportation to and from Cadaver Lab classes held on main campus, as well as some lectures and labs held off campus. Students also need transportation to and from practicums during the didactic year including: Clinical Medicine classes (lectures by Butler Health System providers), Applied Clinical Medicine Lab classes (simulation lab), and practicums (grand rounds and patient encounters).

During the clinical year, students must have transportation to and from clerkships. Students are also required to return to the PA Program to participate in additional training, assessment and evaluation for two days at the end of every clerkship and for two weeks at the end of the clinical year.

**MEET THE FACULTY & STAFF**

**MEDICAL DIRECTORS**

**Patricia Jarrett, M.D., Ph.D.**
Dr. Jarrett serves as one of the program’s medical directors. She has a PhD in molecular genetics and served on the basic science faculty of the University Of Pittsburgh School Of Medicine. As a faculty member she taught undergraduate students, graduate students, medical students, residents and fellows; and is widely published in peer review journals. After obtaining her M.D., Dr. Jarrett practiced in both internal medicine and psychiatry. She is board certified in Psychiatry and Neurology. She has a specialized clinical expertise in neuropsychiatry, medical psychiatry and substance abuse disorders. As a physician she served on the clinical faculty of the School of Medicine and served as Medical Director of the UMPC hospital system Consult-Liaison department. She has served on numerous academic and hospital committees with an interest in medical ethics. After an academic career, Dr. Jarrett served as Medical Director at a community mental health center, and is now practicing forensic psychiatry.

**Charles Spingola, M.D.**
Dr. Spingola is a practicing orthopedic surgeon in Butler, PA and has served as one of the medical directors of the SRU PA Program since the preliminary planning stages of the program. Dr. Spingola graduated from the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey, which has been renamed as Rutgers Medical School. He is a Diplomate of the American Board of Orthopedic Surgery and a fellow of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgery. He has held multiple leadership positions in the Butler Health System, including President of the Medical Staff, Chairman of Surgery, and a member of the Board of Directors. Throughout the course of his career he has instructed and mentored countless physician assistants. Dr. Spingola lives in Butler with his wife, who is a local veterinarian. They have three adult daughters, one who recently completed her Master’s degree as a Physician Assistant, one who recently completed her Master’s degree as a Nurse Practitioner and one who is pursuing her PhD in engineering. Dr. Spingola spends his limited spare time enjoying spy novels, tinkering with computers,
basking on a sandy beach, restoring model trains and entertaining his animals.

John Reefer, M.D.
Dr. Reefer is a practicing internal medicine physician in Butler, PA. He serves as one of the medical directors for the SRU PA Program. Dr. Reefer graduated from Johns Hopkins University with a bachelor’s degree in Natural Science. He then attended the University of Pittsburgh Medical School where he graduated as a Doctor of Medicine. He did his residency in internal medicine at UPMC Presbyterian Hospital. Dr. Reefer opened a private practice in Butler, PA where he practiced internal medicine for many years. Dr. Reefer is the Chief Medical Officer and the Vice President of Professional Affairs at Butler Hospital. He also enjoys volunteering at the free clinic in Butler. Dr. Reefer lives on a farm in Butler, PA with his wife and dog. In his free time he enjoys outdoor activities such as golfing, hunting and fishing.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR AND FACULTY
Alison Wix, MPA, PA-C, Assistant Professor
Interim Program Director and Academic Coordinator
Ms. Wix graduated from Duquesne University in 2005 with a Master’s degree in Physician Assistant Studies. She also holds a Bachelor’s degree in Health Sciences from Duquesne University. She is Board Certified as a Physician Assistant by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants. Ms. Wix was an Adjunct Professor for Duquesne University’s Physician Assistant program prior to starting her full time position at Slippery Rock University. She attended the PAEA Pando Basic Faculty Skills Workshop for Physician Assistant Educators in 2016. Ms. Wix has 10 years of clinical experience as a Physician Assistant in Vascular Surgery. During her practice as a Vascular Surgery PA, she also practiced General Surgery for a period of four years. Ms. Wix has participated in two research projects through the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center on ruptured abdominal aortic aneurysms and pararenal abdominal aortic aneurysms. She has also conducted research on initial treatment regimens for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Type I for her Evidence Based Medicine Master’s Thesis project and she has conducted research on neoadjuvant and adjuvant therapies for breast cancer, which was presented at St. Margaret’s Hospital in Aspinwall, PA, 2004. Ms. Wix has been singing the National Anthem for the Relay for Life of Pittsburgh West for the past four years every spring. Ms. Wix enjoys traveling, reading, and spending time with her three children, husband, family and friends.

Megan Borger, MSPAS, PA-C, Assistant Professor
Clinical Coordinator
Ms. Borger completed her Physician Assistant training at Kings College in Wilkes-Barre, PA graduating with a Master’s of Science in Physician Assistant Studies in 2008. She also completed her undergraduate training at Kings College with a Bachelor’s of Science in Medical Studies in 2007. She served as preceptor for Physician Assistant and Nurse Practitioner students as well as provided many shadowing opportunities for future healthcare students. She attended the PAEA Pando Workshop for Clinical Coordinators in 2017. Upon graduation practiced clinically in family practice in a rural health clinic in Port Allegany, Pennsylvania. Currently she practices clinically in family medicine with Lawrence County Family Medicine in New Castle, PA where she has been for the past 5 years. She is a member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants. She has volunteered the past 3 years with Grove City Chamber of Commerce for their seasonal events in including Christmas in the Park and Fall Fest. Ms. Borger enjoys kayaking, being outdoors and being with her family and friends which includes returning to her hometown of Warren, Pennsylvania where her family and dearest friends reside.
Jamie Hammond, MS, MPAS, PA-C, Assistant Professor
Coordinator of Special Needs Populations Education
Ms. Hammond graduated from Waynesburg College with a Biology Pre-Medical Degree in 2004, from Chatham College with a Master in Biology degree in 2005, and from Chatham College with a Master in Physician Assistant Studies in 2007. She has practiced clinically in Pulmonology/Sleep Medicine in Washington, PA, Family Practice in southwestern PA and NC and Neurosurgery in PA. She is a member of American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), Pennsylvania Society for Physician Assistants (PSPA), Pennsylvania Rural Health Association (PRHA) and Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). She serves as liaison to PSPA for PRHA and serves as secretary for PRHA. She has participated in medical mission trips to Africa. She currently serves on the President’s Commission on Women at SRU and is the advisor for the Pre-PA club at SRU. Ms. Hammond enjoys spending time with her husband and three children as well as being a foodie, traveling, hiking and yoga.

Diane Frndak, PhD, MBA, PA-C, Associate Professor
Dr. Frndak was hired as a new full-time twelve-month clinical faculty member, effective April 2015. Just prior, she worked as a senior leader for a health system in patient safety and quality. She has practiced as a Physician Assistant in family practice, general medicine and research. She also has worked on the administrative side of medicine in consulting, operations manager and process improvement. She is certified by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) and maintains her license as a Physician Assistant in Pennsylvania. Dr. Frndak has also held adjunct faculty positions with several universities and hosted multiple students as a preceptor/mentor in clinical and administrative roles. She graduated with a bachelor of science in Medical Science-Physician Assistant Program from Alderson-Broaddus College, received a Master in Business Administration (MBA) and PhD from the University of Pittsburgh. Dr. Frndak lives in Saxonburg on a farm and spends time with her family including sixteen grandchildren.

Audra Kessler, MPAS, PA-C, Assistant Professor
Ms. Kessler completed her Physician Assistant training at Duquesne University where she received a Masters of Physician Assistant Studies and a Bachelor of Health Science. She served as an academic advisor to Carnegie Mellon University students working to complete their Capstone projects. She has worked to develop a software program that helps to manage chronic kidney disease education. Ms. Kessler has practiced as a physician assistant in field of nephrology for the past 7 years. She specialized in dialysis, transplant, and chronic kidney disease education. She attends yearly conferences to continue her medical education. She continues to practice clinically. She is currently working on grants along with other PA faculty members. She is a member of AAPA (American Academy of Physician Assistants), PAEA (Physician Assistant Education Association), and PSPA (Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants). Ms. Kessler enjoys spending time with her family. She also enjoys reading, travel, and photography. She is married and has one daughter and two dogs.

