



# Admissions Policy

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## **Background and Purpose:**

The purpose of this policy is to define policies and procedures regarding the topic of defining, publishing, and disseminating admission information to prospective students. It also serves to clearly define the application, interview, and selection process for University of Charleston Physician Assistant Program (UCPAP) applicants.

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## **Policy Statement:**

### **General Information**

In reference to the ARC-PA standards listed below, the UCPAP:

1. Defines and publishes information readily available on its official website and via publicly available program policy links to inform prospective students regarding admission-related information.
2. Does not grant advanced placement under any circumstances. All students who matriculate into the Physician Assistant program must complete all program requirements. This information is published in the admissions and

FAQ sections of its official website.

## Application Process

The UCPAP values fair admissions practices. Two admission pathways have been developed for the UCPAP:

- PA Fast Track Admission
- Traditional Admission

## Online Application - Fast Track

The PA Fast Track is only available to full time students who are currently enrolled at UC. Students who have completed more than 30 hours from other institutions are not eligible. The following steps detail the process:

- **Step 1: Account Registration:** Through the UCPAP application portal, applicants complete a registration form to create an account. Before proceeding past the registration page, applicants will be required to check a box signifying acknowledgment that important admissions-related information has been made available to them, as required in the "Procedure for Informing Students of Policies and Practices" section of the Policy Administration policy.
- **Step 2: Completing Application:** Applicants are required to complete the following sections prior to submitting their applications: Academic Strength (includes submitting official transcripts [directly from other institutions to UC], SAT or ACT scores, and completing their education history), Health Care Experience, Social Engagement, Evidence of Propensity to Practice in Medically Underserved Areas and Populations, Personal Narrative, and References.
  - Applicants must specify the year he or she plans to matriculate. If the applicant is accepted but unable to complete matriculation requirements prior to the year he or she specified, then the applicant forfeits his or her seat and will have to reapply.
- **Step 3: Application Submission:** Applicants will submit their applications through the UC portal. There is no application fee for current UC students.

## Online Application – Traditional Admission

Traditional Admission applicants must have been awarded a bachelor's degree (or higher) from an accredited institution of higher education prior to the matriculation

date for which the application is being made. Applications will be submitted to CASPA (Central Application Service for Physician Assistants). Once applicants are verified through CASPA, all applicants who meet minimal academic requirements must complete a supplemental application through the UCPAP portal accompanied by a \$50 submission fee. This completes the application process.

## Application Screening and Scoring

Applications are initially screened by the Admissions Coordinator, who makes the determination if the application fully qualifies for scoring. Any questions the Admissions Coordinator may have about the qualifying nature of any application component is deferred to the Program Director or Associate Program Director. All qualified applications will go through scoring process as follows:

- **Step 1: Academic Strength Scoring:** The Academic Strength score is based on the applicant's GRE score (traditional admission applicant), SAT or ACT (fast-track applicants) and GPA. Academic Strength accounts for 40% of the total score.
- **Step 2: Non-Academic Strength Scoring:** Members of the program faculty and Program Admissions Committee use a predefined rubric to independently score all sections of the application other than the Academic Strength: Health Care Experience, 25% of total score; Social Engagement, 15% of total score; Evidence of Propensity to Practice in Medically Underserved Areas and Populations, 5% of total score; Personal Narrative, 10% of total score; and References, 5% of total score. This information is not evaluated by the Admissions Coordinator.
- **Step 3: Invitation for Interview:** Scoring results from Step 2 are combined and then added to the Academic Strength score from Step 1 to determine a final score (0 – 100pts). Applicants will be invited for interviews based upon their standing in the overall scoring.

## Interviewing Candidates

- With the exception of the Admissions Coordinator and the General Admissions Representative, Program Admissions Committee (PAC) members and invited community physician assistants are eligible to interview applicants. Once the interviews are complete, interviewers will take into consideration information obtained during the interview and the applicant's complete application.

Interviewers will then complete a score sheet with comments and recommendations regarding the applicant. All score sheets are submitted to the Admissions Coordinator.

- Candidates who interview will be provided informational materials about Financial Aid. They will have an opportunity to interact with current UCPAP students. Candidates will also be given a tour of UC's campus and provided an opportunity to ask any further questions related to the program.

