

Revised 10/11/2011

## The University

East Carolina University (ECU) boasts the only Physician Assistant Program offered in the University of North Carolina system. ECU enrolls more than 23,000 students each year. The university, which serves as a focal point in eastern North Carolina for business, medicine and higher education in many fields, offers Programs through the College of Arts and Sciences and the professional Schools of Art, Business, Education, Health and Human Performance, Human Environmental Sciences, Industry and Technology, Music, and Social Work and Criminal Justice Studies. The Division of Health Sciences is comprised of the Colleges of Allied Health Sciences and Nursing, the Health Sciences Library and the School of Medicine. Pitt County Memorial Hospital (PCMH) serves as a teaching hospital for the School of Medicine and also operates a family practice center, radiation-oncology center and outpatient clinics in several medical specialties. More information is available at <http://www.ecu.edu/>.

The ECU Physician Assistant Studies Program enrolled its first class in 1997, and that class graduated in 1999 with a bachelor's degree. The first master level class enrolled in May 2003 and graduated in 2005 with a Master of Science (MS) in PA Studies. The ECU PA Program no longer offers enrollment in a bachelor's Program or a distance learning Program.

## Greenville

Greenville, a city of more than 80,000 people, is located in eastern North Carolina, midway between Raleigh, the state capital, and the Atlantic Coast and is within 125 miles of Norfolk and 157 miles of Richmond, Virginia.

Greenville is the home of the premier medical center of eastern North Carolina. ECU's Health Sciences Division, PCMH and the University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina serve the region. Four North Carolina Area Health Education Centers (AHECs) are headquartered in the region, with the twenty-three-county eastern AHEC headquartered in Greenville.

## PCMH/University Health Systems

Pitt County Memorial Hospital (PCMH) is the primary teaching facility for the Brody School of Medicine. The hospital provides an environment where patient care, clinical education and medical research flourish. The scope and complexity of hospital services are constantly expanding to meet the growing health-care needs of the community and the region. Originally a community hospital serving Greenville and Pitt County, PCMH now serves people in twenty-nine counties in eastern North Carolina.

PCMH is a tertiary care hospital with critical care units for medical, surgical, neurological, pediatric, coronary and cardiac surgery patients. Other facilities include outpatient medical and surgical units, a freestanding surgical center, a birthing center, cardiac catheterization laboratories and a hemodialysis center.

The close cooperation between the hospital and the School of Medicine has made possible the development of many services not available at most community hospitals. The exceptional relationship between the hospital, the medical school and private practice physicians is embodied in the formal name for the medical campus—University Health Systems of Eastern Carolina.

## The Physician Assistant Profession

Physician assistants (PAs) are highly qualified health professionals prepared through a demanding academic and clinical curriculum to practice medicine supervised by licensed physicians. As members of

the health-care team, PAs assume a broadly defined range of medical diagnostic and patient management functions that have traditionally been performed by physicians in both office practice settings and health institutions.

The maldistribution and shortage of health manpower in the 1960s gave rise to the concept of the PA. Today, the PA profession is one of the fastest growing health careers both in North Carolina and the United States. There are more than 75,000 PAs in the nation eligible to practice with more than 3,000 practicing in North Carolina. 38 percent of PAs work in family medicine and other primary care specialties, but the utilization of PAs has increased to include every field and subspecialty in medicine. Physician assistants have proven their effectiveness and ability to provide quality care in many settings—remote rural areas, major urban medical centers, physicians' private practices, hospitals, public health clinics, managed care organizations, the uniformed services, and other federal agencies. Employers in nonclinical fields, such as research and administration, are also utilizing the talents of PAs. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects a greater than 50 percent increase in the number of PA positions by the year 2014, making the PA profession one of its top four career choices for the next decade.

A commitment to cost-effective, quality and compassionate patient care is the foundation of the PA profession. By assuming some of the duties traditionally performed by a physician, the PA enables the supervising physician to spend more time with patients with more serious or complicated medical problems. Physician assistants are educated to take medical histories, perform physical examinations, order and interpret tests, make diagnoses, establish and carry out treatment plans, suture wounds, assist in surgery, and provide preventive health counseling. In forty-nine states including North Carolina, plus the District of Columbia, Guam, the uniformed services, and other federal agencies, PAs have delegated authority to write prescriptions.