Jacob R. Hovis, MPA, PA-C, Assistant Professor
Mr. Hovis completed his undergraduate Bachelor of Science degree at the University of Pittsburgh in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania with a major in biology, minor in chemistry, and a certificate in the philosophy of medicine. He attained his masters in Physician Assistant program at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He has served on the Slippery Rock University Physician Assistant advisory board. He has practiced clinically as a general surgery PA-C, 24 hour on call trauma surgery PA-C for Wheeling Hospital in Wheeling, WV, trauma surgery and critical care for
Mission Hospital in Asheville, NC, emergency medicine for Meadville Medical Center in Meadville, PA, family practice, acute care, and nursing home geriatric care for Express Care with Family Healthcare Partners in Grove City and Mercer, PA. He has served as a preceptor for several high school students, college undergraduate and medical and physician assistant graduate students in various locations and various medical specialties. Mr. Hovis enjoys spending time with his family comprised of his wife, two daughters, a dog, and several chickens. He enjoys hiking, biking, kayaking, fishing, archery hunting, foraging for wild mushrooms and other wild edibles, gardening, farming, botany.

**Emily Prenatt, MPAS, PA-C, Assistant Professor**

Ms. Prenatt completed Duquesne University’s entry level Masters of Physician Assistant Studies program, earning both a Bachelor of Science in Health Science and a Master of Physician Assistant Studies degree. She has practiced clinically in a pre-operative clinic in Meadville, PA. She also has experience in Urgent Care/ Family Practice and working in a Free Clinic setting in Wheeling, WV. Ms. Prenatt has experience as a preceptor for PA students and college students interested in the PA field. She and her husband arranged a fundraising event for Wigs for Kids at which they both donated their hair for pediatric patients. She and her family visit a children’s home in Aruba and take Christmas gifts for the residents each year. She also participated in Meadville Medical Center Community Care Network’s Christmas gift drive last year by collecting and donating gifts from members of her department. In her free time, Ms. Prenatt enjoys gardening, cooking, fitness, and travel. She also enjoys spending time with family. She is married and has two rescue dogs.

**Justin Siebert, Ph.D., M.S. Med.Ed, Assistant Professor**

Dr. Siebert joined the faculty of Slippery Rock University. He completed his doctoral research under the direction of Drs. Dennis J. Stelzner and Donna J. Osterhout (SUNY Upstate Medical University) focused on studying axonal regeneration and remyelination following spinal cord injury. He then spent a year as a post-doctoral fellow at Cornell University (Ithaca NY campus) in the Department of Biomedical Engineering, where he continued his studies into spinal cord injury, utilizing advanced bioimaging techniques. He started his teaching career at the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Seton Hill, located in Greensburg, PA, as an Assistant Professor of Anatomy, where he taught medical gross anatomy, histology, embryology, facilitated problem-based learning, and discussions in human sexuality and medical ethics. In addition, he also earned his master's degree in medical education from LECOM in the spring of 2015.

**Heather Fritz, MPAS, PA-C, Assistant Professor**

Ms. Fritz completed her Masters of Physician Assistant and Biomedical Science training at Medical College of Ohio (University of Toledo) in 2003. She also holds a Bachelor of Health and Human Services from Bowling Green State University. She was an adjunct Professor for Slippery Rock’s PA Program summer of 2017 and hired as a full-time tenure-track Assistant Professor beginning in the fall semester 2017. Her clinical experience entails 12 years as a Physician Assistant in Orthopedic Surgery with Greater Pittsburgh Orthopedic Associates. She is a member of the American Academy of Physician Assistants and Pennsylvania Society of Physician Assistants.
Accreditation

Accrediting Body
The Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), 12000 Findley Road, Suite 150, Johns Creek, GA 30079 accredits physician Assistant programs in the United States. Click here to go to their website.

Accreditation Status
The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the Slippery Rock University Physician Assistant Program sponsored by Slippery Rock Rock University.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class.

Admissions

Admission and Enrollment Preferences
A limited number of seats will be held for:
• Highly-qualified Slippery Rock University accelerated 3+2 Pre-PA Concentration students
• Highly-qualified Slippery Rock University Pre-PA Concentration students who take the required prerequisite courses at SRU
• Highly-qualified students attending other universities if such a university has an articulation agreement in place with Slippery Rock University’s PA Program

Additional points will be awarded during application review through a point-award system for:
• Slippery Rock University Students and Graduates
• Students and Graduates from other 13 Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education Universities
• Veterans
• There is no guaranteed admittance into the Program and an interview is required before any applicant is offered a seat in the Program.
• There could be a potential advantage to applicants who apply early. Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Seats will be offered to highly-qualified applicants after each interview day. After all seats are filled, remaining interviewed highly-qualified students will have a waitlist option only. Applicants will be informed when invited for an interview if seats have been tentatively filled. Applicants on the waitlist could be offered a seat in the Program up until the first day of class.
• Even with preferences in place, the Program will strive to have diverse cohorts, comprised of traditional and nontraditional students, SRU and non-SRU students and graduates, veterans and non-veterans, and students that have graduated from an array of other universities across the region, state, nation and world. We will not discriminate against individuals on the basis of race, sex, age, national or ethnic origin, handicap, religion, political affiliation or sexual identity.

• SRU provides an environment that respects, encourages and promotes the talents and contributions of all. SRU values a community with a shared sense of purpose, where people demonstrate mutual respect and appreciation. SRU values diversity that honors and includes all persons regardless of age, creed, disability, ethnic heritage, gender, gender identity, race, religion, sexual orientation or socioeconomic status in academic and extracurricular endeavors, in the working environment, and in the daily life of the university community.

**Advanced Placement**
The Program does not grant advanced standing. Prior completion of PA Program-like courses, experiences in the medical field and degrees earned in medicine or other health-related fields will not earn applicant advanced placement. All courses (111.5 credits) in the curriculum are required for completion of the Program. This includes required practicums and clerkships.

**Transfer Students**
The PA Program will not accept transfer students from other PA Programs. All courses (111.5 credits) in this curriculum must be completed here at this Program.

**Part-Time Students**
The Program does not accept part-time students.

**International Students**
In addition to all of the standard admission requirements, all international applicants must take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or the International English Language Testing System (IELTS). Contact Graduate Admissions at 724.738.2051 or 877.SRU.GRAD | Fax: 724.738.2146 | Email: graduate.admissions@sru.edu to ask questions or visit website at [www.sru.edu/graduate](http://www.sru.edu/graduate) for more information. Minimum accepted scores for the PA Program are listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOEFL exam type</th>
<th>TOEFL Minimum Accepted Score</th>
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<tr>
<td>Paper-based</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer-based</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet-based (iBT)</td>
<td>80; minimum of 19 on speaking section</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IELTS exam</td>
<td>Minimum Accepted Score: Composite Score 6.5</td>
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Admission and Prerequisite course requirements for international applicants are the same as all applicants. [CASPA](http://caspa.edu) will not accept, translate, or verify transcripts from International institutions (except Anglo-Canadian). For course work and/or academic degrees from institutions not in the U.S. or Canada, a course-by-course transcript evaluation must be requested from an accredited credential evaluation service. Examples of such services may be found on the website of the
National Association of Credential Evaluation Services.® Applicants should refer to the CASPA website for CASPA submittal procedures regarding these reports. Refer to CASPA for policies and procedures regarding GPA calculations. Refer to Slippery Rock University Graduate Admissions for policies and procedures regarding international students.

Admission Requirements

- Completion of a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in any field of study or successful completion of a Slippery Rock University 3+2 Pre-PA Concentration
- Successful completion of all prerequisite courses
- A “C” or better in all prerequisite biology and chemistry courses
- Post-secondary education cumulative, prerequisite, and science (biology and chemistry courses only) grade-point averages (GPAs) of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.
- Official transcripts from any college or university where credits have been earned
- One-hundred (100) hours or more of community service/service learning satisfied through any type of purposeful VOLUNTEER activity or event done that benefits the community. These hours must be completed prior to submission of application.
- Forty (40) hours or more of clinical experience, exposure, or shadowing. Of these hours, at least 16 must be with at least two different practicing Physician Assistants in at least two different areas of medicine. You will be asked to record these hours on your application. These hours must be completed prior to submission of application.
- List at least 2 references on your application. It is highly recommended that at least one of your references be a practicing Physician Assistant. CASPA allows up to 5 references.
- Submission of an essay on why you want to be a Physician Assistant (5000 character limit = approx. 625 words. Characters include spaces, carriage returns, numbers, letters, etc.). This will be asked for on your CASPA application.
- A successful interview. If you have a competitive application, you will be invited for an interview.

