Program Offered

Master of Physician Assistant Studies

The Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Program is a full-time, 27-month program in the Department of Physician Assistant Education within the University of the Pacific’s Arthur A. Dugoni, School of Dentistry. This Program is offered on the Sacramento Campus. Classes matriculate each January.

In an interprofessional setting, Pacific PA students will become proficient in the full array of skills involved in completing medical histories, performing physical examinations, performing clinical skills and procedures, providing treatment, and counseling patients. Pacific’s PA program provides opportunities for interprofessional education through involvement with Pacific’s highly regarded health-science schools, the Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry and the Thomas J. Long School of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and through student clinical training experiences at community hospitals and clinics.

In addition to successfully completing their program, Pacific PA students are required to pass the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) as required by regulatory agencies in order to enter into practice.

Accreditation Status

The ARC-PA has granted Accreditation-Provisional status to the University of the Pacific Master of Physician Assistant Studies Program sponsored by the University of the Pacific.

Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program’s ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students.

Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class.

Admission Requirements

Completion of the following admission requirements prior to submission of an application is required. Applicants must submit an application to the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Refer to the Program Website (https://dental.pacific.edu/academic-programs/residency-and-graduate-programs/master-of-physician-assistant-studies?utm_source=Link&utm_medium=Redirect&utm_campaign=PAprogram) for deadline and prerequisite course information.

* Bachelor’s degree
* All prerequisite coursework
  * Minimum overall GPA of 3.0 (on 4.0 scale)
  * Minimum overall science GPA of 3.0 (on 4.0 scale)
  * Minimum of 1,000 hours of health care experience

** Grades for all prerequisite courses must be posted and appear on transcript (i.e. no “planned” or “in progress” notations on transcript).

Prerequisite Health Care Experience

We do not consider one type of clinical experience greater than another (i.e. experience as an RN is not more valued than that of a medical assistant). Experience may be paid or unpaid. There is not a published list of health care professions the program considers suitable for clinical experience. At a minimum, the applicant’s clinical experience should include one of the following:

  * Collecting of, and/or reporting in the patient’s chart, data necessary to establish a diagnosis or evaluate the progress of the patient’s treatment plan;
  * Assisting a health care worker in the performance of diagnostic, therapeutic, or surgical procedures;
  * Under the supervision of a health care provider administering or dispensing medications;
  * Other work involving direct patient contact and interaction.

Prerequisite Coursework

* All prerequisite coursework must be completed at an accredited US institution.
* A single course cannot be used to meet multiple requirements.
* No preference is given for coursework completed at 4-year institutions versus 2-year institutions.

Prerequisite Science Courses

Important! Pacific will NOT accept online or AP/CLEP courses to fulfill science prerequisites.

** General Chemistry:** Two courses with a minimum of 1 lab. Total of 8 semester units or 12 quarter units. Should be a course sequence designed for chemistry majors.

** Biological Sciences:** Two courses with a minimum of 1 lab. Total of 6 semester or 9 quarter units. Should be a course sequence designed for biology majors.

** Human Anatomy:** One course with lab is required. Total of 4 semester or 5 quarter units with lab (or combined Anatomy & Physiology).

** Human Physiology:** One course is required. Total of 4 semester or 5 quarter units (or combined Anatomy & Physiology). Lab recommended, but not required.

** Microbiology:** One course is required. Total of 3 semester units or 4 quarter units. Lab recommended, but not required.

Prerequisite Non-Science Courses

** Math:** One course in Statistics is required. Total of 3 semester or 4 quarter units.

** Psychology:** One course in General or Abnormal Psychology is required. Total of 3 semester or 4 quarter units.

** English Composition:** Two courses are required. Total of 6 semester or 9 quarter units. Minimum of 1 composition course; 2nd course can be...
composition, literature, or writing intensive course. English as a Second Language courses will not fulfill this requirement.