## Selection Process

The Program Faculty members of the Program Admissions Committee (PAC) meet to determine whether the candidate is offered a seat, placed on the wait-list, or denied acceptance. All candidates will be notified of their status within one week following the Program Admission Committee's decision.

## Non-Refundable Deposit

### Traditional Admission Candidates

Candidates who accept a seat are required to pay an initial \$500 non-refundable deposit. Candidates are required to pay this deposit within two weeks of email notification of acceptance in order to hold their seat in the class. A second non-refundable deposit of \$500 is required by November 1st. Candidates offered a seat November 1st or later of the respective cycle year are required to pay a \$1000 deposit within one week of notification of acceptance in order to hold their seat. Deposit money will be applied toward the cost of tuition for their first semester in the program. Accepted candidates who do not pay the \$1000 deposit within the required time frame forfeit their seat.

### Fast Track Candidates

Candidates who accept a seat are required to pay a \$500 non-refundable deposit. Candidates are required to pay this deposit within two weeks of email notification of acceptance in order to hold their seat in the class. Candidates offered a seat November 1st or later of the respective cycle year are required to pay the deposit

within one week of notification of acceptance in order to hold their seat. Deposit money will be applied toward the cost of tuition for their first semester in the program. Accepted candidates who do not pay the \$500 deposit within the required time frame forfeit their seat.

## Post-Acceptance Requirements

All students who accept a seat are subject to the [Post-Acceptance Requirements](#) as described on the UCPAP web page of the same name. Students are required to fulfill all post-acceptance Requirements no later than November 1st or they will not be allowed to matriculate into the program, except in the following circumstances:

- Students who have completed required prerequisites and/or their Bachelor's degree (traditional Admission students) in the Fall semester preceding program matriculation must supply unofficial transcripts documenting fulfillment of post-acceptance requirements at least two weeks before their first day of orientation. Students failing to do so will not be permitted to matriculate into the program. Receipt of official transcripts documenting course/degree completion is still required and must occur no later than the end of the first semester of the PA Program. Students failing to do so will be dismissed from the program.
- Students who require one or more multi dose-vaccine series to meet immunization requirements must provide medical documentation that they have initiated the process at least two weeks before their first day of orientation. Students failing to do so will not be permitted to matriculate into the program. They must also provide medical documentation of completion of the process according to established CDC immunization timelines. Students failing to do so will be dismissed from the program.

## Late Acceptance

Late Acceptance is defined as notification of acceptance to the program after November 1st. In these circumstances, deadlines for fulfilling Post-Acceptance Requirements are detailed in the candidate's acceptance letter and supersede deadlines as described in this policy.

## Conflict of Interest

Faculty members are expected to use their professional integrity to excuse themselves from participating in the application scoring or interviewing process of candidates whom they have a significant relationship with external to the PA Program. This may include but is not limited to: family members, friends, family friends, acquaintances of individuals they know well, and those whom they have established professional relationships with in other settings.

## ARC-PA Associated Standards:

- **A3.12** – The program must define, publish and make readily available to enrolled and prospective students general program information to include:
  - a) the program’s ARC-PA accreditation status as provided to the program by the ARC-PA,
  - b) evidence of its effectiveness in meeting its goals,
  - c) the most current annual NCCPA PANCE Exam Performance Summary Report Last 5 Years provided by the NCCPA through its program portal, no later than April first each year,
  - d) all required curricular components including required rotation disciplines,
  - e) academic credit offered by the program,
  - f) estimates of all costs (tuition, fees, etc.) related to the program,
  - g) program required competencies for entry level practice, consistent with the competencies as defined by the PA profession,
  - h) whether certain services and resources are only available to students and faculty on the main campus when the program is offered at a geographically distant campus location, and
  - i) the most current annual student attrition information, on the table provided by the ARC-PA, no later than April first each year.
  
- **A3.13** The program must define, publish, consistently apply and make readily available to prospective students, policies and procedures to include:
  - a) admission and enrollment practices that favor specified individuals or groups (if applicable),
  - b) admission requirements regarding prior education or work experience,

c) practices for awarding or granting advanced placement,  
d) any required academic standards for enrollment, and e) any required technical standards for enrollment.

- **A3.14** The program must make student admission decisions in accordance with clearly defined and published practices of the institution and program.