Course Prerequisites – Standardized Requirements

- A general biology course with lab (3-4 credits)
- Anatomy and Physiology I with lab (3-4 credits); must have taken within the past 10 years
  - Exceptions for >10 years granted upon request and approval for those working in healthcare
- Anatomy and Physiology II with lab (3-4 credits); must have taken within the past 10 years
  - Exceptions for >10 years granted upon request and approval for those working in healthcare
- A genetics course (3-4 credits; lab recommended, but not required)
- Microbiology with lab (3-4 credits)
- Highly Recommended: one upper-level biology or biochemistry course with or without lab in addition to the required biology courses listed above.
- General Chemistry I with lab (3-4 credits)
- General Chemistry II with lab (3-4 credits)
- Organic Chemistry I (3-4 credits; lab recommended, but not required)
- An inferential statistics course (3 credits; any statistics course with inferential statistics embedded)
- A psychology course (3 credits; introductory, developmental, or abnormal psychology)
- A college writing or composition course (3 credits)
- A college literature course (3 credits)
• A medical terminology course (1 credit); must have taken within the past 10 years (exceptions for >10 years granted upon request and approval for those working in healthcare)

Course Prerequisites – Seat Preference Requirements for SRU Students and Graduates
If you are a Slippery Rock University student and want to be considered for seat preference, you must take all your prerequisite courses at SRU. The following is a list of the prerequisite courses you must take at SRU:
• BIOL 104: Principles of Biology/Lab (4 credits)
• BIOL 216: Anatomy and Physiology I/Lab (3 credits)
• BIOL 217: Anatomy and Physiology II/Lab (3 credits)
• BIOL 250: Genetics/Lab (4 credits)
• BIOL 210: Medical Microbiology/Lab (3 credits) OR BIOL 330: Microbiology/Lab (3 credits)
• CHEM 107: General Chemistry I (3 credits)
• CHEM 111: General Chemistry I (1 credit)
• CHEM 108: General Chemistry II (3 credits)
• CHEM 112: General Chemistry II Lab (1 credit)
• CHEM 201: Organic Chemistry I (3 credits)
• An Inferential Statistics Course: You may take any statistics course with inferential statistics embedded. You may need prerequisite courses to get into these courses. SRU’s statistic courses with inferential statistics embedded are listed below:
  o BIOL 325: Biometry with Lab (3 credits)
  o ECON 219: Business Statistics (3 credits)
  o MATH 152: Elementary Statistics I (3 credits)
  o MATH 153: Elementary Statistics II (3 credits)
  o MATH 352: Mathematical Statistics I (3 credits)
  o MATH 353: Mathematical Statistics II (3 credits)
  o MGMT 219: Business Statistics (3 credits)
  o PSYC 221: Introduction to Behavioral Statistics (3 credits)
  o PSYC 421: Advanced Behavioral Statistics (3 credits)
• PSYC 105: Introduction to Psychology (3 credits – can substitute abnormal or developmental)
• ENGL 102: Critical Writing (3 credits)
• ENGL 104: Critical Reading (3 credits)
• ERS 250: Medical Terminology (3 credits) or PA Medical Terminology for PAs
• Highly Recommended, but not required: one upper-level biology course or biochemistry with or without lab in addition to the required biology courses listed above. You may need prerequisite courses to get into these courses. Suggested Slippery Rock University upper-level biology courses and the biochemistry course are listed below. Some of these courses are only offered during the summer. Some are only offered off campus.
  o BIOL 213: Medical Immunology with Lab (1 credit)
  o BIOL 214: Medical Parasitology with Lab (1 credit)
  o BIOL 215: Medical Mycology with Lab (1 credit)
  o BIOL 300: Social and Ethical Issues in Genetics (3 credits)
  o BIOL 307: Vertebrate Ecology with Lab (3 credits)
  o BIOL 335: Cell Biology with Lab (3 credits)
  o BIOL 340: Vertebrate Anatomy with Lab (3 credits)
  o BIOL 343: Embryology with Lab (3 credits)
- BIOL 370: Molecular Biology with Lab (3 credits)
- BIOL 400: Disease Ecology (3 credits)
- BIOL 405: Animal Physiological Ecology with Lab (4 credits)
- BIOL 410: Animal Physiology with Lab (3 credits)
- BIOL 412: Population Biology (3 credits)
- BIOL 430: Pathogenic Microbiology with Lab (3 credits)
- BIOL 470: Histology with Lab (3 credits)
- CHEM 335: Biochemistry (3 credits)
- CHEM 336: Biochemistry Lab (1 credit)

**Recommended, but not required**: CHEM 211: Organic Chemistry I Lab (1 credit)

### Course Prerequisites – Notes

- Be aware, you may have to meet certain requirements to get into a prerequisite course, such as taking another course first and earning a certain grade in it.
- All prerequisite courses must be completed from an accredited institution.
- Applicants can apply to SRU’s PA Program with outstanding prerequisite courses if there is a feasible plan in place to finish all prerequisite courses before class begins. This will not impede the admissions review process. Your plan can be delineated on the CASPA application in the supplemental PA Program questions where you are given the opportunity to provide additional information you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application. Contingent seats can be offered. If an applicant does not successfully complete prerequisites prior to the start of classes, applicant’s seat in the program will be automatically forfeited.
- Applicants just under 3.00 who are still completing a bachelor degree, completing prerequisite courses, or repeating courses will still be considered for the Program. This will not impede the admission’s review process. Your plan can be delineated on the CASPA application in the supplemental PA Program questions where you are given the opportunity to provide additional information you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application. Contingent seats can be offered to such applicants. If an applicant does not successfully meet minimum GPAs prior to the start of classes, applicant’s seat in the program will be automatically forfeited.
- Prerequisite courses are not waived if you have a college degree.
- A combination survey course that includes organic chemistry does not meet the prerequisite requirement for organic chemistry. All applicants are required to take 3-4 credits of organic chemistry I with or without a lab.
- Applicants are required to have taken A&P I, A&P II and medical terminology within the past 10 years, unless applicant works in healthcare.
- Credit by Examination (AP, DSST, CLEP, etc.) or College in High School credits can be used to satisfy prerequisite requirements; however, Credit by Examination and College in High School credits will not be used to calculate your GPA admission requirements. This means other courses will carry more weight when calculating your GPAs.
- Prerequisite online courses, including lab component, offered through an accredited institution are acceptable.
- The following prerequisite courses require a lab to meet our PA Program prerequisite requirements:
  - General Biology with a Lab
  - Anatomy and Physiology I with a Lab
  - Anatomy and Physiology II with a Lab
  - Microbiology with a Lab
Prior Work Experience Requirements
No work experience is required; however, work experience in healthcare can strengthen an application.

Standardized Testing Requirements
There are NO standardized testing requirements (GRE, MCAT or other standardized tests), but if you have taken a standardized test(s), you may be requested by the Program to provide test results on the CASPA application.

Technical Standards Requirements
The technical standards for Slippery Rock University’s Physician Assistant (PA) Program have been established to ensure that students have the ability to demonstrate academic mastery, competency when performing clinical skills, and ability to communicate clinical information in sound physical and mental capacities. These technical standards are intended to ensure that each student has the academic, physical and behavioral ability to acquire competencies, as defined by the National Commission on Accreditation of Physician Assistants (NCCPA), the Accreditation Review Commission for Education of the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) and the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA). The Slippery Rock University’s PA Program technical standards are consistent with and modeled after the technical standards set forth by the Accreditation Council of Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). These technical standards are required for admission and must be maintained throughout a student’s progress through the Physician Assistant Program. In the event that a matriculated student is unable to fulfill the technical standards, with or without reasonable accommodations, the student may be counseled to pursue alternate careers.

All students must be able to independently meet the following technical standards:

- **General Abilities**
  - A functional sense of vision, touch, hearing, taste and smell in order to integrate, analyze and synthesize data in a consistent and accurate manner
  - Perceives pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, equilibrium and movement

- **Observational Abilities**
  - Observe dissected cadavers and specimens
  - Observe microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states through microscopic study
  - Observe demonstrations, exercises and patients accurately at a distance and close-up
  - Observe non-verbal as well as verbal signals
  - Use of observation to obtain a medical history and perform a complete physical examination in order to integrate findings and develop an appropriate diagnosis(es) and treatment plan

- **Communication Abilities**
  - Speak intelligently
  - Hear sufficiently
  - Interpret non-verbal and verbal aspects of communication
  - Effectively and efficiently elicit and transmit patient information in oral and written English to members of a healthcare team
- Describe changes in mood, activity and posture
- Communicate effectively, efficiently and sensitively with patients and their families
- Read at a level sufficient to accomplish curricular requirements and provide clinical care for patients
- Write or type appropriate medical documents according to protocol in a thorough and timely manner, accurately and clearly

**Sensory and Motor Abilities**
- Possess gross and fine motor skills sufficient to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation and other basic diagnostic procedures, maneuvers and examinations
- Execute motor movements reasonably required to provide basic medical care, such as airway management, placement of catheters, suturing, phlebotomy, application of sufficient pressure to control bleeding, simple obstetrical maneuvers and extended standing and retraction in surgery
- Respond to emergency situations in a timely manner
- Provide general and emergency care
- Adhere to universal precaution measures
- Meet safety standards applicable to inpatient and outpatient settings and other clinical activities

