The Physician Assistant program is a 24-month graduate curriculum awarding the Master of Health Science (MHS) degree, as well as certificate of completion of the PA Program granting eligibility to sit for the NCCPA certification exam. A core curriculum is provided, preparing students for service in all healthcare settings with particular emphasis on the needs of medically underserved populations.
Mission
- Provide graduate medical education that prepares highly-skilled Physician Assistants capable of providing quality health care
- Provide expertise in the health care needs of the medically underserved
- Prepare Physician Assistants to critically evaluate and become leaders with a goal to improve medical & social systems that affect the health of medically underserved populations
- Encourage graduates to become primary care Physician Assistants in medically underserved areas of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania

History
The program was developed in 1996 to increase the number of primary care providers in medically underserved areas of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The program has graduated over 600 licensed health care providers.

Program Delivery
Using state of the art technology, full-time resident faculty, and high quality educational facilities, the program is offered at four locations in central Pennsylvania (Lock Haven, Clearfield, Harrisburg, and Coudersport). Students accepted to the program will, on a space available basis, have their choice of campus locations. Students at all four campus locations complete the same curriculum as one group with lectures delivered to and from all campus locations.

Accreditation
The program holds the status of “Continuing Accreditation” by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). The program was last visited in 2012.

National Board Certification
In 2014, the first-time pass rate for those who successfully completed all requirements of LHU’s PA Program was greater than 95%. The program celebrates a five-year first time average pass rate of 95% (national average of 93%) and a five-year overall average pass rate of 99.6%.

Program Excellence
A modular designed curriculum, extensive use of technology and a faculty with over 125 years of health care experience has won the program national recognition as one the premier Physician Assistant programs in the country.

Employment
The demand for Physician Assistants throughout the United States is extremely high and is expected to remain very strong for the next 10 years. A majority of Lock Haven graduates are employed at the time of graduation. Over 60% of program graduates work in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Curriculum
The first year of the program is primarily based in the classroom and lab while the second year is primarily based in a variety of clinical settings. Courses are arranged so that foundation information is learned early and provides students with confidence and a strong basis for subsequent material.

The medical content is designed around the most common problems encountered in primary care. Clinical experiences in the second year also emphasize primary care. Students gain depth and breadth of knowledge during their clinical rotations and preceptorships. Rotations are typically six weeks in duration and are concentrated in the areas of behavioral and mental health, pediatrics, obstetrics, gynecology, emergency medicine, general internal medicine, and general surgery.

Modular Format
The curriculum is presented in a modular format. Each module corresponds to a body system or medical specialty and contains information regarding: epidemiology, pathophysiology, physical diagnosis, clinical medicine, diagnostic procedures, anatomy, medical reasoning, rural and underserved health issues, medical issues, medical records/communications, pharmacology, medical nutrition, and medical research. Each module contains lecture, laboratory, service learning, and case-based learning components.

Non-Competitive Learning
The program encourages cooperation between students. The only competition we encourage is competition with oneself. The program places a heavy emphasis on teamwork in and out of the classroom setting. You will be encouraged to establish study groups and learn in a collaborative fashion. This non-competitive learning environment will aid you in understanding the Physician Assistant team concept.

Admissions Criteria
Enrollment in the Physician Assistant program is limited and selection is highly competitive. Students are selected upon evaluation of the following factors: completion of academic prerequisites, academic ability, residency, evidence of potential for future practice in primary care in medically underserved areas of Pennsylvania, evidence of personality traits indicating an ability to work effectively with people, and letters of recommendation.

Those candidates who appear most qualified based upon the above factors may be asked for a personal interview. Health care experience, while beneficial, is not a requirement for admission.

MINIMUM STANDARDS FOR CANDIDATE CONSIDERATION
- A baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited institution, including the pre-requisite courses listed below, with a minimum 3.0 GPA on a 4.0 scale
- A grade of B or better on all required pre-requisite courses
- Combined GRE Score of 1000 or higher on old GRE or Top 50% percentile on the New GRE
- GRE Writing Score of 3.5 or higher

PREREQUISITE COURSES
- Two Courses in General Chemistry
- Human Anatomy and Physiology (6 credits total)*
- Two Courses of General Biology or Zoology
- Microbiology
- Human Genetics
- Statistics

* Statistics

MASTER OF HEALTH SCIENCE: PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
RECOMMENDED COURSEWORK

- Organic Chemistry
- Biochemistry
- Physics
- Development Psychology

Additional coursework in the behavioral sciences: Psychology, Sociology, or Anthropology is recommended.

