The physician assistant profession is one of the newest and most exciting in health care. Physician assistants (PAs) are licensed to practice medicine with physician supervision. They are responsible for making medical decisions and providing a broad range of diagnostic and therapeutic services.

Physician assistants work in a variety of settings, including medical offices, hospital emergency rooms, nursing homes, rural satellite clinics, health maintenance organizations, and patients' homes.

In the traditional office setting, PAs see patients, obtain histories, perform physical examinations, and order necessary laboratory and/or radiological studies. Based on this information, the PA establishes a diagnosis, develops an appropriate management plan, and initiates treatment that may include prescribing medications. The physician is consulted as needed and remains ultimately responsible for the care provided by the physician/PA team. PAs also are involved in both patient and community health education.

The Department of Physician Assistant Studies and Services is part of the Carver College of Medicine. It is located on the University of Iowa health sciences campus, which includes University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics, one of the nation's largest university-owned teaching hospitals.

### Programs

#### Graduate Program of Study

**Major**
- Master of Physician Assistant Studies

### Courses

#### Physician Assistant Studies and Services Courses

**PA:8211 Clinical Decision Making II** 1 s.h.
Concepts of evidence-based medicine; development of the knowledge and practical skills to search the medical literature for answers to clinical questions and critically appraise the evidence found.

**PA:8212 Fundamentals of EKG and ACLS for Physician Assistant Students** 2 s.h.
Theory and practice with basic analysis of EKG strips and interpretation, including rhythm disturbances; completion of American Heart Association's Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) program.

**PA:8213 Fundamentals of Radiology for Physician Assistant Students** 1 s.h.
Theory and practice for interpretation of radiographs including general radiology, body, chest, musculoskeletal, pediatrics, and neurology. Requirements: enrollment in physician assistant studies and services.

**PA:8214 Fundamentals of Clinical Laboratory Medicine for Physician Assistant Students** 1 s.h.
Theory and practice of selected clinical laboratory techniques and procedures; emphasis on effective utilization of clinical laboratory in diagnosis and management of disease states. Requirements: enrollment in physician assistant studies and services.

**PA:8300 Physician Assistant Clinical Second Year** arr.
**PA:8301 Seminar for Physician Assistant Students** 1 s.h.
Professional issues that affect the physician assistant's practice of medicine.

**PA:8302 Physician Assistant Professional and Clinical Skills** 1 s.h.
Hands-on experience and activities; suturing, injections, prescription and order writing, medical records, patient confidentiality, Iowa Law governing physician assistant practice, motivational interviewing, toddler and disability exams.

**PA:8303 Physician Assistant Senior Capstone** 1 s.h.
Demonstration of strong clinical knowledge base and proficiency in basic clinical problem solving; focus on student's ability to think logically and critically, integrate and synthesize knowledge, access evidence-based medical resources, document patient care appropriately, apply clinical knowledge, and demonstrate professional behavior. Requirements: enrollment in physician assistant studies and services.

**PA:8304 Emergency Medicine for Physician Assistant Students** arr.
Obtaining and recording pertinent historical data, obtaining indicated laboratory studies, assessing the results, arriving at a diagnosis, formulating a treatment plan, implementing appropriate therapy.

**PA:8305 Gynecology for Physician Assistant Students** 4 s.h.
Opportunity to develop proficiency in history and physical exams of gynecological patients; outpatient, family planning, gynecological cancer, concepts of diagnostic techniques and therapy.
Experience working with children and adolescents.

Students arr. PA:8325 Pediatric Elective for Physician Assistant
Opportunity for involvement in varied surgical procedures.

Proficiency in recognizing otolaryngology problems; how to institute appropriate management of these conditions;

PA:8324 Otolaryngology Elective for Physician Assistant Students
Proficiency in recognizing otolaryngology problems; how to institute appropriate management of these conditions;

PA:8325 Pediatric Elective for Physician Assistant Students
Experience working with children and adolescents.
PA:8338 Internal Medicine (Gastroenterology) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Experience with a wide range of gastrointestinal pathology; history and physical exams of gastrointestinal diagnostic procedures, follow-up care of patients through outpatient clinics.

PA:8339 Internal Medicine (Oncology) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Experience to develop diagnostic skills in clinical oncology; and gain familiarity with methods of staging common cancers; assistance in therapy and outpatient management of cancer patients.

PA:8340 Internal Medicine (Geriatrics) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Familiarity with broad spectrum of medical conditions among the elderly; experience in history and physical exams, diagnosis of geriatric patients along with follow-up visits.

PA:8341 Internal Medicine (Pulmonary) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Development of basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis, treatment, and management of pulmonary diseases.

PA:8342 Internal Medicine (Palliative Care/Hospice) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Work on a hospice care team performing evaluation, treatment, and education of patients with terminal illnesses; dealing with the prospect of death.

PA:8343 Internal Medicine (Infectious Disease) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Development of basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnoses, treatment, and management of infectious diseases.

PA:8345 Urology Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Proficiency in managing patients with urologic conditions; skill in taking a urologic history, performing physical exams, interpreting laboratory studies and data.

PA:8346 Family Practice Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Proficiency in delivering ambulatory primary care.

PA:8347 Gynecology Elective (Women's Health) for Physician Assistant Students  
Experience in annual gynecologic exams, PAP screening, gynecology problems, contraception issues, STD screening and counseling, common gynecologic procedures.

PA:8348 Migrant Health Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of diseases, injuries, and conditions related to environmental exposure in migrant worker populations.

PA:8349 Occupational Medicine Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of work-related diseases, injuries, and conditions related to environmental exposure.

PA:8350 Pediatrics (Neonatology) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skill for diagnosis, treatment, and management of critically ill infants.

PA:8351 Internal Medicine (Rheumatology) for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis, treatment, and management of rheumatologic diseases.

PA:8352 Medical Intensive Care for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis, treatment, and management of critically ill patients.

PA:8353 International Medicine for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of diseases, injuries, and conditions relevant to international medicine.

PA:8354 Interventional Radiology for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis and treatment of conditions requiring interventional therapy.

PA:8355 Gynecologic Oncology Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Experience developing diagnostic skills in clinical gynecologic oncology, learning methods of staging specific cancers; and assisting in therapy and outpatient management of patients with varied cancers.

PA:8356 Wilderness Medicine for Physician Assistant Students  
Four-week emergency medicine elective taken in conjunction with Carver College of Medicine; mix of didactic and experiential learning; ten-day trip to Colorado to learn about hypothermia, altitude medicine, search and rescue, field evaluation, treatment and evacuation of common back country injuries; lectures and simulations.

PA:8357 Physician Assistant Transitions to Clinical Rotations  
Additional didactic and hands-on skills essential for preparation prior to core and elective clinical rotations. Requirements: enrollment in physician assistant studies and services.

PA:8358 Internal Medicine (Endocrinology) Elective for Physician Assistant Students  
Basic clinical knowledge and skills for diagnosis treatment and management for common endocrinology diseases.

PA:8359 Surgery Elective for Physician Assistant Students (Plastics and Reconstruction)  
Experience in a wide range of surgical problems, procedures, and treatments in medical reconstruction, plastics, and trauma; includes diagnosis, care and treatment, and postoperative courses for surgical patients.

PA:8360 Physician Assistant Summer Clinicals  
Clinical course for physician assistant students during their second summer session.

PA:8361 Physician Assistant Remediation and Self Study  
Completion of remediation or self-study program requirements.