**Critical Thinking Abilities**
- Assimilate detailed and complex information presented in the curriculum
- Learn through a variety of modalities, such as classroom instruction, small group, team and collaborative activities, individual study, report preparation and presentation, computer technology, active learning, clinical experiences and interprofessional activities
- Independently access and interpret medical histories and files
- Identify significant findings from history, physical examination and laboratory data
- Provide a reasoned explanation for likely diagnoses, prescribed medications and therapy
- Recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner and see the relationship between this retained information and its application in clinical practice
- Memorize, measure, calculate, reason, analyze and synthesize
- Incorporate new information from peers, teachers and medical literature in formulating diagnoses and plans

**Behavioral and Social Attributes**
- Possess maturity and emotional stability
- Accept responsibility for learning
- Understand the legal and ethical aspects of medical practice
- Function within the law and ethical standards of the medical profession
- Possess ability to use intellectual capacity, exercise good judgment and promptly complete responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, sometimes under potentially stressful circumstances, emergency situations and extended hours
- Develop empathic, sensitive, professional and effective relationships with patients
- Work effectively, respectfully and professionally as part of a healthcare team
- Exhibit flexibility and adaptability to changing environments and learn in the face of uncertainties inherent to the practice of medicine
- Contribute to collaborative and constructive learning environments, making appropriate positive changes
- Accept constructive feedback and respond to supervision appropriately
- Act within the appropriate scope of practice

Applicants should possess, at minimum, with or without the help of compensatory techniques and/or assistive devices, the following abilities, demonstrating proficiency of and attesting to these abilities prior to matriculation into the Program if asked.

- **Manual Dexterity** of wrists, hands, fingers and arms
  - Ability to grasp, palpate, pinch, hold and percuss
  - Ability to lift, pull, push, rotate and twist
  - Ability to cut
  - Ability to measure
  - Ability to use sterile technique
  - Ability to use universal precaution methods
  - Ability to operate and maintain equipment (ventilators, monitors, defibrillators, etc.)

- **Sensation** to allow for palpation, auscultation, percussion, vision and smell

- **Physical Strength**
  - Ability to support another person
  - Ability to position another person
  - Ability to transition from/to walker, cane, crutches, bed, chair and gurney
  - Ability to provide motion exercises
  - Ability to stand for long periods of time
  - Ability to perform CPR/resuscitation

- **Other Abilities**
  - Ability to be poised and self-confident
  - Ability to read, write, understand and communicate proficiently and effectively in the English language
  - Ability to remain calm during emergency situations
  - Ability to meet and deal with people of differing backgrounds and behavioral patterns
  - Ability to display and maintain mental and emotional stability
  - Be free from any active diseases that are infectious and may be spread by routine means, such as handshakes, skin contact or breathing

If applicant states inability to meet all the technical standards without accommodation, Slippery Rock University will determine whether the student can meet the technical standards with reasonable accommodation. This includes a review of whether the accommodations requested are reasonable, taking into account whether the accommodation would jeopardize patient safety or the educational process of the student or the institution, including all coursework, practicums, and clerkships deemed essential to graduate. Students with documented disabilities who wish to request academic accommodations should contact Carla Hrdisky-Coffelt, Interim Director of Office for Students with Disabilities, at 724.738.4877. [Click here](#) for the Office for Students with Disabilities website.

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**Apply to the Program**

All applicants must apply through the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) for the June start. [Click here](#) to find the application. The application will be available April and must be completed and submitted to CASPA by December 1st (unless otherwise noted.
on our website) to apply to the Program for the upcoming year. New cohorts will start every summer. Click here for CASPA application instructions. All applications will be reviewed by the PA Program Admissions Committee. Competitive applicants will be offered an interview. All interviewed candidates will be notified in writing of the Admissions Committee’s decision within a few weeks of the interview if they are accepted, waitlisted or denied.

**NOTE to SRU 3+2 Pre-PA Concentration (accelerated option) Applicants:**
You should apply to the Program before Registration Week (usually in November) of your junior year to be considered for accelerated acceptance. Those who do not apply in a timely fashion may need to decelerate to the 4+2 option, complete their senior year of study in their undergraduate major and apply to the PA Program their Senior year.

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**Special Requests**
The Program will consider special requests for this application cycle, given it has gone through modifications during the development of the Program. If you have any special requests you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application, you will have the opportunity to make such requests in the "Program Questions" section of the CASPA application under the "Opportunity to Explain" program supplemental question section.

**Supplemental Application**
At this time, there IS NO supplemental application, but you will be asked to answer additional questions on the CASPA application.

**The Interview**
In addition to satisfactorily meeting standard admission and course prerequisite requirements, applicants must be interviewed before they are accepted in the Program. Approximately 150 of the most qualified applicants will be invited for a personal interview. From this group, a class of 52 will be selected. During the interview, evidence of academic potential, knowledge of the healthcare system, motivation, maturity, self-assurance, empathy, compassion, passion to improve quality of life for special needs populations, interpersonal skills and potential to achieve a career as a PA will weigh strongly in the admission decision.

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**Accepted Applicants**

**Admission Notification**
All applicants will be notified if accepted, waitlisted or denied. Accepted candidates will be notified in writing of the Admissions Committee’s decision within two weeks of the interview and have two weeks to submit a nonrefundable seat deposit of $500 to hold a seat in the program. The entire deposit will go towards tuition.

**Conditional Acceptance**
Students and graduates can be accepted conditionally if all requirements have not been met, but all requirements must be met before the first day of class. Failure to do so will result in automatic forfeiture of seat in Program.
Notes to Accepted Applicants

• A seat deposit is due 10 days after receiving acceptance letter.
• If offered a seat in the Program, all admission and course prerequisite requirements must be met prior to start of the Program. Failure to do so can result in automatic seat forfeiture.
• If offered a seat in the Program, additional evidence of completed clinical experience and/or exposure may be required. Inability to complete clinical experience and/or exposure to do so can result in automatic seat forfeiture. Forty (40) hours or more of clinical experience and/or exposure are required. Of these hours, at least 16 must be completed with at least 2 different PAs in at least 2 different areas of medicine. At minimum, for each clinical experience or exposure, the following information is needed: facility name, phone and address; type of facility setting; date(s); hours; description of clinical experience or exposure; and supervisor’s dated signature and contact information. The Program provides a form to help record hours if completed after CASPA application is complete. Hours should be completed before applying to the Program.
• If offered a seat in the Program, a level 1 background check is required prior to the start of the Program. Failure to do so can result in automatic seat forfeiture. A positive background check that does not match what was recorded on application can result in automatic seat forfeiture. Applicant is responsible for associated costs. Details will be provided in the acceptance letter.
• If offered a seat in the Program, a child abuse clearance is required prior to the start of the Program. Failure to do so can result in automatic seat forfeiture. Applicant is responsible for associated costs. Details will be provided in the acceptance letter.
• If offered a seat in the Program, a physical examination, immunizations and/or titers, TB testing and completion of a health history form are required before classes start. Requirements will be based on CDC guidelines for healthcare workers at the time of admission. Failure to provide complete health records and immunization forms to the program prior to the start of classes can result in automatic seat forfeiture. Under no circumstance will students be permitted to participate in clinical experiences without clearances. This can have a significant impact on course grades associated with clinical experiences and ultimately, led to dismissal from the Program. Applicant is responsible for the associated costs. Details will be provided.
• If offered a seat in the Program, proof of personal health insurance throughout the entire program is required. Details will be provided.
• If offered a seat in the Program, proof of personal liability insurance throughout the entire program is required. Details will be provided.
• Full acceptance will occur after all requirements are met satisfactorily.

Waitlist
The Admissions Committee may offer interviewed applicants a spot on the waitlist. Waitlisted candidates are ranked. There is no deposit to be placed on the waitlist. Available seats in the Program are offered to the highest ranked candidate on the waitlist until all seats have been filled, up to and including the first day of class.

Entering Class Profiles
The average demographics for the entering class, graduating class of 2019 are as follows:
• Gender: 22% male; 78% female
• Average SRU: 31%; other 69%
• Average pre-requisite GPA: 3.68
• Average age: 23.83 years
• State of residence: 73% Pennsylvania residents—12 other states represented OH, NY, MD, IL, VA, HI, AL, DC, DE, RI, MI, FL)
Majors: 26% biology majors 20% exercise science, others include: athletic training, public health, health sciences, engineering, etc.

