



# **Towson University • CCBC Essex**

## **Physician Assistant Program Application and Admissions Information**

This booklet contains complete application and admissions information for the 2011 admissions process. Information included in this booklet is subject to change. Refer to this site often for updates.

**CCBC**  
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# Top Reasons Prospective Students Choose The Towson • CCBC Physician Assistant Program

- ❖ Solid reputation built on more than 35 years of excellence in PA education
  - Master's Program initiated in 2001
- ❖ Master's program focusing on leadership and education with reasonable and affordable tuition and fees
  - In-state tuition and fees for entire program very reasonable—no hidden costs or fees
  - Students work closely with faculty on completion of projects and research
  - Leadership opportunities
- ❖ Excellent student to faculty ratio
  - 35 students per class
  - Five fulltime faculty members—seven adjunct faculty members
- ❖ Excellent graduate pass rate for the national certification exam
- ❖ 100% placement rate for all graduates seeking employment as a physician assistant
  - Assistance from the program and faculty
  - Local employers seek Towson • CCBC graduates
- ❖ Experienced Core faculty members
- ❖ Excellent clinical instructors and top-notch teaching sites
  - Affiliations with all of the major medical teaching institutions in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area including: The Johns Hopkins Medical Center, Greater Baltimore Medical Center, University of Maryland Medical Center, St. Joseph's Medical Center
  - Participation of private physician offices
  - HMO teaching sites
  - Clinical instructors dedicated to producing the best PA's
- ❖ Community Medicine, Cross Cultural Stipend Program
  - Students can apply for travel and expenses to complete elective rotations internationally or within the US
  - Sites have included Belize, Florida, Western Maryland and other underserved and rural areas

## The PA Profession

The title "physician assistant" or "PA" refers to health care providers who are licensed to practice medicine with the supervision of a licensed physician. The concept of the profession originated in the 1960s as a way to enhance provision of health care to medically underserved communities. The founding of physician assistants as a profession was based on the acceptance of the premise that other health professionals with special training and education could perform with equal competence many of the functions normally carried out by physicians.

Physician assistants by the nature of their education are prepared to perform many of those duties that in the past were most commonly the responsibilities of the physician. PA's are allowed to practice in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Guam, and are employed in a broad range of medical facilities including private physician's offices, hospitals, nursing homes, HMOs, occupational health centers, emergency departments, the military and correctional institutions.

Working with the supervision of a physician, and as a part of the larger medical team, PA's practice medicine through performing history taking and physical examination, ordering or performing laboratory tests, and analyzing medical data to formulate diagnoses and develop management plans. Additionally, PA's perform many diagnostic and therapeutic procedures including casting, splinting, and minor surgery procedures such as suturing and biopsies. All 50 states, including Maryland, allow physician assistants to prescribe medications.

The physician assistant profession is a rapidly growing career field and employment opportunities are expected to grow through the next decade.

## Scope of Practice of the Physician Assistant

The physician assistant is academically and clinically prepared to provide health care services with the direction and responsible supervision of a doctor of medicine or osteopathy. Within the physician/PA relationship, physician assistants make clinical decisions and provide a broad range of diagnostic, therapeutic, preventive and health maintenance services. The clinical role of PAs includes primary and specialty care in medical and surgical settings. PA practice is centered on patient care and may include educational, research and administrative activities.

The role of the physician assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, appropriate interpersonal skills, and the capacity to react to emergencies in a calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and a commitment to the patients' welfare are essential attributes.

PA practice is characterized by clinical knowledge and skills in areas traditionally defined as family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, surgery, and psychiatry/behavioral medicine. Specific tasks performed by individual PAs cannot be delineated precisely because of the variation in practice requirements mandated by geographic, political economic and social factors. At a minimum, however, PAs are educated in areas of basic medical science, clinical disciplines and discipline-specific problem solving. PA practice is characterized by clinical knowledge and skills in areas traditionally defined as family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, surgery, and psychiatry/behavioral medicine. Physician assistants practice in ambulatory, emergency, inpatient, and long-term care settings. Physician assistants deliver health care services to diverse

patient populations of all ages with a range of acute and chronic medical and surgical conditions. They need knowledge and skills which allow them to function effectively in a dynamic health care environment. Services performed by physician assistants while practicing with physician supervision include, but are not limited to evaluation, monitoring, therapeutic, patient education and referral.

## Program Description

This collaborative program of CCBC and Towson University is designed for students who hold a bachelor's degree prior to admission. It prepares individuals with strong academic backgrounds and clinical experience for careers as Physician Assistants. Full-time continuous enrollment is required throughout the 26-month program. The Accreditation Review Committee on Education of Physician Assistants (ARC-PA) accredits the program. Graduates are eligible for certification by the National Commission on the Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

Entry into the program requires admission to Towson University Graduate Studies and CCBC, as well as admission to the collaborative PA Program. Enrollees must successfully complete all requirements of the program, which include both Towson University and CCBC courses. The program of study is 96 credits—36 graduate credits taken through Towson University and 60 undergraduate credits provided through CCBC. All courses are provided on the CCBC Essex campus. Enrollees enjoy full student privileges on both campuses. Faculty has teaching appointments to both institutions.

The physician assistant curriculum (CCBC and Towson University courses) integrates a large volume of technically detailed information. Successful completion of the program requires strong science, general education and medical experience preparation, as well as intense study and commitment throughout the 26 month program. The first year of study is in large part didactic in nature. Students will attend classes for 35 to 40 hours per week. In the second year, students complete clinical rotations in medicine, family practice, pediatrics, obstetrics and gynecology, emergency medicine, community medicine, and surgery, as well as an elective rotation and an eight-week primary care preceptor ship. Students return to the Essex campus between rotations for classes during their clinical year.

All classes are taken on the CCBC Essex campus. Students will register for 200 level courses with CCBC Essex and will register for 600, 700 and 800 level courses with Towson University.

Tuition and fees for 200 level courses are paid to CCBC Essex. Tuition and fees for 600, 700, and 800 level courses are paid to Towson University. Applicants will pay appropriate application fees to each institution as appropriate. Towson University graduate course GPAs are calculated separately from CCBC courses. Students will receive two grade reports each semester and carry a GPA separate for Towson and CCBC. Comprehensive records from both institutions will be maintained by CCBC.

## Program Sequence of Study

### Year I

#### Summer

• PAST 216	Psychosocial Issues in Medicine II	2
• PAST 217	Pathophysiology	3
• PAST 602	Ethics, Issues, Trends	3
• PAST 212	Public Health and Preventive Medicine	2
• PAST 603	Medicine I	<u>2</u>
		<b>12</b>

#### Fall

• PAST 213	Diagnostic Process	4
• PAST 214	Psychosocial Issues I	2
• PAST 230	Diagnostic Studies I	2
• PAST 604	Medicine II	6
• PAST 606	Pediatrics I	2
• PAST 609	Pharmacology I	<u>2</u>
		<b>18</b>

#### Winter (Minimester)

• PAST 231	Diagnostic Studies II	2
• PAST 605	Medicine III	<u>2</u>
		<b>4</b>

#### Spring

• PAST 232	Diagnostic Studies III	2
• PAST 250	Introduction to Clinical Practice	4
• PAST 601	Research Methods	3
• PAST 607	Pediatrics II	2
• PAST 608	Medicine IV	6
• PAST 610	Pharmacology II	<u>2</u>
		<b>19</b>

### Year II

#### Summer

• PAST 251	Clinical Practicum I	<u>6</u>
		<b>6</b>

#### Fall

• PAST 252	Clinical Practicum II	12
• PAST 730	Clinical Management Seminar I (summer start)	2
• PAST 801	Research Seminar I (summer start)	<u>1</u>
		<b>15</b>

#### Winter/Minimester

• PAST 253	Clinical Practicum III	<u>3</u>
		<b>3</b>

#### Spring

• PAST 254	Clinical Practicum IV	11
• PAST 731	Clinical Management Seminar II (winter start)	2
• PAST 802	Research Seminar II (winter start)	<u>1</u>
		<b>14</b>

#### Summer

• PAST 255	Clinical Practicum V	<u>5</u>
		<b>5</b>

Total Credits

**96**

## Description of Program Courses

### **PAST 212      Public Health and Preventive Medicine      2 Credits**

An introduction to the dynamics of health and disease in human populations and to services and facilities for the maintenance of health and prevention of illness. Current clinical prevention standards, public health methods, clinical epidemiology and relevant public health models for clinicians will be taught in detail of demography, epidemiology, environmental health, provision of medical services, preventive medicine and infectious disease will be explored. Basic principles of health policy making will also be addressed.