## Curriculum

The goal of the physician assistant Program at East Carolina University is to provide a primary care-oriented, rural-based training Program for entry-level health-care professionals. The educational objectives of the Program are based on the Accreditation Standards for Physician Assistant Education (2006) as established by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA). The standards concentrate on the patient management skills of evaluation, monitoring, diagnosis, therapeutics, counseling, and referral. In meeting these goals and objectives, the PA Program will provide clinical experiences in rural communities.

## Pre-PA Phase

Qualified students must have a bachelor's degree to be considered for the intensive twenty-seven month PA professional track which begins in August of each year. The bachelor's degree must be completed by the end of the spring semester prior to admission. **All PA Program prerequisites must be completed September 1.** The prerequisite courses may be taken at any regionally accredited institution of higher learning including community colleges. Prerequisites will be accepted only with a letter grade, not with a Pass/Fail. All prerequisites must have been taken within seven (7) years of application. We recommend that anatomy and physiology be taken within 2 years of the program application date; however, this is not a requirement. The academic advisor for ECU students is Anthony Coutouzis: [coutouzisa@ecu.edu](mailto:coutouzisa@ecu.edu). Applicants from other colleges or universities should have their academic advisors contact Mr. Coutouzis with academic questions or course equivalencies for ECU. There is no advanced placement, transfer credit or experiential learning credit within the ECU PA Program. **AP, CLEP, Survey Course or Self-Directed Study course**

credit will not be accepted for any prerequisite courses.

**Course Prerequisites**

**Required:**

<b>General Chemistry or higher with lab</b>	8 semester hrs.
<b>Human Anatomy &amp; Physiology with lab</b>	8 semester hrs.
<b>Microbiology</b>	3 semester hrs.
<b>Statistics</b>	3 semester hrs.
<b>Introductory Psychology or higher</b>	3 semester hrs.
<b>Medical Terminology</b>	2 semester hrs.
<b>Genetics</b>	3 semester hrs.

(We **do not** accept ECU BIOL 2130/2131 to fulfill any portion of the human anatomy and physiology prerequisites.)

Applicants must have at least a 3.0 GPA in their prerequisite coursework to be considered for the program. A grade of B or higher in each course is recommended.

**Taking Courses at a North Carolina Community College?**

Colleges within the North Carolina community college system use the same course name and number designations regardless of which location you choose to attend. Use the information below to plan and register for your prerequisite course of study.

NC Community College Equivalent Courses

Course	ECU Course Number	NC Comm. College Course Number
General or Intro Chemistry with lab	CHEM 1150/1151 <b>AND</b> CHEM 1160/1161	CHM 151 <b>AND</b> CHM 152
Human Anatomy & Physiology with lab	BIOL 2140/2141 <b>AND</b> BIOL 2150/2151	BIO 168 <b>AND</b> BIO 169
Microbiology	BIOL 2110 or BIOL 3220	BIO 275
Statistics	BIOS 1500, MATH 2228 or 2283 or PSYC 2101	MAT 150 or 151
Introductory Psychology or higher	PSYC 1000	PSY 150
Medical Terminology	ATEP 2800 or HIMA 3000*	OST 141 <b>and</b> 142 <b>OR</b> MED 121 <b>and</b> 122**
Genetics	BIOL 2300	BIO 250

\*ATEP 2800 can be taken online to fulfill the medical terminology prerequisite requirement. HIMA 3000 is often reserved for ECU majors in specific allied health fields.

\*\* Students must take BOTH of these courses to fulfill the 2-hour credit for ECU.

**Professional PA Training-Didactic Phase**

The on-campus didactic curriculum is fifteen months in length consisting of 59 semester hours conducted on the campus of ECU. The curriculum is oriented toward primary care infused with content related to unique problems and issues of health-care delivery in remote settings.