Academic Performance, Progression and Graduation

Academic Standards
All completed courses will be graded on a letter grade basis of A, B, C, D or F. Passing grades are considered a “C” or better. All courses must be passed to graduate. If a student earns a “D” in a course, student can repeat the course once with approval from advisor and Program Director. Repeating a course can result in deceleration, as some courses can only be offered once a year. Student can have a maximum of two repeats across the curriculum. Repeated course grades will be used for GPA calculations. A third “D” across the curriculum, a second “D” in the same course, or an “F” automatically dismisses student from the program.

Degree candidates must have a 3.000 or better cumulative GPA on a 4.000 scale or all graduate courses attempted at Slippery Rock University to graduate. Failure to maintain a 3.000 or better cumulative GPA at the end of any semester will result in probation/ remediation (first incidence), suspension/ deceleration (second incidence) or dismissal (third incidence) from the program.

Student has one month after notification of suspension or dismissal to submit a written petition to Program Director and academic dean to request readmission. If readmission is granted for a suspended student, student will decelerate one year and will be required to meet readmission criteria as set forth in a contract designed by the program’s admissions committee to specifically give student best possibility of success. If readmission is granted for a dismissed student, student will restart the program with a clean slate. Student may request only one suspension readmission and only one dismissal readmission.

Students wishing to be readmitted after suspension or dismissal must make a written petition to Program Director and academic dean for readmission within one month of suspension or dismissal notification. Readmitted students are responsible for meeting all academic requirements in effect at the time they are readmitted, not at the time they were originally admitted to the university.

Click here for university information on “Grading System” and “Probation and Suspension.”

Completion Deadlines and Requirements
Student must successfully complete all PA Program courses within the university six-year statute of limitations. Student must successfully complete all PA Program PA Program courses (111.5 credits) to earn a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies degree.

A student can request in writing to the Program Director and academic dean a one-year leave of absence from the program. The readmissions committee will determine criteria for student to return. Click here for university information on “Statute of Limitations.”
Progression Standards
Normal progression occurs over 24 continuous months; summer, fall and spring semesters. Student must earn a PA Program 3.000 GPA on a 4.000 scale and a “C” or better in all PA Program courses to progress. See “Academic Standards” above. Student must successfully complete each academic semester before matriculating to the next academic semester. Student must successfully complete the academic year before matriculating to the clinical year.

Core Competencies for Academic Progress and Graduation
Between 2003-2004, the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) led an effort with three other national PA organizations (Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA), American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), and Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) -- formerly Association of Physician Assistant Programs (APAP)) to define PA competencies in response to similar efforts conducted within other health care professions and the growing demand for accountability and assessment in clinical practice. The Slippery Rock University’s PA Program core competencies are based on their model. Some of these competencies will be acquired during your formal PA education and training, while others will be developed and mastered as you become a seasoned practitioner in the art of medicine. The PA profession defines the specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and educational experiences requisite for physician assistants to acquire and demonstrate these competencies. The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical practice settings. Professional competencies for physician assistants include the effective and appropriate application of medical knowledge, interpersonal and communication skills, patient care, professionalism, practice-based learning and improvement and systems-based practice. Patient-centered, physician assistant practice reflects a number of overarching themes. These include an unwavering commitment to patient safety, cultural competence, quality health care, lifelong learning and professional growth. Furthermore, the profession’s dedication to the physician-physician assistant team benefits patients and the larger community.

The Slippery Rock University’s Physician Assistant Program core competencies follow:

Medical Knowledge
Medical knowledge includes an understanding of pathophysiology, patient presentation, differential diagnoses, patient management, surgical principles, health promotion and disease prevention. Physician Assistants (PA’s) must demonstrate core knowledge about established, evolving biomedical and clinical sciences and the application of this knowledge to patient care in their areas of practice. In addition, PA’s are expected to demonstrate an investigatory and analytic thinking approach to clinical situations. Upon completing the Slippery Rock University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program, graduates are expected to:

• evaluate etiologies, risk factors, underlying pathologic process and epidemiology for medical conditions;
• identify signs and symptoms of medical conditions;
• select and interpret appropriate diagnostic or lab studies;
• manage general medical and surgical conditions to include understanding indications, contraindications, side effects, interactions and adverse reactions of pharmacologic agents and other relevant treatment modalities;
• identify the appropriate site of care for presenting conditions, including identifying emergent
cases and those requiring referral or admission;
• identify appropriate interventions for prevention of conditions;
• identify the appropriate methods to detect conditions in an asymptomatic individual;
• differentiate between normal and abnormal anatomic, physiological, laboratory findings and other diagnostic data;
• appropriately use history and physical exam findings and diagnostic studies to formulate a working differential diagnoses; and
• provide appropriate care to patients with chronic conditions.

Interpersonal and Communication Skills
Interpersonal and communication skills encompass verbal, nonverbal and written exchange of information. PA’s must demonstrate interpersonal and communication skills that result in effective information exchange with patients, their patients’ families, physicians, professional associates and the healthcare system. Upon completing the Slippery Rock University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program, graduates are expected to:
• use effective listening, nonverbal, explanatory, questioning and writing skills to elicit and provide information;
• appropriately adapt communication style and messages to context of individual patient interaction;
• work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals as a member or leader of a health care team or other professional group;
• apply an understanding of human behavior;
• demonstrate emotional resilience and stability, adaptability, flexibility and tolerance of ambiguity and anxiety;
• accurately and adequately document and record information regarding care processes for medical, legal, quality and financial purposes;
• manage and coordinate patient care between multiple providers, disciplines and health systems; and
• demonstrate competency skills in the utilization of electronic health record systems.

Patient Care
Patient care includes age-appropriate assessment, evaluation and management. PA’s must demonstrate care that is effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient and equitable for the treatment of health problems and the promotion of wellness. Upon completing the Slippery Rock University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program, graduates are expected to:
• work effectively with physicians and other health care professionals to provide patient-centered care;
• demonstrate caring and respectful behaviors when interacting with patients and their families;
• gather essential and accurate information about patients;
• make informed decisions about diagnostic and therapeutic interventions based on patient information and preferences, up-to-date scientific evidence and clinical judgment;
• develop and carry out patient management plans;
• counsel and educate patients and their families;
• competently perform medical and surgical procedures considered essential in the area of practice; and
• provide healthcare services and education aimed at preventing health problems or maintaining health.
**Professionalism**

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals as care is delivered. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one’s own. PA’s must know their professional and personal limitations. Professionalism also requires that PA’s practice without impairment from substance abuse, cognitive deficiency or mental illness. PA’s must demonstrate a high level of responsibility, ethical practice and sensitivity to a diverse patient population and adherence to legal and regulatory requirements. Upon completing the Slippery Rock University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program, graduates are expected to demonstrate:

- understanding of legal and regulatory requirements, as well as the appropriate role of the PA;
- professional relationships with physician supervisors and other health care providers;
- respect, compassion and integrity;
- commitment to ethical principles pertaining to provision or withholding of clinical care, confidentiality of patient information, informed consent and business practices;
- sensitivity and responsiveness to a patient’s culture, age, gender or disability; and
- self-reflection, critical curiosity and initiative.

**Practice-Based Learning and Improvement**

Practice-Based learning and improvement includes the processes through which clinicians engage in critical analysis of their own practice experience, medical literature and other information resources for the purpose of self-improvement. PA’s must be able to assess, evaluate and improve their patient care practices. Upon completing the Slippery Rock University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program, graduates are expected to:

- locate, appraise and integrate evidence from scientific studies related to their patients’ health problems;
- apply knowledge of study designs and statistical methods to the appraisal of clinical studies and other information on diagnostic and therapeutic effectiveness; and
- apply information technology to manage information, access online medical information and support their curricular activities as life-long learners.

**Systems-Based Practice**

Systems-Based practice encompasses the societal, organizational and economic environments in which health care is delivered. PA’s must demonstrate an awareness of and responsiveness to the larger system of health care to provide patient care that is of optimal value. PA’s should work to improve the larger health care system of which their practices are a part. Upon completing the Slippery Rock University Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies Program, graduates are expected to:

- use information technology to support patient care decisions and patient education;
- interact effectively with different types of medical practices and delivery systems;
- understand funding sources and payment systems that provide coverage for patient care;
- advocate for quality patient care and assist patients in dealing with system complexities; and
- apply medical information and clinical data systems to provide more effective, efficient patient care.

**Graduation Requirements**

- Complete all PA Program courses, practicums and clerkships (a total of 116 credits) with a grade of “C” or better (a course may be repeated once, as approved, if a grade below a “C”
was earned; students are limited to a maximum of 2 repeats across the PA curriculum; course repeats may result in student deceleration).