### **PAST 213      Diagnostic Process      4 Credits**

This introduction to the diagnostic process focuses on the proper methods of obtaining, recording, and presenting patient histories and physical examinations. Emphasis is on interpersonal communication skills. A system-by-system approach to performing the physical exam and an overview of the common symptoms and physical findings for each system as well as a review of anatomy pathophysiology will be presented. Each week includes two hours history taking, four hours physical examination (two hours lecture and two hours lab).

### **PAST 214      Psychosocial Issues in Medicine I      2 Credits**

This course will provide an understanding of the psychological processes underlying human behavior in medical settings. Emphasis is placed upon the dynamics of the patient-health provider relationship. Topics include communication skills, approaches to patients, working with special populations, cross-cultural communication, stress and disease, chronic illness, adherence, domestic violence, human sexuality issues, and death and dying.

### **PAST 216      Psychosocial Issues in Medicine II      2 Credits**

This course is designed to provide the student with an understanding of the psychological process underlying human behavior and psychiatric disorders. An emphasis is placed upon the importance of psychiatric principles in primary care. The course examines concepts in the diagnosis and treatment of the major classes of psychiatric disorders, psychiatric emergencies in primary care, special issues in geriatric mental health as well as prevention, recognition and intervention of child abuse and sexual assault.

### **PAST 217      Pathophysiology      3 Credits**

This course covers the reaction of the human body to disease from the cellular to the multi-system level. It includes a classroom review of human anatomy and physiology, and a projection cadaver laboratory. This course prepares the entering physician assistant student for future courses in medicine and prevention.

### **PAST 230      Diagnostic Studies I      2 Credits**

The first of three courses designed to provide students with proficiency in performance, and ordering and interpretation of diagnostic studies. Covers ordering and interpretation of radiographs, ultrasound studies, and electrocardiograms. Students also perform 12 lead EKG studies.

**PAST 231 Diagnostic Studies II**

**2 Credits**

This course is designed to prepare students to perform and interpret basic diagnostic and laboratory tests. Emphasis is placed on those tests necessary to assess complaints common to the ambulatory, hospitalized and emergency medicine patient.

**PAST 232 Diagnostic Studies III**

**2 Credits**

This course is designed to prepare students to perform and interpret basic diagnostic and laboratory tests. Emphasis is placed on those tests necessary to assess complaints common to the ambulatory, hospitalized and emergency medicine patient.

**PAST 250 Introduction to Clinical Practice**

**4 Credits**

Further development of basic clinical skills presented in PAST 213. A focus on the diagnostic process with exposure to elements of clinical management. Students are assigned to the clinical setting for one or two eight-hour days per week and meet in small groups with faculty members for two hours each week. Emphasis is placed on eliciting the patient history, physical assessment, recording patient data and case presentation, diagnosis and basic management plans, and performing basic clinical skills with actual patients in the clinical setting.

**PAST 251-254 Clinical Practicum I-IV**

**32 Credits**

**PAST 251 Clinical Practicum I**

**6 Credits**

**PAST 252 Clinical Practicum II**

**12 Credits**

**PAST 253 Clinical Practicum III**

**3 Credits**

**PAST 254 Clinical Practicum IV**

**11 Credits**

These four clinical practica provide rotations in family practice, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, surgery, emergency medicine, community medicine, long-term care and two general elective areas in primary care and general medicine. Psychiatry in patient care is covered during family medicine and emergency medicine rotations with core faculty.

**PAST 255 Clinical Practicum V**

**5 Credits**

The Primary Care Preceptorship, the final clinical experience, provides the student with an opportunity to apply principles of the practice of medicine covered throughout the program in a primary care or rural/underserved location. The student will function as a full member of the medical team and be responsible for patient care from presentation through follow-up including diagnostic evaluation and patient management.

**PAST 601 Research Methods**

**3 Credits**

Interpretation, critique, and application of qualitative and quantitative research for clinical practice will be explored.

**PAST 602 Ethics, Professional Issues and Trends**

**3 Credits**

This course examines professional and ethical issues, as well as legal implications, confronting the physician assistant. Effect of social, political and economic changes is also explored, together with the physician assistant role in the health care team. Prerequisite: Admission to program.

**PAST 603 Medicine I**

**2 Credits**

The first of four courses designed to prepare the physician assistant student for management of disease in the adult patient. The disease process, diagnostic criteria and management options are presented. Includes the standard lecture format as well as case-based learning.

**PAST 604    Medicine II****6 Credits**

This is the second part of four courses designed to provide Physician Assistant students with exposure to the mechanism and natural course of disease process. Signs, symptoms and laboratory findings are presented along with differential diagnoses and management options. In addition to the standard lecture format students participate in case-based learning.

**PAST 605    Medicine III****2 Credits**

The third of four courses designed to prepare the physician assistant student in management of disease in the adult patient. Women's health is emphasized.

**PAST 606    Pediatrics I****2 Credits**

This is the first part of a two-part course designated to provide Physician Assistant students with exposure to the mechanism and natural course of the disease process in the pediatric patient.

**PAST 607    Pediatrics II****2 Credits**

This is the second part of a two-part course designated to provide Physician Assistant students with exposure to the mechanism and natural course of the disease process in the pediatric patient.

**PAST 608    Medicine IV****6 Credits**

The fourth of four courses designed to prepare the physician assistant student in management of disease in the adult patient.

**PAST 609    Pharmacology I****2 Credits**

This is the first of two courses covering the basic principles of pharmacology and pharmacokinetics. Basic principles of prescribing are a major focus. The clinical use of antibiotics, analgesics, hypoglycemic agents, insulin, and medications used for treatment of peptic ulcer disease is covered in this course.

**PAST 610    Pharmacology II****2 Credits**

Specific topics include drugs affecting the autonomic nervous system, cardioactive drugs, antiarrhythmic, anesthetics, diuretics, antifungal, asthmatics, and drugs used for the treatment of various neurological and psychiatric disorders.

**PAST 730    Clinical Management Seminar I****2 Credits**

Selected clinical management topics are presented in a group seminar/lecture format. Students meet at the conclusion of each clinical rotation. Topics include current management of the major disease entities encountered in primary care. Principles of management including the diagnostic process, the selection of current medical interventions, and the management of patient education are expected of the students. Current interpretations of the literature addressing changes in current clinical management are expected of the students.

**PAST 731    Clinical Management Seminar II****2 Credits**

A continuation Patient Management Seminar I. Selected clinical management topics are presented in a group format. Students meet at the conclusion of each clinical rotation. Topics include current management of the major disease entities encountered in primary care. Principles of management including the diagnostic process, the selection of current medical interventions, and the management of patient education are expected of the students. Current interpretations of the literature addressing changes in current clinical management are expected of the students.

Each student will work with a mentor and the research coordinator to compose a formal report of the chosen research project. The final research project will be presented to a panel of faculty members for evaluation and critique.

## PA Program History

The oldest and most well established program in Maryland, the Essex Physician Assistant Program began in 1972 as a cooperative effort with the Johns Hopkins University and Franklin Square Hospital, with separate tracks at each institution. Both tracks were integrated as one in 1976. Now a collaborative effort of CCBC Essex and Towson University; the program has undergone a dynamic evolution over its 30-year history. More than 600 program graduates are employed in a wide variety of medical settings in regional, national, and international locations.

## Towson University

Founded in 1866, Towson University is recognized today as one of the nation's finest regional public universities, offering more than 90 undergraduate and graduate programs at the bachelor's, master's and doctoral levels. It is the second-largest institution in the University System of Maryland (enrolling over 16,500 students) and the largest comprehensive university in the Baltimore area.

Towson University ranked second in academic reputation among 65 regional public institutions in the North in the *2000 America's Best Colleges* by *U.S. News and World Report*. Located in the suburban community of Towson, just eight miles north of downtown Baltimore, the 328-acre beautifully landscaped campus has an impressive blend of traditional and modern architecture. The campus is approximately ten miles from the CCBC Essex campus, which is also in the suburban Baltimore area. Towson has graduated more than 90,000 students, including more than 10,000 with graduate degrees.

## CCBC

In October of 1998, by action of the Baltimore County Council, the three Baltimore County Community Colleges—Catonsville, Dundalk and Essex—became The Community College of Baltimore County. The former Essex Community College was established in 1957 and has a long history of excellence in allied health professional programs. The CCBC Essex campus of approximately 147 acres is located in a wooded setting in eastern Baltimore County. Nine major academic buildings house classrooms, laboratories, offices for faculty and staff, and special facilities such as the library, the community center, the theater, and School of Health Professions Program laboratories. Franklin Square Hospital Center occupies 100 acres adjacent to the college and provides a convenient site for shared clinical education activities. Tree-lined parking areas, pedestrian plazas, large lawns, and special gardens complete the campus environment.