**Professional PA Training-Clinical Phase**

Didactic Curriculum	Semester Hours
<b>Fall I</b>	
PADP 6030 Clinical Gross Anatomy	5
PADP 6040 Human Physiology	5
PADP 6050 Intro. to Clinical Medicine	3
PADP 6200 History and Physical Exam I	2
PADP 6000 Role of Physician Assistant	1
	16
<b>Spring</b>	
PADP 6500 Pharmacology	4
PADP 6210 History and Physical Exam II	3
PADP 6150 Clinical Medicine I	5
PADP 6010 Diagnostic Methods I	3
	15
<b>Summer</b>	
PADP 6020 Diagnostic Methods II	3
PADP 6250 Clinical Medicine II	4
PADP 6850 Health Promotion/Disease Prevention	2
PADP 6220 History and Physical Exam III	3
	12
<b>Fall II</b>	
PADP 6680 Introduction to Clerkship	4
PADP 6800 Behavioral Medicine	2
PADP 6650 Surgery and Emergency Medicine	4
PADP 6980 Research Project	4
PADP 6810 Medical Ethics	2
	16
Didactic Total	59

The twelve-month clinical phase equals 40 semester hours with more than 1,900 contact hours of patient care. Eight clinical rotations are conducted at a variety of clinical sites located in Eastern North Carolina with priority given to rural, medically underserved areas.

**Program Course Descriptions**

Clinical Curriculum	Semester Hours
<b>Spring II, Summer II and Fall III</b>	
PADP 6310 Behavioral Med Clin Pract	6 wks 5
PADP 6320 Internal Med Clin Pract	6 wks 5
PADP 6330 Family Med Clin Pract	6wks 5
PADP 6340 Surg Clin Pract	6 wks 5
PADP 6350 Emerg. Med Clin Pract	6 wks 5
PADP 6360 Pediatrics Clin Pract	6 wks 5
PADP 6370 Women's Health Pract	6 wks 5
PADP 6380 Geriatrics Clin Pract	6 wks 5
Clinical Total	40
<b>Program Total</b>	<b>99</b>

**Didactic Phase:**

**PADP 6030. Clinical Gross Anatomy (5,0)**

Structure of human body with virtual anatomy lab and clinical case studies.

**PADP 6040. Human Physiology (5)**

P: Enrolled in the PA program or by permission of the chair. Physiological principles fundamental to living tissue. All body systems studied as they relate to normal and pathological conditions in humans.

**PADP 6000. The Role of the Physician Assistant and the History, Philosophy, and Ethics of Medical Practice (1)**

History of medicine. Introduces medical ethics, nonclinical aspects of dependent practice, and roles of other health care providers involved in medical team approach to medical care and disease prevention. Explores different cultures and their perception of medicine, legal issues, quality assurance, and risk management. Facilitates development of realistic role identity for the physician assistant.

**PADP 6010. Diagnostic Methods I (3)**

Laboratory procedures used to identify pathophysiological processes and the rationale for ordering them. Interpretation of laboratory results and treatment options.

**PADP 6020. Diagnostic Methods II (3)**

Continuation of PADP 6010. Emphasis on ordering and interpreting lab tests in organ system based pathological case studies. Interpretation and ordering of electrocardiography, radiography and MRI, CT and PET scans.

**PADP 6050. Introduction to Clinical Medicine (3)**

Emphasis on medical problem-solving using patient management format and case studies..

**PADP 6150. Clinical Medicine I (5)**

Clinically-oriented didactic and lab skills as preparation for clinical rotations and future clinical practice. Etiology, pathophysiology, clinical manifestations, and appropriate management of selected disease entities. Clinical training in lab sciences, standardized patients, and obtaining and writing history and physical exams. Enhances acquisition of skills necessary to formulate a diagnosis and treatment plan. Presents musculoskeletal, infectious disease, dermatology, and cardiology systems.

**PADP 6200. History and Physical Examination I (2)**

Emphasis on patient interviewing, communication skills, and counseling skills. Proper use of instruments and techniques used in performing a thorough physical examination.

**PADP 6210. History and Physical Examination II (3)**

Continuation of 6200. Emphasizes the adult physical examination.

**PADP 6220. History and Physical Examination III (3)**

Continuation of PADP 6200 and 6210. Emphasis on examination of the pediatric patient and the geriatric patient.

**PADP 6250. Clinical Medicine II (4)**

Continuation of PADP 6150. Presents pulmonary, nephrology, neurology, endocrine, and hematology/oncology systems. Includes geriatrics and pediatrics.

**PADP 6500. Pharmacology & Pharmacotherapeutics (4)**

Pharmacological knowledge basic to assessment and management skills for advanced clinical practice. Pharmacological management of patients throughout life span with common acute and chronic health problems. Overviews of selected drug classes. Emphasis on data collection and diagnostic reasoning in relation to major drug classifications, monitoring, and evaluation of pharmacological interventions. Application of cost-benefit, risk-benefit, efficacy, side-effects, and adverse responses through case studies to develop knowledge and skills that adhere to legal standards of practice.