- Earn a cumulative PA Program GPA of 3.000 or better (if a course is approved for repeat, the most recent grade, regardless of whether it is higher or lower, will be used to calculate the cumulative PA Program GPA)
- Be in good academic standing
- Be in good professional standing
- Successful passage of a summative experience and final evaluation at end of Program
- Recommendation for graduation by the program, the department and the university
- Satisfaction of all financial obligations to Slippery Rock University
- All courses offered in the curriculum are required and all of these courses and requirements must be successfully completed (as detailed above) in order to meet eligibility for graduation
- All requirements must be completed within a six-year period commencing with the first graduate course taken at SRU. Requests for extension will be considered on a case-by-case basis only through special request with an absolute statute of limitations of ten years with Dean approval.
- Completion of formal application to graduate sent to the Office of Academic Records and Summer School by March 1 for spring graduation.
- It is student’s responsibility to complete all degree/certificate requirements and to know the university’s requirements for graduation.

Degree Awarded
Students graduating from Slippery Rock University’s Physician Assistant Program will be awarded a Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) degree.

Student Grievances Policies and Procedures
Click here for university information on “Academic complaints” and “Grade Appeal Policy.”

Withdrawal and Dismissal Policies and Procedures
Click here for university information on “Drop, Add, Withdrawal.” Click here for university information on “Withdrawal from University.” See “Academic Standards” above for dismissal policy.

Remediation and Deceleration Policies and Procedures
Remediation
The program curriculum is rigorous and requires a full commitment from both students and faculty. It is important to the program that all students be successful. As such, the program will use an “Early Academic Alert System” to recognize students who could potentially be at academic risk. The following will be implemented:

- Advisors and evaluators are to notify the Program Director of students who exhibit signs of academic risk ASAP.
- Academic progress of all students will be reviewed at weekly faculty meetings.
- Students are encouraged to speak to advisors, instructors or Program Director if feeling overwhelmed or concerned about their academic progress.
- At minimum, two regular advisor sessions will be scheduled during each semester. Student academic monitoring forms will be used at advising sessions and maintained in student files.
- Early intervention/remediation/referrals will be implemented as needed.
- A student with an exam or evaluation score below 80% will be required to conduct a self-
analysis, complete a self-analysis form, meet with their instructor or a designated proxy and
develop a remediation plan of action, which can include intervention, within 48 hours after
grades have been released. Intervention can include such things as peer group tutoring; one-
on-one peer tutoring; tutoring from individuals within the PA profession; a recommended
change in test-taking methods or study habits; periodic meetings with instructor or
designated proxy, Program Director and/or advisor; review sessions with course instructors
or coordinators; additional assignments; mandatory study sessions and/or meeting with the
Office of Disability, Counseling Services and/or Academic Support Services – all aimed at
couraging and supporting student success.

During the clinical year, a student with a PAEA “End of Rotation” exam score below 1
standard deviation of the national average will be required to conduct a self-analysis,
complete a self-analysis form and meet with their advisor or a designated proxy to review
and discuss their “End of Rotation” exam results and to develop a remediation plan of action.
This should occur within 48 hours after scores have been released. The remediation plan of
action will be specific to the needs of a student and based on how best to help student be
successful after review of “End of Rotation” exam outcomes. Student must retake a program
generated end of rotation exam and earn a grade of 70% or better. Failure to do so will result
in failure of the rotation. If this is student’s first grade below a “C,” student can repeat the
rotation at a time so approved by the student’s advisor, the clinical team and the Program
Director. If this is student’s second grade below a “C,” student will be dismissed from the
program. If student earns a 70% or better on the retake, student will earn a “C” on the
retake, regardless. The retake exam will be scheduled at a time convenient for student and
advisor or designation proxy.

The program will implement intervention and mentorship as soon as academic risk is identified to
help promote academic success and completion of the program. Self-analysis will be encouraged
for students earning an 80-90% exam or evaluative score. If a student is not required to but
wants to conduct a self-analysis for personal enrichment, they can make an appointment with
the department secretary to review an exam or evaluation and/or make an appointment with the
instructor or designated proxy to review/discuss an exam or evaluation.

**Deceleration**

Students who fail to meet academic standards may be subject to academic deceleration,
including academic probation, suspension or dismissal. Reasons for deceleration include failure to
maintain a cumulative GPA above 3.000 at the end of any semester, course failure (grade below
a “C”) and lapse in professionalism. Decelerated students will be required to sign a
Learning Contract and develop an Academic Improvement Plan of Action if given the
opportunity to remain in or return to the program. These will be student specific and based on
circumstances that led to deceleration, as well as the needs of the student.

**Learning Contract**

A Learning Contract is used when a student fails to meet expected academic or professional
standards. It describes how student has failed to meet expected standards, stipulates
expectations and conditions to remain in and/or graduate from the program and recommends
steps that should be taken to remediate a deficiency or improve performance. This is
implemented by the Program Director with recommendations from advisor, instructors and
faculty. Student and Program Director will sign the document. Failure to comply with the
conditions established in a Learning Contract constitutes grounds for further disciplinary
action, including dismissal from the program.
**Academic Improvement Plan of Action**
The Academic Improvement Plan of Action delineates steps a student should take to facilitate success. An Academic Improvement Plan of Action can include such things as peer group tutoring; one-on-one peer tutoring; tutoring from individuals within the PA profession; a recommended change in test-taking methods or study habits; periodic meetings with instructor or designated proxy, Program Director and/or advisor; review sessions with course instructors or coordinators; additional assignments; mandatory study sessions and/or meeting with the Office of Disability, Counseling Services and/or Academic Support Services—all aimed at encouraging and supporting student success. This can be implemented by advisor, instructors, faculty or the Program Director as needed and will be signed by person who initiates the plan, student and Program Director.

**Academic Probation**
Any student with a GPA below a 3.000 (first offense any semester, including summer) will be put on academic probation. A second offense will result in suspension and a third offense will result in dismissal from the program. Any student receiving a “D” (first offense) will be put on academic probation. A second offense in a different course will result in suspension and a third offense in a different course or a second offense in the same course will result in dismissal from the program. Any student receiving a grade lower than a “D” will be dismissed from the program. Student will be informed of academic probation in writing. Student will complete a Learning Contract and an Academic Improvement Plan of Action.

**Suspension**
Any student with a GPA below a 3.000 (second offense any semester, including summer) will be put placed on academic suspension. A third offense will result in dismissal from the program. Any student receiving a “D” (second offense in different course) will be put on academic suspension. A third offense in a different course or a second offense in the same course will result in dismissal from the program. Any student receiving a grade lower than a “D” will be dismissed from the program. Other reasons for suspension include: a breach of professionalism, a violation of the Code of Ethics, a breach in academic integrity, a violation of the Student Code of Conduct as defined by the university and being dismissed from a clinical rotation for any reason. Student will be informed of suspension in writing. Student has one month after notification of suspension to submit a written petition to Program Director and academic dean to request readmission. If readmission is granted for a suspended student, student will decelerate one year and will be required to meet readmission criteria as set forth in the Learning Contract, designed by the program’s Admissions Committee, to specifically give student best possibility of success. Student will complete an Academic Improvement Plan of Action if student was suspended for academic reasons. Student may request only one suspension readmission.

**Dismissal**
Any student with a GPA below a 3.000 (third offense any semester, including summer; or final semester) will be dismissed from the program. Any student receiving a “D” (third offense in a different course or second offense in the same course) will be dismissed from the program. Any student receiving a grade lower than a “D” will be dismissed from the program. Student will be informed of dismissal in writing. Other reasons for dismissal include: failure to meet conditions established in a Learning Contract or a serious lapse in professionalism or integrity. Student has one month after notification of dismissal to submit a written petition to Program Director and academic dean to request readmission. If readmission is granted for a dismissed student, student will decelerate one year and will be required to meet readmission
criteria as set forth in the Learning Contract, designed by the program’s Admissions Committee, to specifically give student best possibility of success. Student will complete an Academic Improvement Plan of Action if student was dismissed for academic reasons. Student may request only one dismissal readmission.

Readmitted students are responsible for meeting all academic requirements in effect at the time they are readmitted, not at the time they were originally admitted to the university. Signed Learning Contracts and Academic Improvement Plans of Action will be distributed as follows: one copy to the student, one copy to the dean and the original will be placed in the student’s file.

See “Academic Standards” and “Completion Deadlines and Requirements” above for more information on deceleration policies, procedures and options. Program policy, if more stringent than university policy, supersedes university policy.

Harassment Policies and Procedures
Click here for university information on “Discrimination and Harassment Policy,” “Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault Policy” and Title IX information found under “Title IX Coordinator.”

Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) Results

PANCE First-Time Test-Taker Results
Slippery Rock University’s PA Program intends to be fully compliant with Fair Practices regarding reporting of first-time pass rates on the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE). We will report in whole the most recent five-year, NCCPA published, first-time graduate performance results in a timely manner, as results are released to us from NCCPA.