## Program Mission

The Physician Assistant Program provides a generalist foundation with a broad range of knowledge and skills to prepare competent PAs for practice in diverse medical settings.

## Program Vision

The Physician Assistant Program prepares students in a learning-centered environment and promotes the following core values:

- Professionalism in compassionate and ethical medical practice
- Cultural diversity within the learning environment
- Cultural sensitivity and advocacy for addressing health care disparities
- Information literacy and life-long learning
- Inter-professional team practice
- Representing and advocating for the PA profession

## PA Program graduates:

1. promote the public's interest and the patient's needs before any other considerations;
2. are ethical health care professionals;
3. serve as advocates for patient needs;
4. provide patient education and preventive health care services;
5. demonstrate commitment to lifelong learning;
6. work with other health care professionals in providing coordinated health care; and
7. are committed to assuring that health care services are accessible and compassionate.

## Program Commitment

The Physician Assistant Program seeks:

- 1) To assure that the education provided to graduates meets expectations of the medical community and complies with the *ARC-PA Standards*;
- 2) To promote the continuing education of program graduates; and
- 3) To provide career opportunities to individuals from all socio-economic background regardless of gender, race, religion, sexual orientation or national origin.

## PA Program Objectives

### Educational Objectives

Graduates will be able to:

1. With the supervision of a physician, practice medicine across the lifespan, including but not limited to the following.
  - a. Conducting health assessments and providing preventive health services
  - b. Performing histories and physical examinations
  - c. Evaluating health status and diagnosing disease
  - d. Formulating management plans for routine health maintenance, acute and chronic illness and emergent conditions
  - e. Performing clinical procedures and surgical skills in a safe and efficacious manner
  - f. Providing counseling and health education
  - g. Evaluating outcomes of care
2. Demonstrate awareness of cultural diversity and sensitivity to multicultural health care issues.
3. Provide leadership in medical setting and ethical decision-making across a variety of practice settings.
4. Effectively advocate for the enhancement of health care delivery in the public arena using a variety of strategies.
5. Provide leadership in health care organizational systems.

6. Analyze research literature for use in the practice of evidence-based medicine.
7. Participate in research studies designed to contribute to the knowledge base in medicine.
8. Contribute to the education of health care professionals in academic and clinical settings.

### Clinical Practice Objectives

Graduates will practice medicine, with the supervision of a licensed physician, performing the following tasks in a safe, efficient, and accurate manner. They will:

1. Screen patients to determine need for medical attention and review patient records to determine health status.
2. Elicit medical histories
  - a. Establish rapport with the patient and/or his/her family.
  - b. Establish the patient's chief complaint.
  - c. Obtain a history of present illness.
  - d. Obtain a past medical history.
  - e. Obtain a personal and social history including education, employment, and alcohol, caffeine, drugs, and tobacco use.
  - f. Obtain the family history of illness or exposure to illness.
  - g. Assist patients with the narrative through the use of support and reassurance, empathy, reflection, interpretation, touch, or other methods appropriate to the situation.
  - h. Bringing closure to the interview in an appropriate manner.
  - i. Communicate historical information to physicians or other health professionals in a clear and concise manner.
3. Perform complete physical examinations on patients of all age groups.
  - a. Gain the patient's confidence.
  - b. Use instruments for physical examination, such as stethoscope, blood pressure cuff, tuning forks, tape measure, oto-ophthalmoscope, percussion hammer, pen light, etc
  - c. Perform the examination in an orderly manner.
  - d. Alter examination according to the needs of the patient.
  - e. Recognize and record in an acceptable manner, normal and abnormal findings based on the patient's age, sex and race.
  - f. Perform developmental screening examinations.
4. Make initial diagnoses based on patient complaints, physical findings and laboratory study results.
  - a. Assess the patient's problem(s), identify the appropriate diagnostic procedures and discuss differential diagnosis based on signs, symptoms and initial laboratory results.
  - b. Interpret the routine hematological, cytological, bacteriologic, and chemical tests, CBC, differential platelet counts, granulocyte counts, and serum electrolyte levels, etc.
  - c. Identify the diseases with which abnormal findings are most often associated.
  - d. Identify tests needed to monitor a patient's condition and/or effectiveness of the therapy.
  - e. Order, interpret, and as appropriate, perform diagnostic tests.
    - (1) EKG
    - (2) Radiographs

- (3) Chemistry studies
  - (4) Hematology studies
  - (5) Culture results
  - (6) Others
  - f. Perform follow-up evaluation of previously diagnosed illnesses.
  - g. Carry out and collect specimens for commonly performed laboratory diagnostic studies.
  - h. Perform clinical procedures including:
    - (1) Venipuncture
    - (2) Administration of oral and parenteral medications
    - (3) Administration of intravenous fluid, blood or blood component transfusions
    - (4) Administration of local anesthesia
    - (5) EKG
    - (6) Suturing, wound care, application of bandages and dressings
    - (7) Casting and splinting
    - (8) Control of external hemorrhage
    - (9) ABG specimen collection
    - (10) Removal of superficial foreign bodies of the skin, ear and eye
    - (11) CPR
    - (12) ACLS
    - (13) Aseptic and isolation techniques
    - (14) Bladder catheterization
    - (15) Nasogastric intubation
    - (16) Feeding tube insertion
  - i. Prepared with basic skills to learn a variety of clinical procedures pertinent to a specific clinical setting including but not limited to:
    - (1) Lumbar puncture
    - (2) Bone marrow aspiration
    - (3) Central lines
    - (4) Harvesting of saphenous veins
    - (5) Endometrial biopsy
    - (6) Suction evacuation of the uterus
    - (7) IUD insertion
  - j. Assist in surgery
    - (1) Identify and use appropriate surgical instruments
    - (2) Demonstrate appropriate OR conduct
    - (3) Suture
    - (4) Dress wounds
5. Formulate and implement patient management plans including writing prescriptions and issuing medical orders.
6. Evaluation and initiate management for emergency situations including but not limited to:
- a. Cardiac arrest
  - b. Respiratory distress
  - c. Hemorrhage and hemorrhagic shock
  - d. Burns
  - e. Trauma
  - f. Anaphylaxis
  - g. Ingestion of toxic substances

- h. Myocardial Infarction
  - I. Acute abdomen
  - j. Septic joint
  - k. Urinary tract infection
  - l. Wound infection
7. Provide counseling, and patient and family health education, and health risk assessment.
    - a. Report communicable diseases using the appropriate forms and follow-up.
    - b. Identify the personal or family socio-economic factors affecting medical care.
    - c. Initiate requests for patient services including home health care, school testing and evaluation, and public health services.
    - d. Give emotional support to patients and their families.
    - e. Teach patients the procedures for breast self-examination and testicular self-examination.
  8. Provide ethical healthcare.
    - a. Apply ethical decision-making skills.
    - b. Apply Professional Code of Ethics
  9. Demonstrate critical evaluation skills.
    - a. Locate and retrieve medical literature.
    - b. Discuss practice implications.
    - c. Read the medical literature on an on-going basis.
    - d. Discuss current and controversial medical knowledge with physicians and colleagues.
  10. Demonstrate effective written and oral communication skills.
    - a. Report and record patient data.
    - b. Write prescriptions and medical orders.
  11. Possess a sense of responsibility to medically underserved communities.
  12. Demonstrate awareness of issues of cultural diversity and a sensitivity to those of other cultures.

## NCCPA Pass Rates

Towson University · CCBC Essex physician assistant graduates have enjoyed excellent pass rates on the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE) over the history of the program. Since the transition from a certificate-only program to the masters/certificate program 97% of program graduates have passed the exam within six months of graduation.

Towson/Essex Class PANCE Pass Rates*					
	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Towson First-time Takers	94%	97%	96%	94%	100%
All Programs First-time Takers	92%	93%	94%	92%	94%

\*Updated March 2011

## Financial Aid

It is imperative that applicants complete financial planning that does not require employment during the 26 months of the program due to the didactic and clinical demands of the program. Course work must be pursued on a full-time basis only. Students must also have reliable private transportation to assigned clinical sites. Towson University · CCBC Essex PA students are generally eligible for up to \$18,500 annually in federally guaranteed loans. The Towson University Financial Aid Office administers financial aid information for PA students. For financial aid information for PA students, go to the following web site <http://onestop.towson.edu/finaid>. The financial aid representative for the program is Ms. Jennifer Schleigh. She can be reached through e-mail at [jschleigh@towson.edu](mailto:jschleigh@towson.edu) or by phone, 410-704-3225.