**PADP 6650. Surgery and Emergency Medicine Skills (4)**

Clinically-oriented didactic and lab skills related to knowledge and skills needed in emergency department and surgical arena. In-depth focus on acute and surgical conditions encountered in primary care and surgical settings. Pre-operative and post-operative care as well as surgical preparation to be properly demonstrated.

**PADP 6680. Introduction to Clerkship (4)**

Emphasis on preparing the student for clinical rotation experiences and medical procedures.

**PADP 6800. Behavioral Medicine and Psychosocial Issues in Health Care. (2)**

General survey of fundamental principles underlying human behavior. Includes physiological development, learning, memory, motivation, and social and abnormal behavior. Emphasis on improving communication skills and integrating knowledge of psychosocial principles and diagnoses with clinical situations. Development of counseling skills, ability to handle patients with stress, and death and dying issues. Covers additional content in psychiatric case studies, problem-solving methodologies, and evidence-based medicine.

**PADP 6810. Medical Ethics and Jurisprudence (2)**

Develop critical skills necessary to identify, analyze, and resolve ethical, legal, and professional issues.

**PADP 6850. Health Promotion/ Disease Prevention (2)**

Basic concepts include distribution, prevalence, causation, mode of transmission and dissemination, control, and prevention strategies used to counter significant infectious disease and occupational injuries. Investigates reportable diseases and conditions; role of state health departments in the process; and role of CDC&P in collecting and evaluating data reported by state, identifying emerging pathogens, and informing treatment community in a timely manner through such venues as the MMWR.

**PADP 6980. Research Project (4)**

Research and writing prospectus. Students prepare and submit a Admission to candidacy, successful completion of didactic and clinical phases of the program, and successful performance on comprehensive exam as designated by dept.

**Clinical Phase:**

**PADP 6310. Behavioral Medicine Clinical Practicum (5)**

Advanced rotation focuses on community settings in area of student's medical vocational interest. Facilitates acquisition of communication and behavioral modification skills useful in primary care setting.

**PADP 6320. Internal Medicine Clinical Practicum (5)**

Applies medical knowledge to basic and complicated problems and situations encountered in internal medicine practice. Collect database, formulate complete problem list, and participate in daily rounds and management of patient problems. Develops awareness of complexity of disease processes and differential diagnosis.

**PADP 6330. Family Medicine Clinical Practicum (5)**

In-depth emphasis on outpatient evaluation, treatment of conditions common at family medicine/primary care level, and appropriate health maintenance measures for all age groups.

**PADP 6340. General Surgery Clinical Practicum (5)**

Routine health care of variety of surgical inpatients and outpatients. Assignment to surgical team with emphasis on pre-operative evaluation and preparatory procedures, assisting at operating table, and management of patients through post-operative period to discharge.

**PADP 6350. Emergency Medicine Clinical Practicum (5)**

Evaluation and management of emergency and surgical problems seen in emergency department. Initial evaluation of potential surgical conditions and performance of problem-specific exams, emergency procedures, and minor surgical skills.

### **PADP 6360. Pediatrics Clinical Practicum (5)**

Assignment to institutional setting or community-based pediatric site. Emphasis on communication skills and relating sensitively to children and parents. Familiarization with normal growth and development, pediatric preventive medicine, and evaluation and management of common childhood illnesses.

### **PADP 6370. Women's Health and Prenatal Care (5)**

Provide the student with clinical experiences in prenatal and P: Enrolled in PADP program; or consent of chair. Clinical experiences in prenatal care and women's health.

### **PADP 6380. Geriatrics Clinical Practicum (5)**

Clinical experience with the aging population focusing on unique medical, psychosocial, environmental and cultural aspects of aging.

## **Accreditation**

East Carolina University is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees. In addition, the University is a member of or accredited by more than sixty state and national associations and agencies.

The East Carolina University Physician Assistant Program is accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant, Inc. (ARC-PA).