Since our program has not yet graduated its first class (inaugural class began May 2016 and will graduate May 2018), we have no data to currently report. Please check back after May 2018 when our inaugural class graduates and results are released.
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Application/Admission Questions

Does the Program give preference to a particular bachelor degree?
NO. The Program does not give preference to a particular bachelor degree. The requirement is to graduate with a bachelor degree; however, it is important to note you must meet the minimum standards in regards to GPA, prerequisites, community service/service learning hours and clinical exposure/experience hours, no matter your field of study.

Can I repeat courses and still apply to your PA Program? If I do, which grade will you count towards my GPA(s)?
YES. You can repeat courses and still apply to the PA Program. The Program understands extenuating circumstances occur. If you retake a course, your best grade will be used to calculate your GPA(s). You have the opportunity to explain on the CASPA application why you repeated courses when asked to “Please provide any additional information you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application.”

PLEASE TAKE NOTE: If you are in one of the 3+2 SRU accelerated Pre-PA majors (biology, psychology, exercise science or public health), retaking a course will result in automatic withdrawal from the accelerated option. You may continue in your plan of study by decelerating to a traditional bachelor degree plan, retake any course, and still apply to the PA Program during your senior year.

Will the Program consider my application if I have just under a 3.00 cumulative, prerequisite or science GPA?
YES. If you are just under a 3.00 cumulative, prerequisite or science GPA and STILL completing your bachelor degree, completing prerequisite courses, or repeating courses; the Program will still consider your application. Contingency seats will be offered to the most highly-qualified students with an understanding that failure to successfully complete all prerequisite and admission requirements prior to the start of the Program will result in automatic forfeiture of contingency seats. Your plan to meet the minimum 3.00 GPA requirements can be delineated on the CASPA application in the supplemental PA Program questions where you are given the opportunity to provide additional information you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application. Applicants should apply as soon as the application cycle opens, because acceptance is based on a rolling admissions process.

I am not earning my bachelor degree until spring. Can I submit my application to the Program before I graduate?
YES. You can apply to the PA Program before you earn a bachelor degree. Contingency seats will be offered to the most highly-qualified students with an understanding that failure to successfully
complete all prerequisite and admission requirements prior to the start of the Program will result in automatic forfeiture of contingency seats. Applicants should apply as soon as the application cycle opens, because acceptance is based on a rolling admissions process.

**Can I submit my application to the Program before I complete all prerequisite courses?**
YES. You can apply to the Program before completion of all prerequisite courses, within reason. Contingency seats will be offered to the most highly-qualified students with an understanding that failure to successfully complete all prerequisite and admission requirements prior to the start of the Program will result in automatic forfeiture of contingency seats. Your plan to complete prerequisites can be delineated on the CASPA application in the supplemental PA Program questions where you are given the opportunity to provide additional information you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application. Applicants should apply as soon as the application cycle opens, because acceptance is based on a rolling admissions process.

**Is an essay required to apply to the Program?**
YES. An essay on why you want to be a Physician Assistant is required when you complete your CASPA application (5000 character limit = approx. 625 words. Characters include spaces, carriage returns, numbers, letters, etc.).

**How many references do I need to list on my application?**
You are required to provide at least 2 references on your application. It is highly recommended that at least one of these references be a practicing Physician Assistant. A recent supervisor or advisor would make a good second reference, as would another healthcare provider. You can submit more than 2 references, but are limited by the application to 5 references.

**I did not go to Slippery Rock University. Should I still apply to the Program?**
YES! Please apply to the Program even if you did not go to Slippery Rock University. The Program will strive to have diverse cohorts, comprised of traditional and nontraditional students, SRU and non-SRU graduates, veterans and non-veterans, and students that have graduated from an array of other universities across the region, state, nation and world.

**I graduated from college a long time ago. Should I still apply to the Program?**
YES! Please apply to the Program even if you graduated from college years ago. The Program will strive to have diverse cohorts. The only courses that need to have been taken within the past 10 years are A&P I, A&P II, and Medical Terminology, but if you have been working in a health-related field, we can still consider your application even if these courses have been taken greater than 10 years ago. Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis. If you would like special consideration, please ask us for such on your application when asked “Please provide any additional information you would like us to consider before we make a decision on your application.” You will still need to meet all other prerequisite and admission requirements.

**What does the admission committee look for in a competitive applicant?**
There is no one profile that constitutes a successful PA applicant. The following is a list of potential attributes that the admissions committee will expect in a successful applicant. You must only meet the minimal requirements for the Program to look at your application. Interview consideration will be given to those applicants with the strongest applications.

1. A successful academic record history as evidence by achievement at or above the required cumulative, prerequisite and science GPAs and at least a “C” in all prerequisite biology and chemistry courses – many applicants will have nothing lower than a “B” on their
2. Completion of at least the required 100 hours or more of volunteer community service or service learning satisfied through any type of purposeful VOLUNTEER activity or event done outside of the healthcare field that benefits the community – many applicants will surpass this amount.

3. Completion of at least the required 40 hours of clinical experience, exposure or shadowing (at least 16 of these hours must be with a least two different practicing Physician Assistants in at least two different areas of medicine) – many applicants will surpass this amount – some applicants will have hands-on or direct healthcare experience.

4. Participation in extracurricular activities.

5. Dynamic work-life experiences.

6. A rigorous undergraduate workload.

7. Employment or additional responsibilities as an undergraduate.

8. At least 2 good references, with at least one being from a practicing PA – many applicants will provide 3-4 references (up to 5 references permitted).

9. A good work ethic, maturity, empathy, compassion, motivation, ability to communicate, ability to accept constructive criticism, cultural sensitivity, good will, critical thinking skills and potential to achieve a career as a PA are attributes faculty look for in a competitive applicant.

10. Ability to meet technical standards.

11. A passion to improve quality of life for special needs populations.

**Can you review my transcripts, other application materials or my application before I apply to the Program to tell me what else I need?**

We are happy to answer specific questions, but unfortunately, we are not able to review transcripts, other application materials or your application before you apply, due to the high volume of applicants.

**Can you tell me what my chances are of being accepted to your program before I submit my application?**

The program cannot give you an idea of your chance of being accepted to the program before you apply. There are too many variables. Applications will only be reviewed by the Program after they are completed and verified by CASPA.

**Do all PA Programs require the same prerequisite and admission requirements?**

NO. PA Program prerequisite and admission criteria vary greatly from one PA Program to another. Make sure you carefully research any PA Program you are considering as early as your Freshman year to make sure you will be able to meet the criteria of the PA Programs you are interested in pursuing.

**Interview Questions**

**Is an interview required?**

YES. The admissions process requires an interview. The interview will be designed for you to get to know the Program and for the Program to get to know you. This program should be the right fit for you, as well as you being the right fit for the program. If you have a competitive application, you will be invited for an interview.

**If I am offered an interview, will it guarantee me a seat in the Program?**
NO. You are not guaranteed a seat in the Program if you are offered an interview, but you will know within approximately 2 weeks after the interview if you are offered a seat in the Program, waitlisted or denied.

**How long after the interview do I have to wait to know if I am accepted into the Program?**
You will receive an acceptance, waitlist or denial letter from the university approximately 2 weeks after your interview.

**I have a medical degree from another country. Am I granted an automatic interview and entry into the Program?**
NO. Completion of a medical degree will not be accepted in lieu of any programmatic requirements. A medical degree will not automatically grant you an interview or acceptance into the Program.