## Admission Requirements

1. **Bachelor's degree** completed at the time of application or completed by the end of the fall semester in the application year. It is preferred that the bachelor's be completed by the time of application. However, applicants who will complete the degree by the end of the fall semester in the application year will be considered, provided the program receives verification no later than January 15th of the start year.

*Occasionally exceptional applicants who will not complete the Bachelor's Degree until the spring semester (May) of the admission year will be selected for an interview and selected for admission provided they have:*

- *Completed all prerequisites with a grade of "B" or better at the time of application.*
- *A 3.25 GPA for upper division (last 60 credits) courses*
- *A 3.00 Science GPA*
- *Completed all required health care hours by the date of application.*

2. **Minimum 3.25 GPA** for upper division (third and fourth years of undergraduate study or last 60 credits) courses at the time of application. Applicants with a 2.75 or above may be considered for conditional admission. However, most successful applicants will have a 3.2 for the last 60 credits, or a 3.5 or better for a completed graduate degree.
3. **Patient contact or medical/health related experience** (minimum 400 documented hours).
4. **Completion of prerequisite math and science courses<sup>1</sup> with a minimum of a "C" grade.<sup>2</sup>**

Anatomy (or Human A & P I) <sup>3</sup>	4 credits
Physiology (or Human A & P II) <sup>3</sup>	4 credits
Essentials of Organic and Biochemistry <sup>4</sup>	3 credits (Lab recommended)
Microbiology	4 credits (Must include Lab)
College Level Statistics – any discipline	3 credits

5. **Medical Terminology<sup>5</sup>** 3 credits (May be taken online)

<sup>1</sup> Must have at least four prerequisite courses completed by application deadline, and the 5<sup>th</sup> must be completed by the end of the fall semester in the application year. Students who have completed all courses at the time of application will be given preference. Courses should be completed within the last 10 years. Most competitive applicants will have completed course work

within the preceding five years.

<sup>2</sup> While applicants with “C” grades in these courses may receive consideration, those with one or more “C” grades in these courses will not be competitive.

<sup>3</sup> Comparative anatomy and vertebrate physiology may be substituted for A&P I and II

<sup>4</sup> The CCBC course “Essentials of Organic and Biochemistry” is the prerequisite course. A course in Biochemistry may be substituted.

<sup>5</sup> Accepted applicants are required to have a 3 credit medical terminology course prior to beginning the program (an online course will be accepted).

5. **International Students** (Applicants who are not US citizens are considered international students)

a. Residency Requirement

- i. Copy of permanent residency permits (green card) required.
- ii. Copy of current visa required.

b. English Language Proficiency

- i. All international students for whom English is not a native language are required to complete the TOEFL<sup>1</sup> exam.
- ii. International students who hold a degree from a U.S. institution are exempt from this requirement.
- iii. Applicants who are not United States citizens are considered international students;
- iv. Minimum required TOEFL score--550 (paper-based testing) or 79/80 (internet based testing)
- v. Towson University is a testing site and offers the test in the fall and spring semesters. Information can be obtained [www/towson.edu/elc](http://www.towson.edu/elc). Towson’s institution code is 5404.

**<sup>1</sup>International students who hold a degree from a US institution are exempt from this requirement.**

c. International Transcripts

- i. Towson University requires copies of all transcripts, including foreign transcripts, sent directly from your university to the Graduate Admission Office (**This does not need to occur before acceptance for an interview. Those selected for an interview will be sent additional information.**)
- ii. International transcripts must be evaluated by the WES.\* Please note: CASPA and Towson University allow other options. The PA Program requires WES credentialing.

World Education Service (WES)  
Bowling Green Station  
PO Box 5087  
New York, NY 10274  
(212)966-6311

6. Ability to perform the essential functions of a physician assistant (see *Physician Assistant Essential Functions*).

### Preferred applicants will have:

1. Completed all prerequisite courses and the bachelor's degree by the summer of the application year;
2. Earned a minimum of "B" for each of the Prerequisite courses;
3. Completed required medical experience in the United States healthcare system;
4. Two or more years of full-time professional healthcare experience;
5. References from individuals within the United States healthcare system;
6. A GPA of 3.2 or higher for the last 60 credits; and
7. A 3.0 or higher Science GPA
8. Experience in working with individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds.

### Application Dates, Timelines & Deadlines

1. The program application cycle year precedes the year of admission.
2. The CASPA application process opens each year by May 1<sup>st</sup>. Application may be made any time after this date.
3. For best consideration applications should be submitted to CASPA as early as possible as and no later than August 1<sup>st</sup>.
4. Applications submitted to CASPA after September 1 will not be considered. Additionally, once the class has been filled the programs will no longer review applications, even if the September 1<sup>st</sup> deadline has been met.

## Application Process

### Initial Application

The Towson University · CCBC Essex Physician Assistant Program participates in the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). E-mail address: [www.caspaonline.org](http://www.caspaonline.org)



After clicking on to the CASPA site, click the button *Before Applying* and review the information there **BEFORE** starting the application.

Please send transcripts to the following mailing address:

**CASPA**  
**Post Office Box 9108**  
**Watertown, MA 02471**

For questions about completing the online CASPA application, help can be reached by phone, (617) 612-2080, or by e-mail [caspainfo@caspaonline.org](mailto:caspainfo@caspaonline.org)

The CASPA application window begins May 1<sup>st</sup>. For more information about the process, log on to <https://secure.caspaonline.org/>.

Applications are reviewed by the admissions committee as they are received from CASPA.

## Secondary Applications

**Only applicants selected for an interview will be sent supplemental application materials.**

Supplemental applications, which are returned to the PA program as one package, include:

1. A Towson University graduate application and fee,
2. A CCBC application and fee,
3. A PA Program application and fee, and
4. Official transcripts from any institutions that awarded the applicant degrees.

## International Students

International Students—Additional Application Requirements

Applicants who are not U.S citizens are considered international students. International students accepted for an interview must submit the following to Towson University:

1. Official copy of the transcript evaluation performed through World Education Service [www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org).
2. Official TOEFL scores received directly from the Education Testing Service. International students for whom English is a native language or who hold a degree from an accredited US institution are exempt.
3. Official copy of all transcripts from international schools attended.
4. Copy of permanent residency permits (green card).
5. Copy of current visa.

For additional information contact Janet Schmitt at (410) 704-3317 or [JLSchmitt@towson.edu](mailto:JLSchmitt@towson.edu).

## Patient Contact or Medically Related Experience

All eligible candidates must submit verification of a minimum of 400 hours of patient contact or medically related experience. While applicants with health care experience in another health care area are preferred, patient contact or medically related experience may include:

- Clinical hours completed as part of a health care training program,
- Medical or clinical research with or without patient contact
- Volunteer hospital or clinical experience,
- Documented home health care experience.

## Requirements for Successful Completion of Program

Successful students will receive the Master of Science Degree in Physician Assistant Studies from Towson University and a certificate of completion from CCBC. A student may not earn one credential (Master's Degree and Certificate of Completion) without the other.

1. Successful completion of all PA Program (CCBC Essex and Towson University) courses on a full-time basis in the outlined sequence.
3. Achievement of an overall 3.00 GPA for Towson University Graduate physician assistant courses with no more than two “C” course grades.
4. The medicine courses provide the foundation needed to complete the remainder of the

program. Therefore, achievement of minimum of a “B” in PAST 604 or PAST 608 is required. Students who do not earn at least a “B” for one of these courses may not continue in the program.

5. Achievement of a minimum of a “C” for all medicine course exams (PAST 603, 604, 605, and 608) as defined in the course syllabus.

6. Achievement of an overall 3.00 GPA for CCBC physician assistant courses with no more than two “C” course grades.

7. Achievement of a minimum score as defined in course syllabi for the Year I summative evaluation tests, completion of PACKRAT exam, standardized patient Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) and clinical simulator testing—and recommendation of the Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC) for continuation into the second year.

8. Achievement of a minimum score as defined in course syllabi for the Year II summative evaluation tests, completion of PACKRAT exam, standardized patient Objective Structured Clinical Exams (OSCEs) and clinical simulator testing—and recommendation by the Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC) for continuation to the primary care preceptorship.

9. Completion of all program requirements within 36 months of beginning the physician assistant program.

10. Full compliance with all Physician Assistant Program, Towson University and CCBC policies.

# Physician Assistant Essential Functions

## Professional Technical Standards

The role of the physician assistant demands intelligence, sound judgment, intellectual honesty, the ability to relate with people and the capacity to react to emergencies in calm and reasoned manner. An attitude of respect for self and others, adherence to the concepts of privilege and confidentiality in communicating with patients, and commitment to the patient's welfare are essential attributes.