## **Professional Organizations**

### **PAEA**

The PA Program at East Carolina is an active member of the Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). This group provides PA Programs a forum for the exchange of ideas and research on many educational issues. <http://www.paeonline.org/>

### **AAPA**

Faculty and graduates of the East Carolina Program are members of the American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA), the professional organization representing physician assistants. AAPA takes an active role in determining the direction and development of the PA profession. <http://www.aapa.org/>

### **NCAPA**

Faculty and many PA students are members of the North Carolina Association of Physicians Assistants (NCAPA). <http://www.ncapa.org/>

### **NCCPA—PANCE**

The National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants Inc. (NCCPA) administers the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) and the Physician Assistant National Recertifying Examination (PANRE) each year. Graduates of the PA Program at East Carolina are eligible to sit for the PANCE. All states, including North Carolina, now require that PAs be certified in order to practice. <http://www.nccpa.net/>

## **Admission Requirements**

Admission to the Program is very competitive with the number of applications expected to more than exceed the 35 seats available in the one class selected each year to begin in the fall semester. The applicants accepted into the Program must have a grade point average (GPA) and general GRE scores to satisfy the requirements of the ECU Graduate School. ([http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/.](http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/)) The decision to interview an applicant is based upon GPA and GRE scores. To be competitive, a general GRE cumulative verbal and quantitative score should be at least 1000 and the Analytical Writing

score should be a minimum of 4.0. Overall GPA should be at least 3.0 to be competitive. The Department of Physician Assistant Studies prerequisite courses listed in this document must be completed with a cumulative GPA of at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale.

Any exceptions must be approved by the Department Chair. Recent Program GPA and GRE results may be found on the PA *Admissions* page.

## **Pre-Admission Clinical Experience for all Applicants**

Clinical experience that includes direct patient care is **required**. For the class entering in fall 2012, a minimum of 250 patient contact hours is required. **Hours must be completed by September 1.**

Acceptable forms of clinical experience include:

- Shadowing PA/NP/MD/DO
- Nursing (CNA, LPN, RN)
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Military Medical/Clinical Specialist
- Corpsman
- Surgical Technician
- Radiological Technician
- Laboratory Technician
- Phlebotomist
- Athletic Trainer
- Scribe
- Orderly
- Pharmacy Technician
- Certified Physical/Occupational Therapist
- PT/OT Assistant
- Home Health with verification of job duties
- Hospital Volunteer

Unacceptable forms of clinical experience include:

- Veterinarian Assistant
- Secretary for Physician's office
- Dental Assistant
- Massage Therapist

## **Criminal Background Checks and Drug Screens**

Due to certain federal, state and local institutional regulations, the CAHS has established a policy regarding criminal background checks and drug screening. ECU and the PA Program are not responsible for reviewing background checks, ordering them or paying for them. If a student cannot finish the clinical portion of the PA Program professional curriculum because of negative item/s in a criminal background check, that student will not graduate. Neither ECU nor the PA Program will be held liable for a student's failure to graduate or failure to obtain a state license because of a criminal background or use of drugs or alcohol. Students will be subject to institutional and ECU policies regarding alcohol and drug use.

## **PA Technical Standards**

A student admitted into the East Carolina Physician Assistant Program must meet basic and essential requirements that are necessary for obtaining employment and performing as a Physician Assistant. The technical standards each student must master include cognitive, physical and behavioral characteristics. Reasonable accommodation for persons with documented disabilities will be considered on an individual basis, but a candidate must be able to perform in an independent manner. All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The following skills are required, with or without accommodation:

**Minimum Technical Standards include:**

**Critical Thinking.** All students must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical, and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. The ability to solve problems, a skill that is critical to the practice of medicine, requires the intellectual abilities of measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Candidates for the Program must be able to perform demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences.

**Communication Skills.** A candidate should also be able to converse with patients as well as hear and observe them in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written forms.

**Visual Ability.** Candidates must also be able to observe a patient accurately, both at a distance and close at hand. This ability requires the functional use of vision and somatic sensation.

**Hearing and Tactile Abilities.** Candidates should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic techniques.

**Mobility and Fine Motor Skills.** A candidate should be able to execute movements reasonably required to move from area to area, maneuver in small places, calibrate and use large and small equipment, position and move patients, and provide patients with general care and emergency treatment.

**Interpersonal Abilities.** A candidate for the PA Program must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities required for the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, families, and colleagues.

East Carolina University seeks to fully comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Support Services, located in Slay 138 on East Campus, to verify the disability before any accommodation can occur. The telephone number 252-737-1016 and the web site is: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs%2Dstudentlife/dss/>

## Financial Information

### Tuition and Fees

East Carolina University is a publicly supported institution. Tuition and fee schedules are subject to change each year as mandated by the North Carolina General Assembly.