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**Slippery Rock University undergraduate PRE-PA CONCENTRATION Questions**

**Does Slippery Rock University have an undergraduate Pre-PA Concentration option?**
**YES. There are 2 Pre-PA Concentration options. You can declare only one of these at a time.**

1. **SRU 3+2 Pre-PA Concentration (accelerated option)**

   This option is not for everyone, but is ideal for academically strong students who enjoy learning at an accelerated pace and want to earn a bachelor’s and a master’s degree in 5 years. You apply to the PA Program junior year and if accepted, start the PA Program your senior year. Credits earned during senior year while in the PA Program will also apply toward your undergraduate degree. A bachelor’s degree is earned by the end of the first year in the PA Program. A master’s degree is earned at the end of your second year in the PA Program. Students who are not accepted into the PA Program junior year can complete their undergraduate degree senior year and have the option to reapply to the PA Program senior year. Students can decelerate from this option to the Pre-PA non-accelerated option at any time. Requirements and information for this option are listed below.
   a. You must declare this option at or before start of freshman year at SRU
   b. You must be a Biology, Psychology, Exercise Science or Public Health major at SRU
   c. You must take all prerequisite courses at SRU
   d. You must maintain progression standards (not meeting these standards disqualifies you from the 3+2 Pre-PA Concentration designation):
      - Earn a “C” or better in all prerequisite biology and chemistry courses
      - No prerequisite course withdrawals
      - No prerequisite course repeats
   e. You must complete required undergraduate course work over 3 continuous years
   f. You may decelerate to option 2 (listed below) at any time
   g. You must meet PA Program admission requirements:
      - Official transcripts from any college or university where credits have been earned submitted to Slippery Rock University
      - One-hundred (100) hours or more of community service/service learning satisfied through any type of purposeful VOLUNTEER activity or event that benefits the community. Hours must be completed prior to submission of application.
      - Forty (40) hours or more of clinical experience, exposure, or shadowing (at least 16 of these hours must be with at least 2 different PAs in at least 2 different areas of medicine). Hours must be completed prior to submission of application.
      - A 3.00 cumulative, prerequisite and science (biology and chemistry courses only) GPA
- Submission of a well written essay on why you want to be a Physician Assistant (5000 character limit = approx. 625 words. Characters include spaces, carriage returns, numbers, letters, etc.)
- Submission of at least 2 references (highly recommend at least one reference be from a practicing PA)
- A successful interview: Competitive applicants will be invited for an interview
h. Your application must be completed and submitted by October 31st of Junior year – failure to do so will result in the removal of the SRU 3+2 Pre-PA Concentration from your record
i. Highly-qualified applicants with timely submitted applications will be interviewed before fall registration
j. Competitive applicants with a successful interview will be offered a contingency seat in the Program before fall registration
k. A limited number of seats in PA Program will be saved for students enrolled in this option
l. Those not interviewed or offered a seat in the Program Junior year can declare the second option below, take classes Senior year to finish undergraduate degree (must take 12 credits to remain a full-time student), and reapply to PA Program Senior year
m. This option does not guarantee admission into the PA Program

2. Pre-PA Concentration (non-accelerated option)
   This option is for students who want a traditional undergraduate education. Reasons to pick this option instead of the accelerated option are: simultaneous employment and working on undergraduate degree, other responsibilities outside of school, student athlete, involved in many extracurricular activities, want to double major or minor, interested in major different from the 4 majors offered under accelerated option, not interested in accelerated option or would just like to enjoy 4 years of undergraduate education before going to graduate school. You apply to PA Program Senior year. A bachelor’s degree is earned Senior year. A master’s degree is earned at the end of second year in the PA Program. Requirements and information for this option are listed below.
   a. You must be enrolled at SRU
   b. You can declare this option at any time while enrolled at SRU
   c. You can declare any major at SRU
   d. You can take prerequisite courses at any university; however, to qualify for seat preference, you must take all prerequisite courses at SRU (you will still be eligible for point-award preference regardless)
   e. You can withdraw or repeat a course (you have opportunity to explain why you withdrew from or repeated a course on your application when asked to submit additional information you want us to consider before we make a decision on your application under supplemental program questions)
   f. You can take as many years as necessary to complete required coursework and earn your bachelor's degree (you will be given the opportunity to explain why it took more than 4 years to complete your bachelor’s degree on your application when asked to submit additional information you want us to consider before we make a decision on your application under supplemental program questions)
   g. You must meet PA Program admission requirements
      - A “C” or better in all prerequisite biology and chemistry courses
      - Official transcripts from any college or university where credits have been earned submitted to Slippery Rock University
      - One-hundred (100) hours or more of community service/service learning satisfied through any type of purposeful VOLUNTEER activity or event that benefits the community. Hours must be completed prior to submission of application.
- Forty (40) hours or more of clinical experience, exposure, or shadowing (at least 16 of these hours must be with at least 2 different PAs in at least 2 different areas of medicine). Hours must be completed prior to submission of application.
- A 3.00 cumulative, prerequisite and science (biology and chemistry courses only) GPA
- Submission of a well written essay on why you want to be a Physician Assistant (5000 character limit = approx. 625 words. Characters include spaces, carriage returns, numbers, letters, etc.)
- Submission of at least 2 references (highly recommend at least one reference be from a practicing PA)
- A successful interview: Competitive applicants will be invited for an interview

h. Your application must be completed and submitted by October 31st of Senior year to qualify for seat preference – the Program will continue to accept applications until December 1st; however, applications received between October 2nd and December 1st will not qualify for seat preference and will be considered in the general applicant pool (you will still be eligible for point-award preference, regardless)

i. Highly-qualified applicants with timely submitted applications will be interviewed

j. Competitive applicants with a successful interview will be offered a contingency seat in the Program

k. A limited number of seats in PA Program will be saved for students enrolled in this option

l. Those not interviewed or offered a seat in the Program should continue to build their resume and reapply to PA Programs if they still want a career as a PA

a. This option does not guarantee admission into the PA Program

What if I am a SRU student who is interested in applying to SRU’s PA Program, but am not interested in declaring a SRU Pre-PA Concentration?
If you are a SRU student who is interested in applying to SRU’s PA Program, but are not interested in declaring a SRU Pre-PA Concentration, you can still apply to SRU’s PA Program; however, you will be considered within the general applicant pool. SRU students who declare a Pre-PA Concentration, take all prerequisite courses at SRU, and submit a timely application will be given preferential consideration for a limited number of seats in the PA Program. SRU students who do not declare either of these options, may be at a disadvantage when trying to register for prerequisite courses. Having a Pre-PA Concentration on your transcript alerts your advisor of your intended path of study and facilitates advisement.

Additional Questions

Do I need to purchase a laptop for the program?
Laptops are not required, but highly recommended. Students will utilize computers for electronic resources, research, assignments, and coursework. Computers will be available for student use on a first-come, first serve basis during posted hours on university grounds.

Can I meet with a SRU PA Program faculty member?
YES. The PA Program is also more than happy to meet with you. Contact the PA Program at 724-738-2425 to set up an appointment.

How does faculty stay up to date with medicine?
PA Program faculty are encouraged and given opportunities to practice clinically, to maintain healthcare networking, to remain current in their areas of expertise, to remain current with the ever changing world of medicine, to keep up to date with PA education, to give back to the medical community and to conduct research. Faculty is encouraged to attend and present at
conferences, symposiums, webinars, workshops and invited lectures.

Who will teach me what I need to know to be successful as a practitioner and to pass my boards?
Faculty will teach courses based on their areas of expertise and will provide continuity to the Program. The Program will strive to have faculty and outside experts with diverse areas of expertise to bring to lectures and labs. Current practitioners, invited as guest lecturers, will provide students with real-time medicine, helping to better prepare students to be practitioners in today’s ever changing world of medicine. Other experts in their fields of study will convey information that creates a well-rounded practitioner. Experts in board preparation will help prepare students for their boards.

Do I have to find my own rotation sites? Where will I be placed?
NO. You do not have to find your own rotation sites. The Program will have a list of approved clinical sites who have agreed to affiliate with the PA Program and will work with students during the placement process. If you are interested in rotating through a clinical site(s) not on the list, the Program will work with you to build a new affiliation(s). All approved clinical sites and experiences must meet minimum standards. Sites are not obligated to affiliate with the Program and the Program cannot guarantee where student will be placed. The Program is working to acquire a majority of affiliate sites within a 150-mile radius of the university, as well as student options for Florida, Maryland, Arizona, Hawaii and International sites.

Forms

Clinical Experience/Exposure Verification Form
Click here to find the Clinical Experience/Exposure Verification Form to help you record your hours if you did not provide this information on your CASPA application.

Community Service/Service Learning Verification Form
Click here to find the Community Service/Service Learning Verification Form to help you record your hours if you did not provide this information on your CASPA application.

Contact Information

Who should I contact if I have a question about the application?
For application questions, contact the application service – CASPA. CASPA contact information can be found online at https://portal.caspaonline.org.

Who should I contact if I have a question about the PA Program?
For PA Program questions, contact the Physician Assistant Program at:
Who should I contact if I have a question about Graduate Admissions?
For graduate admission questions, contact Graduate Admissions at:

Address:
Office of Graduate Admissions
Slippery Rock University
1 Morrow Way, 105 North Hall Welcome Center
Slippery Rock, PA 16057
Phone: 723.738.2051 or 877.SRU.GRAD
Fax: 724.738.2146
Email: graduate.admissions@sru.edu
Web: www.sru.edu/graduate

Who should I contact if I have a question about Undergraduate Admissions?
For undergraduate admission questions, contact Undergraduate Admissions at:

Address:
Office of Admissions
Slippery Rock University
1 Morrow Way
146 North Hall Welcome Center
Slippery Rock, PA 16057
Phone: 800.929.4778 or 724.738.2015
Fax: 724.738.2913
Email: asktherock@sru.edu
Web: http://www.sru.edu/academics/enrollment/undergraduate