### Candidates admitted to the program must:

- Have the academic ability to master a large volume of technically detailed information and be able to synthesize and use this data to solve complex clinical problems. This information must be acquired in a short and intense period of study, which requires well-developed study skills, a high level of motivation and may require considerable personal and financial sacrifice.
- Have the mental, emotional, physical ability and stamina to complete the program on a full-time basis in the required sequence.
- Possess the emotional maturity and stability to approach highly stressful human situations in a calm, safe and rational manner.
- Have well developed oral and written English language communication skills.
- Be comfortable with the role of a dependent practitioner operating under the supervision of a licensed physician, while simultaneously feeling comfortable with the large amount of responsibility that goes along with the delivery of patient care in sometimes remote locations.
- Display strong ethical integrity consistent with working as a health care professional.
- Have the minimum physical abilities in the areas of sensory function, hand eye coordination, fine motor coordination and neuromuscular control to competently perform the technical activities that are a critical part of the program curriculum and profession, including:
  - a) Physical examination;
  - b) Performance and interpretation of diagnostic studies such as blood tests, EKGs and x-rays;
  - c) Surgical assisting (standing, sitting and holding arms in one position for long periods of time);
  - d) Performing common procedures such as casting, suturing and venipuncture; and
  - e) Lifting and transferring objects weighing up to 25 lbs.

Approved September, 1998. Revised January 2004.

**Projected Physician Assistant Program Tuition Costs**  
**IMPORTANT TUITION CHANGES EFFECTIVE SUMMER 2011 – SEE HIGHLIGHTED AREA BELOW**

Towson University	Cost	CCBC	Cost
Admission Deposit	<b>\$900.00</b>	Admission Deposit	<b>\$1,700.00</b>
Application (non-refundable)	\$50.00		
		<b>PA Program Application</b>	20.00
Tuition Per Semester		<b>Tuition Per Semester</b>	
In State	\$324.00	In State (In County)	\$100.00
Out of State	\$681.00	Out of State (Out of County)	\$286.00
University Fees		<b>Fees</b>	
Univ. Fee per Unit	\$95.00	Technology Fee (per billable hour)	\$9.00
		Capital Fee	\$5.00
		Activity Fee (per billable hour, max \$24/semester)	\$3.00
		Registration Fee	\$55.00

Institution	Credit Number	Tuition Only	Fees	Totals
Towson University In State	36	\$12,132.00	\$3,564.00	<b>\$15,696.00</b>
Towson University Out of State **	36	\$25,524.00	\$3,564.00	<b>\$29,088.00</b>

Institution	Credit Number	Tuition Only	Fees*	Totals
CCBC In State (In County)	60	\$ 6,000.00	\$1,020.00	\$ 7,020.00
CCBC Out of State†	60	\$17,160.00	\$1,020.00	\$18,180.00
CCBC Out of State**†	(approximately)	\$ 6,900.00	\$1,020.00	\$ 7,920.00
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>In State</b>	<b>\$22,716.00</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Out of State</b>	<b>\$47,268.00</b>
		<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>Out of State***</b>	<b>\$37,008.00</b>

All totals are approximate  
 And may be subject to change.

**All figures are based on February 2011 costs and are subject to change.**

\*includes both college and additional semester fees

**\*\* Out of State residents who establish Baltimore County residency will pay the following CCBC tuition:**

**Baltimore County residency for CCBC can be established after 3 months.**

**CCBC Courses: 12 credits at out-of-State rate; 48 credits at In-State rate.**

**\*\*\*State residency status at Towson is a more complicated matter .**

**Special application must be made through the Towson University Graduate School.**

**Once residency has been established, students may be able to receive "statewide program designation" status. The figure given is an estimate.**

† Changes to Maryland State laws, will impact tuition rates for Statewide and Health Manpower Shortage programs beginning Summer 2011. The actual impact on tuition is in flux. At registration, you will pay a new tuition rate for CCBC credits that is half way between the in-county tuition rate and the out-of county tuition rate.

The model above is currently under-estimated.

For more information, go to [www.cbcmd.edu/outofcounty](http://www.cbcmd.edu/outofcounty) or call 443-840-2222.

Applicants should also contact the Office of Financial Aid at Towson University (410-704-4272) for complete information regarding program expenses and actual funding allocations.

## PA Program Expenses in Addition to Tuition and Fees

<b>Prior to PA Program Start</b>		
Towson University tuition deposit <sup>2</sup>	\$ 900.00	Upon acceptance
CCBC supplies/testing costs <sup>3</sup>	1,700.00	Upon acceptance
Desktop or Laptop Computer <sup>4</sup>	varies widely	Prior to orientation
Personal Health Insurance	varies widely	Prior to orientation
Criminal Background Check	50.00	Upon acceptance
Drug Screening	varies widely	If indicated by background check
<b>Summer/Fall Year I</b>		
Textbooks/Software/Information Technology	4,500.00	Summer, Fall
MAPA Membership (two years)	50.00	Summer
SAAPA Membership (two years)	90.00	Summer
MAPA Conference Registration	75.00	Fall
Cell Phone and PDA	varies widely	
Medical Equipment	750.00	
<b>Spring, Year I</b>		
Electronic Logging (entire clinical training)	100.00	
Personal Student Medical Liability Insurance	300.00	
Cell Phone with Pager Capability <sup>4</sup>	varies	
<b>Spring, Year II/Graduation</b>		
CCBC Certificate Fee	20.00	
<b>Post Graduation Expenses</b>		
NCCPA Certification Exam	450.00	
Maryland State Certification (initial)	207.00	
Delegation Agreement Fee	200.00	
<sup>1</sup> Expenses in some instances are approximate, all are subject to change. There may be additional costs not mentioned here.		
<sup>2</sup> Applied to Towson University graduate tuition (not an additional expense.)		
<sup>3</sup> Covers: Standardized patients, standardized testing (PACKRAT), ACLS expenses, Typhon logging fee, online study assistance, hospital jackets, ID badges and name tags, surrogate patients and genital exam training, cadaver lab, skills lab supplies (surgical, suture, casting materials, parental medication and venipuncture equipment, etc.)		
<sup>4</sup> Computer and cell/phone initial costs and month fees vary widely. Student will want to shop for the best possible price.		

# PA Program Candidate Guidelines and Information

## PA Program Expectations for Students

It is imperative that all applicants/candidates carefully review and consider the following before accepting a position in the Towson University · CCBC Essex Physician Assistant program.

### 1. Program Length

The Physician Assistant Program is a full-time, 26 month continuous program of study that begins with the first five-week summer session (early June). Orientation may be scheduled for late May. Year I is largely classroom, laboratory and lecture with some clinical assignment. Year II is largely clinical.

### 2. Employment/Financial Considerations

It is crucial that students plan ahead so that employment, full or part-time, is not necessary during the entire length of the program. No special consideration will be made for students who choose for any reason to ignore this recommendation.

### 3. Planning for Family Obligations

It is imperative that arrangements for childcare and other family responsibilities be planned for in advance with back-up arrangements in place so that students are able to attend all classes and assignments on time. Absence, lateness, and turning in late assignments may be cause for course failure.

### 4. Family Support Systems

The program of study is highly intense and can stress the student's personal, family, social and financial resources. Support of family and friends is crucial to achieving success in this program. Candidates are encouraged to prepare family members well in advance.

### 5. Program Sequence and Advance Standing

Students must complete all class and clinical assignments on time and in the published sequence. The program awards no advance standing. Students who leave the program and wish to return must reapply to begin again.

### 6. Student Travel Costs

Students are fully responsible for all transportation costs (including parking, housing, and meals) related to their clinical assignments and must have reliable transportation in order to attend clinical sites throughout the greater Baltimore/Washington metropolitan area and beyond. Most students will have at least one assignment distant enough from the college that housing is required.

### 7. Clinical Assignments

Students generally do not have options to choose clinical sites (within the exception of the elective rotations) and must attend rotations as assigned at the discretion of the clinical coordinator.

### 8. Academic Schedule—Year 1

Classroom schedule are generally 8:00 a.m. - 4:30p.m. Monday – Friday during the first year of study. Occasionally attendance during evening hours is required.

### **9. Clinical Schedule—Year II**

Clinical schedules are generally 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday – Friday. However, various clinical sites may require evening, night, weekend and on-call hours. All students must be prepared to meet the requirements of their assigned clinical site.

### **10. Cell Phones**

Physician Assistant students are required to own or rent cell phones while involved with the supervised clinical training portion of the physician assistant curriculum (beginning the first summer of Year II). This phone must have a range of at least the Greater Baltimore Metropolitan area. It will be the student's responsibility to purchase and or contact for phone services during this period.