Information regarding education costs and refunds may be found at: [http://www.ecu.edu/financial\\_serv/cashier/](http://www.ecu.edu/financial_serv/cashier/). These are only estimates and are subject to change. At the present, estimated tuition and fees for the entire professional curriculum are as follows: In state=\$17,915; Out of state=\$56,333. Information regarding criteria for residency may be found in the Graduate Handbook at: [www.ecu.edu/gradschool](http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool).

### Other Expenses

Students must obtain and show proof of personal health insurance

prior to starting the training and must maintain that insurance throughout the professional Program.

The Department requires students to have a laptop computer with certain specifications. Those specifications will be provided upon acceptance to the Program. Students are advised not to purchase laptop computers without those specifications. If purchased through the ACE program at ECU, the current approximate cost of the laptop is \$1450.00. Information may be obtained at: <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-itcs/ace.cfm>

Students must expect the expense of obtaining criminal background checks and drug screens at many of the clinical sites. The cost varies.

All students must maintain liability insurance throughout the professional curriculum. The amount of the premium is determined each September and at the present is \$72.00.

Current Basic Life Support (BLS) certification from the Red Cross for Professional Rescuers or the American Heart Association for Health Care Providers must be presented to the PA Department upon acceptance into the Program and must be maintained throughout the professional curriculum. No other certification will be accepted. The cost is approximately \$100 annually.

Students must pay a \$25.00 fee each semester to help defray the cost of OSCE and the physical assessment facilities.

The following costs are estimates only. Expenses may be greater on certain items than indicated. The Program is of 27 months duration: Didactic Phase ("Year One") =15 months; Clinical Phase ("Year Two") =12 months.

Graduate School Application= \$60.00  
Student Identification Badge & Patches=\$15.00  
White Jacket and Scrubs=\$150.00  
Miscellaneous Testing Fees including PACKRAT/ACLS=\$350  
Books/Supplies– Didactic Phase = \$1,500.00 +/-  
Books/Supplies– Clinical Phase =\$400.00+/-)  
Medical Instruments –\$700.00+/-  
Pager during the clinical year–\$5 to \$10 per month  
Parking–\$144.00 per year

During year two (clinical), the student must plan for the expense of rotations away from campus (e.g., living expenses, transportation, etc.). Cost could be \$100 to \$150 per semester in some cases. Employment during enrollment is strongly discouraged. Tuition/fees and other costs are subject to change without notice.

## Financial Aid

Through the use of federal and state funds, as well as contributions from its many friends and alumni, East Carolina University makes every effort to assist students in the continuation of their education. Three main types of financial assistance are available to qualified students—educational loans, part-time employment, and gift aid consisting of grants and scholarships. The university participates in the following federal and state Programs which provide funds on the basis of financial need:

PA Foundation Scholarship Program  
Bunting Scholarship  
North Carolina Academy of Physician Assistants Scholarship  
North Carolina Health, Science, and Math Loan Program  
The University of North Carolina Minority Presence Grant Program  
North Carolina Rural Health Association Grant Program

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U.S. Rural Health Association Grant Program  
U.S. Public Health Service  
U.S. National Health Service  
U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs  
Pell Grant  
Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant  
Perkins Loan  
Work-Study Program  
Stafford Student Loan Program  
Other Federal Loan Programs

The Office of Student Financial Aid assists students in obtaining funds from sources best suited for the individual's need. Please direct all matters concerning financial aid to the Office of Student Financial Aid at 252-328-6610 or at their web site: <http://www.ecu.edu/financial/>

Students are encouraged to obtain financial aid, if needed, rather than seek employment during their professional education because of the academic and clinical time demands of the curriculum. Part-time employment by PA students at ECU is **strongly** discouraged.

## Housing

East Carolina maintains fifteen residence halls that provide a range of living environment options. Housing is also available in the surrounding Greenville and Pitt County residential areas. On-site students are responsible for obtaining their own housing in the Greenville area during the didactic phase of the curriculum. Detailed information regarding university housing is available through University Housing Services at 1-800-328-7668 or 252-ECU-HOME (328-4663) or <http://www.ecu.edu/campusliving/>. The student should be ready for travel by personal vehicle. Since many clinical rotation sites are away from the Greenville area, all students should expect to be assigned to these away sites and should anticipate the need to find housing in these areas during the clinical portion of the Program. Clinical coordinators will work with AHEC about potential housing at these away sites; however, neither AHEC nor the Program guarantees to provide housing.