Other Admissions Requirements

Technical Standards

Students must be able to achieve and maintain certain technical standards of knowledge and skill in order to successfully complete the PA Program. The technical standards in this document apply to satisfactory performance in all academic and clinical course work, as well as fulfillment of non-academic essential functions of the curriculum involving physical, cognitive, and behavior factors that are essential to a professional clinical practitioner. Students must attest to their ability to meet these technical standards prior to matriculation.


Health and Communicable Disease Clearance

Students must provide documentation of general health and the ability to meet technical standards. Additionally, students are required to provide documentation demonstrating communicable disease clearance. Additional information regarding clearance requirements may be found on Pacific’s student health website.

Background Clearance

The Program requires students to undergo background screenings prior to matriculation and periodically throughout enrollment. Students have a fiduciary responsibility for the costs associated with the background screening. Background screening will be completed on all students at matriculation and prior to placement on clinical rotations. Applicants are required to be truthful when completing their application in the CASPA system. Discrepancies noted on the pre-matriculation background screening will be investigated and may result in denial of matriculation. Some clinical rotation sites require an additional background screening immediately prior to the start of the rotation, therefore students may be required to complete multiple background screenings throughout enrollment. Facts uncovered as a result of the background screening which could preclude licensure and/or practice in the profession may impact the student’s ability to begin or continue in the program.

Pending Criminal Action Decisions

Applicants offered admission who have pending criminal charges must have adjudication of the offense(s) completed prior to matriculation. Applicants offered admission who fail to complete adjudication of the offense(s) prior to matriculation, or are convicted of a misdemeanor or higher crime, will have their offer of acceptance withdrawn. Persons currently under the command of the criminal justice system will not be accepted for admission.

Toxicology Clearance

The Program requires students to undergo toxicology screenings prior to matriculation and periodically throughout enrollment. Students have a fiduciary responsibility for the costs associated with toxicology screening. Toxicology screening will be completed on all students prior to matriculation, randomly throughout enrollment and prior to placement on clinical rotations. Toxicology screening may be via urine or serum. Some clinical rotation sites require an additional toxicology screens immediately prior to the start of the rotation, therefore students may be required to complete multiple screens throughout enrollment. The Program requires the authorization by each student for a urine toxicology screen prior to matriculation into the Program. Abnormalities noted on the pre-matriculation toxicology screening will be investigated and may result in denial of matriculation.

International Applicants

- All prerequisite course work must be completed at an accredited US institution.
- Baccalaureate degrees will be accepted from foreign institutions only if accompanied by a World Education Services (WES) evaluation of foreign training. CASPA also accepts the WES evaluation of transcripts.
- Note: WES does not evaluate all Caribbean medical schools. If you attended a school that World Education Services (WES) will not evaluate, your transcripts will not be considered as part of your application. Applicants will still be required to demonstrate that all prerequisites have been met with the exclusion of the affected transcripts.
- The entire curriculum is taught in the English language. If English is not your first language, you may be required to take the TOEFL/IELTS and should submit your score with your CASPA application. The program will not accept applications with a TOEFL score less than 100 or IELTS score less than 7.0. TOEFL scores are valid for two years after the test date per ETS (https://www.ets.org/toefl/ibt/scores/) website. View the TOEFL flowchart (http://dental.pacific.edu/Documents/academicprograms/mpas/TOEFL%20Flowchart.pdf) to see if it is required for you.

Understanding of health promotion and disease prevention, and mechanisms of disease.

Achieved by providing a comprehensive curriculum of basic and clinical sciences delivered in a systems-based format. During the initial didactic phase, the transition from acquiring medical knowledge to putting it into practice is facilitated by frequent use of simulated patients and gradual introduction to actual patients.

Proficient application of critical thinking in medical decision making.

Achieved by emphasis that medicine requires the practitioner to apply logic and reasoning to achieve healing. These principles are taught and practiced in the didactic curriculum in small group discussions, through interactions with simulated patients, and through a commitment to the application of science in medicine.