### **11. Computer Requirements**

The Physician Assistant Program requires that each Physician Assistant student have acquired a multimedia capable laptop computer. (Please check with the Program before making a purchase.)

Minimum requirements include:

- Laptop
- Multimedia package
- Windows XP or Vista operating system
- Microsoft WORD word-processing software. The college standard is Microsoft WORD 2007.
- Wi-fi
- Modem (56000 bps, a cable or DSL modem is preferred)
- Printer

### **12. E-mail Accounts**

The program requires that students establish an email account with Towson University. Important communication among students, faculty and staff occurs via this e-mail address.

### **13. PDA Requirement**

The Physician Assistant Program requires that each Physician Assistant student have a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) or cell phone with PDA capabilities.

### **14. Physical Exam Practice**

PA Students are required to act as surrogate patients for fellow students for history taking and physical examinations (with the exception of the breast and genitalia). All students must be willing to allow themselves to be examined by both male and female fellow students and be examined with full body exposure (with the exception of breasts and genitalia). Women must wear a two-piece bathing suit (leaving most of the anterior and posterior thorax exposed) and gym shorts. Full exposure of the abdomen is required as well as exposure of the chest (with the exception of the areas covered by the sports bra for examination of the heart and lungs). Men must wear gym shorts.

### **15. Criminal Background Checks**

Applicants should be aware that state medical boards will conduct criminal background checks on PA applicants for state licensure. In most instances, individuals with a criminal background will not be granted licensure. As some affiliate clinical sites require student criminal background checks, all SHP students are required to submit to and pay for a criminal background check.

Students who are assigned a clinical site where criminal background checks are required and who are denied access to any clinical site based on the criminal background check will be dismissed from the program.

#### **16. Drug and Alcohol Testing**

Program clinical sites may require routine random drug and alcohol screening or may require testing based on student inappropriate behavior in the clinical setting. Students required by a clinical setting to undergo screening or testing who test positive for drugs or alcohol are subject to dismissal from the program.

#### **17. Information technology and literacy expectations of entering students**

Entering students are expected to possess the following computer skills upon entry into the program:

- Word processing (Microsoft word preferred)
- Presentation software (PowerPoint preferred)
- Internet browsing capability

#### **18. Preparing for the Study of Medicine**

The study load for entering PA students is substantial and clearly greater than loads that most undergraduate or graduate students are expected to carry. Applicants and those preparing for admission may want to investigate *Study Without Stress: Mastering Medical Sciences* by E. Kelman & K. Straker (ISBN: 9780761916796), Sage Publications. It is a paperback and costs around \$40.00. This book represents 25 years of work of two medical educators who did Study Skills workshops for medical students. It has practical information, both general and specific, that covers the gamut of the challenges of medical education.

## PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT CLASS PROFILE 2012

(June 2010 entrance)

<b>Age Range:</b>	21-54
<b>Average Age:</b>	28
<b>Sex:</b>	6 Males, 27 Females
<b>Residency:</b>	In-State: 32 Out-of-State: 1
<b>Education:</b>	All have Bachelor's degrees 5 have Master's degree 3 have Doctoral degree (including foreign medical degree)

### Health Care Experience:

EMT (basic and paramedic)  
Medical Technologist  
Assistants: OT, PT, Chiropractic, MLT, Research  
Nursing  
CNA  
Other health care experience: Sports Medicine, Corpsman

### Major Fields of Undergraduate Study:

Biology  
Other Sciences  
Medical Technology  
Psychology  
Liberal Arts  
Other Medically Related

Other Majors: Nutrition, Health Science

### Academic Grade Point Averages:

Overall GPA:	3.48
Average Last 60 Credits GPA:	3.78
Average Prerequisite GPA:	3.65
Average Science course work GPA:	3.50

## Prerequisite Courses Equivalents

\*Biology majors may substitute 8 credits in anatomy (comparative/ vertebrate) and physiology (mammalian).

Prerequisite Course	TOWSON UNIVERSITY	CCBC Community Colleges of Baltimore County (includes Essex, Catonsville, Dundalk)	UMCP University of Maryland-College Park	UMBC University of Maryland-Baltimore County	AACC Anne Arundel Community College
Microbiology	<b>BIOL 315</b> Medical Microbiology	<b>BIOL 230</b> Microbiology	<b>BSCI 223</b> Microbiology	<b>BIOL 275 and 275 L</b> Microbiology and Microbiology Lab	<b>BIO 223</b> Microbiology
Anatomy or Human Anatomy & Physiology I*	<b>BIOL 213</b> Human Anatomy and Physiology I	<b>BIOL 220</b> Human Anatomy and Physiology I	<b>BSCI 201</b> Human Anatomy and Physiology I	<b>BIOL 251 and 251L</b> Anatomy and Physiology I and Lab	<b>BIO 233</b> Anatomy and Physiology 1
Physiology or Human Anatomy & Physiology II*	<b>BIOL 214</b> Human Anatomy and Physiology II	<b>BIOL 221</b> Human Anatomy and Physiology II	<b>BSCI 202</b> Human Anatomy and Physiology II	<b>BIOL 252 and 252L</b> Anatomy and Physiology II and Lab	<b>BIO 234</b> Anatomy and Physiology 2
Biochemistry	<b>CHEM 106</b> Chemistry for Allied Health Prof. II <b>OR</b> <b>CHEM 351</b> Biochemistry I	<b>CHEM 146 and 147 L</b> Introduction to Organic and Biochemistry and Lab	<b>CHEM 104</b> Fundamentals of Organic and Biochemistry	<b>CHEM 123 and 123L</b> Introduction to Organic and Biochemistry I	<b>CHE 113</b> Fundamentals of Organic Chemistry/Biochemistry <b>OR</b> <b>CHEM 115</b> (Preferred) General Organic and Introduction to Biochemistry
Statistics (Any basic college level statistics course regardless of discipline)	<b>MATH 231</b> Basic Statistics <b>OR</b> <b>PSYC 212</b> Behavioral Statistics <b>OR</b> <b>ECON 205</b> Statistics for Business and Economics I	<b>STATISTICS</b>	<b>STATISTICS</b>	<b>STATISTICS</b>	<b>STATISTICS</b>

## *Frequently Asked Questions*

### General Information

**1) How many students does the program accept each year?**

35

**2) How often and when are classes admitted?**

Students are admitted once per year. Each new class starts in June.

**3) How many applications does the program receive each year?**

500 plus

**4) What is the mailing address for the program?**

Towson University • CCBC Essex  
Physician Assistant Program  
7201 Rossville Blvd, N 317  
Baltimore, MD 21234

**5) How can I reach the admissions office?**

Contact admissions by calling 443-840-2810 or e-mailing [pshanahan@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:pshanahan@ccbcmd.edu). The admissions office fax number is 443-840-6588.

**6) Does the program hold information sessions?**

The program holds information sessions at least twice each year. Please check web site for information and registration.

**7) I will be in the area and would like to meet with an admissions counselor.  
Is this possible?**

If you have reviewed the website thoroughly and still have questions, please contact:

Charlie Martino

CCBC School of Health Professions Case Manager/Counselor

443-840-1037

[cmartino@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:cmartino@ccbcmd.edu)

Essex Campus A244

or

Lois Simmons

Director SHP Office of Selected Admissions

443-840-1406

[lsimmons@ccbcmd.edu](mailto:lsimmons@ccbcmd.edu)

Essex Campus J101

The health professions guidance counselor at your school may also be a helpful resource.

**8) Can I attend the program part time?**

No. The program is 26 months in length and all students must attend full time for the entire program.

**9) Does the program require the GRE?**

No, the GRE is not required. The program does not review GRE scores, even if they are submitted.

**10) Is it possible for me to work to support myself or work as a graduate assistant to finance my education?**

It is crucial that students plan ahead so that employment, full or part-time, is not necessary during the entire length of the program. Students typically spend 40 hours each week in the classroom or clinical setting and have responsibilities for assignments and additional study. **No** special consideration will be made for students who choose for any reason to ignore this recommendation.

**11) If this is a collaborative program of Towson University and CCBC to whom do I pay my tuition?**

Towson University will bill you for graduate courses (600, 700 and 800 level) and CCBC will bill you for the undergraduate courses.

**12) So I would be a student of both CCBC and Towson University?**

Yes. Students accepted in the program have full rights and privileges to both Towson University and CCBC facilities and activities.

**13) Where are classes held? Will I need to commute between both campuses?**

All classes are given on the CCBC Essex campus, where there is ample free parking and excellent laboratory facilities.

**14) Who teaches in the program? Towson faculty or CCBC faculty?**

Physician Assistant Program faculty have appointments at Towson University and CCBC.