## Application Process

Applications are accepted for admission consideration only from citizens or permanent residents of the United States who are also residents of one of the following states: North Carolina; South Carolina; Georgia; Tennessee; and Virginia. Preference is given to residents of North Carolina.

The ECU Physician Assistant Program participates in the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). All applications to this Program must be submitted through CASPA at: <http://www.caspaonline.org/>. All applicants must apply to the ECU Graduate School when accepted for enrollment in the Program. The graduate school application process and all necessary application materials, to include official general GRE scores and official transcripts, may be identified through the ECU Graduate School web site at <http://www.ecu.edu/gradschool/>. The institutional code for the GRE is 5180. **GRE scores must be submitted by September 1.** Direct any questions regarding the Graduate School to the Graduate School and not to the PA Program.

ECU is an equal educational opportunity institution; all applicants for admission to the PA Program are considered without regard to race, color, national origin, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation or disability.

Applications will be accepted by the PA Program only after the CASPA packet is finished and reviewed for thoroughness. **The completed application deadline for CASPA is September 1.**

Candidates will be notified by mail when the Program has received the completed CASPA form. **Please do not contact the Program regarding application status.** For questions concerning the Graduate School requirements, please contact them.

All students accepted to the Program must possess a bachelor's degree or higher and must have completed the PA Program prerequisites. **Official transcripts documenting completion of the prerequisites must be received by the Program no later than September 1.** Official transcripts showing completion of a bachelor's degree must be received by the Program by June 1 or prior to the first semester, and appropriate documentation must be sent to the Graduate School per their requirements. Previously stated GPA standards must be maintained with the courses being currently taken. All students accepted for admission must document with the Program no later than May 15 that all immunizations or appropriate titers under Sections A and B of the Student Health Application have been completed or are in progress if immunization requires a series of injections. The Student Health Service web site is at: (<http://www.ecu.edu/cs-studentlife/studenthealth/index.cfm>) These immunizations are the only Health Screening requirements of the Program.

## Admissions Decisions

The completed CASPA packet including GPA and GRE and analytical writing scores is used by the PA Program to determine which candidates should be invited for an interview. Admissions decisions are based upon the CASPA packet contents and upon how well a candidate interviews. The ECU PA Program has a "rolling" interview process which will begin in January after completed application packets are received from CASPA. Therefore, early applicants may be rewarded with early interviews and possibly with early offers of admission.

Important aspects of the interview will include the candidate's maturity, grooming, communication skills, poise, self-confidence, professional goals and knowledge of the PA profession.

Once the class is filled, there will be no more interviews.

## Program Faculty/Staff

- J. Patrick Carter, MPAS, PA-C  
Interim Chair
- Dale Newton, MD  
Medical Director
- Kelly Brilliant, MPH, PA-C  
Faculty
- J. Patrick Carter, MPAS, PA-C  
Faculty
- Julie Daniel-Yount, MHS, PA-C  
Faculty
- Larry Dennis, MPAS, PA-C  
Faculty
- Carolyn Pugh, MHS, PA-C  
Faculty
- Jane Trapp, MS.ED., PA-C  
Faculty
- Tonya Jefferson  
Administrative Assistant
- Jean Merenda  
Education Technologist
- Anthony Coutouzis  
ECU Academic Advisor  
[coutouzisa@ecu.edu](mailto:coutouzisa@ecu.edu)

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## Visitor Information

For potential applicants, the PA Program conducts a "Closer Look" meeting each quarter during the year. This meeting is for general information and not to answer each individual's specific questions regarding such items as prerequisites. Specific questions may be asked at: [pastudies@ecu.edu](mailto:pastudies@ecu.edu). The scheduled meetings in 2012 are: Friday, February 3, 2012, Friday, May 4, 2012, Friday, August 3, 2012, and Friday, November 2, 2012. The Program may be contacted to reserve a place for "Closer Look" at: [pastudies@ecu.edu](mailto:pastudies@ecu.edu). Further information regarding ECU and the PA Program such as student withdrawal, tuition refunds, student work policies, etc. may be found in the *Physician Assistant Student Handbook* which is available on this web site under *Resources*. More information about the Program may be found in *Resources* under FAQs

East Carolina University  
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