* A combined two semester anatomy/physiology course is acceptable.

Anatomy and Physiology courses must be completed within 5 years of matriculation. All other required courses must be completed within 10 years of matriculation. Science courses with labs are preferred.

Applying to the Program

All candidates must apply through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Applications open in May of each year and must be submitted to Lock Haven University on or before October 1 to be considered. For more information on CASPA, visit https://portal.casponline.org/.

Students are eligible to submit an application if they will complete all prerequisite requirements before the start of the program. Interviews for qualified candidates are scheduled from August through November with final admission decisions made shortly thereafter. Candidates will not be scheduled for a personal interview unless they have submitted official GRE results or can provide them on or before the interview date.

There is only one entry point into the program. All new students start the third Monday of May.

PROFILE FOR THE CLASS OF 2014

Average Undergrad GPA: 3.55
Average Science Undergrad GPA: 3.43
Average Overall GRE Score: 308
Average Verbal GRE: 153
Average Quantitative GRE: 154
Average Writing Sample GRE: 4.1
Average Age: 24
Age Range: 20-35
PA Residents: 57 (75%)
Out of State Residents: 21 (25%)
Gender: 55 females (72%); 21 Males (28%)

Technical Standards

Candidates for the Master of Health Science degree and the Certificate of Completion of the Physician Assistant program conferring eligibility to sit for the national certification exam must have abilities and skills of five varieties, including: 1. Observation, 2. Communication, 3. Motor, 4. Intellectual-Conceptual/Integrative/Quantitative, and 5. Behavioral/Social. Technological compensation can be made for some handicaps in certain of these areas, but a candidate should be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

OBSERVATION

The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in the basic sciences, including but not limited to physiologic and pharmacological demonstrations, microbiological cultures, and microscopic studies of microorganisms and tissues in normal and pathologic states. A candidate must be able to observe and inspect a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation necessitates the functional use of the sense of vision and somatic sensation. It is enhanced by the functional use of the sense of smell.

COMMUNICATION

A candidate should be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients in order to elicit information, describe changes in mood, activity, and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team.

MOTOR

Candidates should have sufficient motor functions to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, and other diagnostic maneuvers. A candidate should be able to do basic laboratory tests (urinalysis, CBC, etc.), carry out diagnostic procedures (proctoscopy, paracentesis, etc.), and read EKGs and x-rays. A candidate should be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physicians are cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the administration of intravenous medication, the application of pressure to stop bleeding, the opening of obstructed airways, and suturing of simple wounds, and the performance of simple obstetrical maneuvers. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium, and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

INTELLECTUAL-CONCEPTUAL, INTEGRATIVE AND QUANTITATIVE ABILITIES

These abilities include measurement, calculation, reasoning, analysis, and synthesis. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physician assistants, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, the candidate should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL ATTRIBUTES

A candidate must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his/her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, the prompt completion of all responsibilities attendant to the diagnosis and care of patients, and the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility, and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admissions and education processes. All students must show evidence of computer literacy, either through formal coursework or experience. Computer literacy includes basic understanding of the operation of computer systems, and applications such as word processing, file management, spreadsheets, and the use of the Internet.

TRANSFERS

Due to the unique curricular formatting of the LHU Physician Assistant Program, it does not permit students to transfer from other PA programs or acquire advanced credit for coursework already completed.
Graduate study in the Physician Assistant program prepares students for service in all healthcare settings with particular emphasis on the needs of medically underserved populations.

- 24-month duration including clinical rotations
- 94.5 credit program
- Four locations

Program holds the status of “Accreditation Continuing” for the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant.

Learn more about the PA Program online at http://portal.lhup.edu/pa

**Most Common Undergrad Majors**
- Health Science
- Pre Medicine
- Biology

**Potential Career Opportunities**
- Emergency Medicine
- Surgical Specialties
- Family Medicine
- Chemistry
- Physical Therapy
- Internal Medicine
- Pediatrics
- And many more

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Visit us online
For more information on what we offer, visit us on the web at www.LHUP.edu/graduatestudies

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