**15) How do I register for courses?**

Once accepted into the PA Program the program registers students for both Towson and CCBC classes. It is the student's responsibility to pay the bill on time so that registration is not cancelled.

## Application

**1) When and how can I apply to the program?**

All applications to the Towson University/CCBC Essex Physician Assistant program must be made through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). CASPA information can be found at [www.caspainfo@caspaonline.org](mailto:www.caspainfo@caspaonline.org). This link is also on the website. Applications for the June 2012 start of the program will be accepted by CASPA starting April 15<sup>th</sup> of the year preceding the start year (i.e. if you are planning to apply to start the program in June 2014 you will make application between April 15<sup>th</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup> of 2013. The deadline for application to the Towson University • CCBC Essex PA Program is September 1<sup>st</sup>. However, **this is a rolling admissions process and all prospective students are urged to apply as soon as they are ready.** Once a class has been selected, no other

applicants will be considered, even if their applications are received before September 1<sup>st</sup>.  
Maximum class size is 35 students.

**2) Is there a supplemental application and where do I find it?**

There are three supplemental applications: Towson University Graduate School, CCBC, and the PA Program. **Do not** submit any of these applications until you apply to CASPA and hear from the Program. **Only those applicants selected for an interview will need to complete the three supplemental applications.** If you are selected for an interview, the program will send you the three applications with instructions.

**3) If PA schools have different deadlines, how will I know when to apply through CASPA?**

You should apply to CASPA by the earliest deadline of those schools to which you are applying. Remember, for best consideration for admission to the Towson/Essex Program apply as soon as possible after CASPA application cycle opens (Usually April 15-May 1) The Towson/Essex deadline is September 1<sup>st</sup>. Keep in mind that it generally takes between 3-4 weeks to receive a completed application from CASPA once they have received all of your required documentation. We will start reviewing as soon as we have received your completed CASPA application.

**4) Does the program offer early decision?**

No, the admissions process is rolling. Applications are considered as soon as CASPA materials are received by the program. Those with excellent credentials will be offered interviews first. The remaining qualified applicants will be interviewed as space allows.

**5) If I only want to apply to the Towson/Essex PA program, can I apply directly to the program and not through CASPA?**

No, all applications to the Towson/Essex PA Assistant Program must be made through CASPA.

**6) Are paper applications available?**

No. The CASPA application must be made on line. The secondary applications for CCBC, TU and the Towson/Essex PA Program are paper applications and will be sent to the applicants selected for an interview with instructions.

**7) Where will I send my original transcripts?**

All official transcripts should be sent to CASPA. If you are asked to interview you will be sent instructions on how to send original transcripts to the Program.

**8) For best consideration from whom should I get my letters of recommendation?**

All three letters of recommendation should come from persons who are familiar with Physician Assistants and the profession. Preferred letters will come from physicians who work with PAs or PAs themselves. College science faculty are also good sources for letters of reference. Other healthcare professionals who have worked with PAs or PA students are also acceptable.

## Admission Requirements

### 1) What courses may be substituted for the program prerequisites listed in the Application and Admissions Information Brochure on the website?

There is a chart of comparable courses for CCBC, Towson University and other area schools. If you did not attend a local school or the course in question is not listed, you should go to the Towson or CCBC website course descriptions and compare your course description to those. Comparative anatomy and vertebrate physiology can be substituted for Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II. Final determination of whether or not a course can substitute for a prerequisite can only be made after application by the admissions committee and is often dependent on the applicants overall preparedness.

### 2) Can organic chemistry be substituted for the Essentials of Organic and Biochemistry course requirement?

The program requires the “Essentials of Organic and Biochemistry” course at CCBC or an equivalent biochemistry course at any accredited college. . Occasionally, the program may accept organic chemistry as a substitute provided the catalog description demonstrates substantial biochemistry content. However, this determination can only be made after application is completed.

### 3) When must required prerequisites be completed in order to be eligible for consideration for admission?

As it states under *requirements* on the website all prerequisite courses should be completed by September 1<sup>st</sup> in the year of application. However, applicants who have completed all but one course and are enrolled in the last course for the fall semester can be considered. Chances of acceptance are increased if all courses are complete at the time of CASPA application submission. As stated above for the best chance of admission, application should be made as soon as possible after April 15<sup>th</sup>.

### 4) Must I have completed my bachelor’s degree before I apply for admission?

For the best chance of admission, the degree should be completed prior to application. However, individuals who will not complete the degree until the end of the fall semester in the application year will still be considered on a space available basis. Occasionally, exceptional applicants who will not complete the Bachelor’s Degree until the spring semester (May) of the admission year will be selected for an interview and selected for admission provided they have:

- Completed all prerequisites with a grade of “B” or better at the time of application.
- A 3.25 GPA for upper division (third and fourth years of undergraduate study or last 60 credits) courses at the time of application.
- A 3.00 Science GPA
- Completed all required health care hours by the date of application.

### 5) Do I need to have a medical terminology course at the time of application?

No, medical terminology is strongly recommended prior to application. However, applicants if accepted to the program **must take a 3 credit medical terminology course before the program start.** An online course is available for the spring semester.

## **6) Can I have outstanding prerequisite courses when I apply to the program?**

Yes, you may have **one** outstanding prerequisite at the time of application, but the CASPA application must indicate enrollment or the intent to take the course by the end of the fall semester. All prerequisite courses (Anatomy and Physiology I & II, Microbiology, Essentials of Organic and Biochemistry, college level statistics) **must** be completed by the end of the fall semester in the year that you apply.

## **7) What if I am taking a program prerequisite in summer or fall course of the year that I apply? Where and when should I send the grade reports?**

As soon as you receive your grade report send a copy to:

Patti Shanahan  
Office of Selective Admissions, J101  
School of Health Professions  
CCBC Essex  
7201 Rossville Blvd  
Baltimore, MD 21237

Make sure you indicate when you anticipate taking the courses on the CASPA application.

## **8) Is there an age limit on prerequisite courses?**

All required courses should be completed within the last 10 years. Most competitive applicants will have completed course work within the preceding five years. It is recommended that anatomy and physiology are taken within the preceding five years.

## **9) I have a graduate degree from a US institution; may I earn just the PA certificate?**

No. All course work must be completed within the program to be eligible for the PA Certificate and Masters Degree. It is not possible to earn one without the other.

## **10) Can you explain what “Patient Contact Experience” means?**

The program is looking for applicants who have thoroughly investigated the healthcare professions. Patient contact experience usually includes working with patients providing direct or ancillary care. Experience gained as a student enrolled in a healthcare profession also counts. Examples of “Patient Contact Experience” include but are not limited to: Nurses, Pharmacists, Speech Pathologists, Paramedics, EMT-B, Military Medics, Medical Laboratory Technologists, Physical Therapists and PT Techs, Athletic Trainers, Surgical Technologists, Patient Care Associates/CNA, Emergency Room Technicians, Patient Escorts and Transporters. Human medical researchers also may qualify. The addition of several hours shadowing a PA is encouraged particularly for those who have limited patient contact experience.

## **11) What types of healthcare experience will qualify me for admission consideration?**

The program is very liberal when it comes to accepting patient contact hours. Any experience paid or volunteer that brings you in contact with medical patients will be accepted for the minimum. However, experience with higher levels of responsibility

receives higher admissions scores. For example, an applicant with several years of nursing experience will receive a higher score than someone with patient escort experience.

**12) I have no healthcare experience. How do I go about gaining that experience?**

While applicants with health care experience in another health care area are preferred, patient contact or medically related experience may include:

Clinical hours completed as part of a health care training program

Medical or clinical research with or without patient contact

Volunteer hospital or clinical experience,

Documented home health care experience.

Some potential applicants have chosen to pursue training as a phlebotomist, certified nursing assistant or EMT-B. A first step might be to contact the volunteer office of your local hospital or the Red Cross to find out about volunteer opportunities. You could also contact schools in your area that provide health care training.

**13) How much healthcare experience must I have at the time of application to be considered?**

Admissions materials of candidates with less than 400 of the required hours are not evaluated. Generally, successful candidates have 700-1400 hours or more. See number 10 above for types of acceptable healthcare experience.

**14) Will healthcare experience hours earned after the CASPA application is submitted be considered as part of my application?**

No. The admissions process is rolling. Therefore, only the courses and experience documented on the CASPA application can be considered in the evaluation process.

**15) When will I know whether I have been accepted to the program?**

Applicants are notified on an ongoing basis about decisions made regarding the status of their applications. All decisions are typically made by mid January.

