

# UNM PA Program Frequently Asked Questions

We're here to help you navigate through your PA application. Find answers to questions commonly asked by potential applicants below.

## Application Information

### When is the application cycle?

Every year, applications are available through CASPA from late April until the August 1 verification deadline. Accepted students begin the following summer.

### What is required to meet your August 1 CASPA application deadline?

We adhere to CASPA's *Green Deadline*, which states that applications must be **verified** by 11:59 pm ET on August 1 of the application year. Applications can only be verified once all payments, transcripts and letters of reference have been received.

Applicants must also have a bachelor's degree from a regionally accredited college and have completed all but one prerequisite course prior to applying. The one outstanding prerequisite course must be completed by December of the application year with a grade of B or above. This will not be calculated into your GPAs. An official transcript will be required to confirm completion.

To ensure your application is verified by the August 1 deadline, submit your completed application at least four weeks **before** the deadline. You are encouraged to check the status of your CASPA application on a weekly basis. Learn more about [CASPA deadlines](#).

### I submitted my CASPA application by the August 1 deadline. What happens next?

1. You will receive an email acknowledging receipt of your application.
2. Your application will be reviewed to determine if you have met the admissions requirements. This review process is time consuming. Please be patient as we process the high number of applications.
3. If you have met the admissions requirements, you will receive a supplemental application via email.

### When will I receive the supplemental application? When is the deadline to return it?

The supplemental application will be sent via email to applicants selected to move on in the admissions process. This review process is time consuming. Please be patient as we process the high number of applications.

The deadline to submit the Supplemental Application and fees will be noted in the email invitation. Please ensure email inbox folders have been set to recognize emails from the UNM PA Program and CASPA to avoid important information being sent a spam folder.

## Prerequisites and Requirements

### What are the UNM course numbers for the highly recommended courses?

As of the 2021 course catalog, course numbers at UNM are:

- Microbiology with Lab or Virology: BIOL 2305 or BIOL 351 & 352 or BIOL 450

- Organic Chemistry with Lab or Integrated Organic and Biochemistry: CHEM 2120 or CHEM 301 & 303L or CHEM 302 & 304L
- Biochemistry or Biological Chemistry: BIOC 423 or BIOC 445 or BIOC 446 or CHEM 421
- Genetics or Molecular Genetics or Molecular Cell Biology: BIOL 2410C or BIOL 425 or BIOL 429
- Immunology: BIOL 456
- Nutrition: NUTR 1110 or NUTR 2110
- Statistics: MATH 1350 or MATH 345 or PSYC 2510

**Can I substitute any of the prerequisite courses?**

Yes. However, you can only make the following substitutions:

- BIOL 2110 or a higher Biology course may be taken to fulfill the Cellular with Molecular Biology with lab requirement.
- Organic chemistry with lab, integrated organic/biochemistry with lab, and/or biochemistry with lab can be substituted for general chemistry with lab. This substitution may be made **ONLY** if your original general chemistry prerequisite was taken more than 10 years ago and has expired. You still need two chemistry courses with labs taken within the last 10 years.

**My courses are from other institutions. How can I best compare them?**

UNM operates on a semester credit calendar. Therefore, classes from quarter system institutions will be recalculated to semester hours (one quarter hour = 0.66 semester hour).

You can compare most university courses to UNM courses through the UNM's [Transfer Equivalency System](#).

For courses without accompanying labs, you will have to take the necessary labs to apply. Please plan on attending one of our group information sessions to determine which labs will serve as an acceptable substitute.

**Does it matter whether I took my prerequisite courses at a community college or a four-year institution?**

No, prerequisite courses may be taken at any regionally-accredited college or university.

**Can I have my transcripts reviewed to verify that I have met all requirements to apply?**

While the PA Program does not offer full transcript reviews, we encourage you to reach out to us at [HSC-PAProgram@salud.unm.edu](mailto:HSC-PAProgram@salud.unm.edu) if you are unsure of equivalencies for specific prerequisite courses **after** reviewing the descriptions of the required prerequisite courses and checking UNM's Transfer Equivalency System.

**What should I do if I took some of my prerequisites more than 10 years ago?**

Science prerequisites and highly recommended courses must be taken within 10 years of application. You will need to retake the science-prerequisite courses and highly recommended courses to refresh your knowledge base.

**Will online courses and/or labs fulfill the prerequisite requirements?**

Normally, we strongly recommend that prerequisite and highly recommended science courses be limited to a maximum of two online courses. All prerequisite and highly recommended courses must be completed through a regionally accredited institution.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNM PA Program will accept prerequisite courses taken online during calendar years 2020 and 2021 (January 2020-December 2021) without limitations.

**Are prerequisite courses taken pass/fail) (for credit only--not a letter grade) accepted?**

Normally, all prerequisite lectures and labs must be taken for a letter grade to be accepted.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNM PA Program will accept ONLY prerequisite LABORATORY courses taken for credit (or pass) in calendar years 2020 and 2021 (January 2020-December 2021), though a letter grade is preferred if possible. All lecture prerequisites must be taken for a letter grade.

**Is Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate credit accepted for prerequisites?**

AP or IB credit will only be accepted toward the Writing, Literature, Public Speaking, and Linguistics requirement, and only if it is listed on an official transcript.

**What should I major in for my undergraduate degree?**

We accept any bachelor's degree from a regionally-accredited college. There is no preferred undergraduate major.

**If I have an MS or PhD in the basic sciences, do I need to retake the prerequisites?**

If your courses are older than 10 years, you will need to retake the prerequisite courses.

**I completed my medical education in a different country. Do I still need to meet the same requirements?**

Yes, all applicants are required to take all prerequisite courses within the last 10 years. All prerequisites and the most recent 60 credit hours must be taken in the United States.

**Is the GRE required?**

The GRE is no longer required for admission to the UNM PA Program.

**My patient care experience has been through volunteer work, is that acceptable?**

Yes, patient care experience may be paid or volunteer. More information defining direct patient care experience can be found on [CASPAs website](#).

**Do I have a chance of being accepted if I am not a resident of New Mexico?**

In alignment with our mission, New Mexico residents receive priority, but we typically admit a few highly-qualified non-residents in each cycle.

## **Program Questions**

**If accepted, can I attend as a part-time student?**

No, there is no part-time option for PA studies at UNM.

**Will I be able to hold a part time job if I am accepted?**

Although not a mandate, we strongly discourage students from working while attending the program. The course of studies is rigorous and the schedule is M-F from 8-5 with evening and weekend study time.