## **Admissions Interviews**

**1) Is an interview required to obtain admission to the program?**

Yes, an interview is necessary. Students who are not offered interviews have been denied from the program. If you are chosen for an interview, you will be notified immediately by e-mail and, in some cases, phone. Those denied admission interviews should hear from the program no later than December 31 in the year of application.

**2) What occurs on interview day?**

Typical of the interview process are writing sample, individual interviews, team interviews (team of applicants interviewed or evaluated by a admissions committee panel), program director interview and informal interaction with first year PA students.

**3) If I am chosen for the interview process, what documents will I be asked to bring to interview day?**

None. All required documents must be submitted prior to the interview.

#### **4) What criteria does Towson/Essex PA Program use to evaluate applicants during the interview process?**

The interview process is designed to evaluate each candidate's communication skills, maturity level, critical thinking ability, match to the program's mission and vision, and understanding of the role of the PA in today's healthcare environment.

#### **5) How many interviews will be conducted?**

Generally, the program will interview 60-70 applicants for the 35 available seats.

### **International Students**

#### **1) What are immigration requirements?**

International students must submit to the Towson University International Student and Scholar Office [International Student Information Form](#) (ISI Form) and a copy of a passport. United States residents should provide the office with a current visa. If you are a dependent, please submit a copy of the visa for your parent or spouse.

#### **2) What is the residency requirement?**

International students must provide a copy of permanent residency status (green card) and a copy of current visa.

#### **3) Do I need to take the TOEFL exam?**

- a. All international students for whom English is not a native language are required to complete the TOEFL1 exam.
- b. International students who hold a degree from a U.S. institution are exempt from this requirement.
- c. Applicants who are not United States citizens are considered international students
- d. Minimum required TOEFL score--550 (paper-based testing) or 79/80 (internet based testing)
- e. Towson University is a testing site and offers the test in the fall and spring semesters. Information can be obtained [www/towson.edu/etc](http://www.towson.edu/etc). Towson's institution code is 5404.

#### **4) Are there additional requirements for international students?**

- a. Towson University requires copies of all transcripts, including foreign transcripts, sent directly from your university to the Graduate Admission Office (This does not need to occur before acceptance for an interview. Those selected for an interview will be sent additional information)
- b. International transcripts must be evaluated by the WES.\* Please note: CASPA and Towson University allow other options. The PA Program requires WES credentialing. World Education Service (WES)  
Bowling Green Station  
PO Box 5087  
New York, NY 10274  
(212)966-6311  
Fax: (212)739-6100  
Website: <http://www.wes.org>

For additional information contact Janet Schmitt at (410) 704-3317 or [JLSchmitt@towson.edu](mailto:JLSchmitt@towson.edu).

**5) If I am an international medical graduate can I receive advanced placement or standing?**

No. The program grants no advanced standing regardless of background. All those accepted to the program must take **all** PA Program courses.

**6) If I am an international medical graduate with a number of years of practice experience is there any way I could receive advanced placement or standing?**

No. The program grants no advanced standing regardless of background. All those accepted to the program must take **all** PA Program courses.

## **Tuition and Financial Aid**

**1) What is the tuition for the program?**

Tuition and fees costs are listed in the PA Program Application and admission information booklet online [www.towson.edu/chp/pa](http://www.towson.edu/chp/pa). Total admissions and fees for the 26 month program for Maryland residents is approximately \$22,000.

**2) How do I qualify for in-state tuition?**

The CCBC considers a student a Maryland resident once s/he has lived in the state and held a Maryland address for three months. Establishing state residency for Towson University is more complicated. Once a student has been a Maryland resident for at least six month, and is currently enrolled in a Towson program an application to establish state residency can be made to the University. One must be able to demonstrate intent to live and work in the state following graduation.

**3) How do I find out if I qualify for in-state tuition rates with Towson University?**

An initial determination of in-state status for Towson University will be made at the time of admission. The determination made at that time, and any determination made thereafter, remains in effect unless or until it is successfully challenged. To qualify for in-state tuition, a student must demonstrate that, for at least twelve (12) consecutive months immediately prior to and including the last date available to register for courses in the semester/term for which the student seeks in-state tuition status, the student had the continuous intent to: 1. Make Maryland his or her permanent home; and 2. Abandon his or her former home state; 3. Reside in Maryland indefinitely; and 4. Reside in Maryland primarily for a purpose other than that of attending an educational institution in Maryland. For more information

<http://www.usmd.edu/regents/bylaws/SectionVIII/VIII270.htmlctu>

**4) How do I apply for financial aid?**

The Towson University College of Graduate Studies and Research can provide information and resources for you as you embark on your graduate education. If you have any further questions, please email [gao@towson.edu](mailto:gao@towson.edu). Also please visit [Towson University's Financial Aid website](#) for more information regarding student grants and loans and the deadlines for consideration for aid.

All financial aid is handled through the Towson University financial aid office which can offer you information about financial assistance. The office is located in the Enrollment Services Building, Room 339. Regular office hours are Monday through Thursday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Friday from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. You can reach Jennifer Schleigh by e-mail at [jschleigh@towson.edu](mailto:jschleigh@towson.edu) or by phone, 410-704-3225.

**5) Should I submit the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid)?**

Yes. Whether or not you have heard back from all of the programs to which you have applied, it is recommended that you complete the FAFSA if you plan to take out loans to finance your education.

**6) Are there any programs that will finance my tuition?**

Yes, there are programs like the National Health Service Corps that you can apply to. More information is available at the Towson University Financial Aid Office.

## **Competitive Applicant Profile**

**1) What does the program consider to be a competitive applicant?**

The competitive applicant demonstrates core values such as: respect, integrity, accountability, compassion, dedication, tolerance, flexibility, and self-reflection. In addition, the applicant has superior communication skills, a high level of maturity, and demonstrate an understanding the role of the PA in today's healthcare environment.

**2) What is the typically GPA of a competitive applicant?**

Successful applicants will generally have a minimum of a 3.2 overall GPA and a 3.0 science GPA.

**3) What is the average amount of health care experience of a competitive applicant?**

Seven hundred hours (six months) of direct patient care are required for consideration, with an additional six months of health-related experience recommended. The more competitive applicant will exceed these requirements and recommendations.

# Physician Assistant Applicant

## Examples of Patient Contact / Healthcare Experience

### Highest Level

Chiropractor  
 Corpsman/medic, IDC  
 Dental Hygienist  
 Diagnostic Medical  
 DVM  
 Dietician  
 Forensic Pathologist  
 Histotechnologist  
 International Medical Graduate  
 with significant US clinical  
 experience  
 Medical Technologist  
 Natural Pathologists  
 Neurophysiology Technologist  
 Nuclear Med Tech  
 Nursing - RN / CRNP  
 Nutritionist / Registered  
 Occupational Therapist  
 Optometrist  
 Osteopath  
 Paramedic, AA  
 Pharmacist  
 Physical Therapist  
 Podiatry  
 Psychologist  
 Radiation Therapy  
 Radiography Tech  
 Respiratory Therapist  
 Sonographer  
 Speech Therapist

### Moderate Level

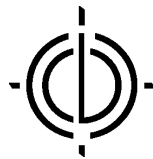
Acupuncturist  
 Anesthesia Tech  
 Athletic Trainer  
 Cardiovascular Tech  
 Clinical Medical Assistant  
 CT Tech  
 Dental Assistant  
 ER Tech  
 International medical graduate  
 with limited US experience  
 Massage Therapist  
 Medical Laboratory Tech  
 Medical Scribe  
 Mortuary Science  
 Nursing - LPN/ Nursing Tech  
 Occupational Therapist Asst  
 Orthopedic Tech  
 Physical Therapist Assistant  
 Research (Human, Clinical)/  
 Patient Educator  
 Social Worker / Counselor  
 Surgical Tech

### Considered

Caregiver  
 Chaplain  
 EEG Tech  
 International Medical Graduate  
 with no US patient contact  
 Front Office / Receptionist  
 Gerontology Aide  
 Health Information Tech  
 Medical Billing / Coding  
 Medical Records Clerk  
 Medical Transcriptionist  
 Medicine Aide  
 Non-Clinical Medical Assistant  
 Nursing Aide / PCT / GNA /  
 CNA /PCA  
 Office Administrator  
 Pharmaceutical Rep  
 Patient Care Assistant  
 Patient Transporter  
 Personal Trainer  
 Pharm Tech  
 Phlebotomist / Venipuncture  
 Physical Therapy Aide  
 Rehab Technician  
 Research – Limited to lab  
 PA Shadowing  
 Student Internships  
 Vet Tech  
 Veterinary Assistant  
 Volunteer (healthcare)

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The Community College  
of Baltimore County