Patient-centered approach to health care practice.

Patient-centered care is based on putting the needs of others first and helping people develop and perform to the best of their abilities. It strives to improve outcomes by strengthening the provider-patient relationship, by providing care in consultation with patients and by replacing the provider-centered system with one from the patient’s viewpoint. Students will become familiar with this type of practice in the didactic phase and will gain hands-on experience working directly with preceptors and PA program faculty who serve as mentors.

Health care delivery through a team-based model that fosters community collaboration.

Achieved by providing students the opportunity to develop a passion for community service through frequent experiences serving the health care needs of the under-served alongside physician and PA role models. Graduate PAs are in a unique position to have a tremendous impact on the communities in which they live and work. The ability to provide compassionate care to marginalized citizens with the breadth of care multiplied through a team-based approach is paramount. During their
tenure with the PA program, students will participate in such collaborative environments in a variety of clinical settings.

Commitment to life-long learning.
Achieved by modeling self-study and continuing education, by encouraging on-going enthusiasm for exploration and investigation, and by directing students to resources for furthering knowledge.

Measures and Student Learning Outcomes
Program Goals & Measures (http://dental.pacific.edu/Documents/academicprograms/mpas/PROGRAM%20GOALS.pdf)

Student Learning Outcomes (http://dental.pacific.edu/Documents/academicprograms/mpas/ProgramSLOs_Final_09.01.16.pdf)

Master of Physician Assistant Studies
Students must complete a minimum of 114 units with a Pacific cumulative grade point average of 2.75 in order to earn a master of physician assistant studies degree.

First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>MPAS 200</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine I - Foundations (Anatomy)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>MPAS 201</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine I - Foundations (Pathophysiology)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPAS 211</td>
<td>Pharmacology and Therapeutics I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPAS 221</td>
<td>Behavioral Sciences I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPAS 231</td>
<td>Professional Practice and the Health System I</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPAS 241</td>
<td>Clinical Skills I</td>
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<td>Summer</td>
<td>MPAS 202</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine II</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPAS 212</td>
<td>Pharmacology and Therapeutics II</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPAS 222</td>
<td>Behavioral Sciences II</td>
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<td>MPAS 232</td>
<td>Professional Practice and the Health System II</td>
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<td>MPAS 242</td>
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<td>Fall</td>
<td>MPAS 203</td>
<td>Clinical Medicine III</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPAS 213</td>
<td>Pharmacology and Therapeutics III</td>
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<td>MPAS 223</td>
<td>Behavioral Sciences III</td>
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<td>MPAS 233</td>
<td>Professional Practice and the Health System III</td>
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<td>MPAS 243</td>
<td>Clinical Skills III</td>
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Second Year

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<td>MPAS 205</td>
<td>Preparation for Clinical Practice</td>
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<td></td>
<td>MPAS 215</td>
<td>Primary Care I</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MPAS 216</td>
<td>Primary Care II</td>
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<td>MPAS 219</td>
<td>Advanced Clinical Skills</td>
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<td>Summer</td>
<td>MPAS 217</td>
<td>Primary Care III</td>
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<td>MPAS 225</td>
<td>Primary Care/Pediatrics</td>
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<td>MPAS 235</td>
<td>Primary Care/Women's Health</td>
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<td>MPAS 245</td>
<td>Primary Care/Behavioral and Mental Health</td>
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<td>Fall</td>
<td>MPAS 255</td>
<td>Internal Medicine</td>
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<td>MPAS 265</td>
<td>Surgery</td>
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<td>MPAS 275</td>
<td>Emergency Medicine</td>
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<td>Elective Rotation</td>
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Third Year

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<td>Spring</td>
<td>MPAS 218</td>
<td>Periodic and Summative Evaluations/Capstone</td>
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<td>2 Elective Rotations</td>
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<td>Total Hours</td>
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Physician Assistant Courses

This course involves a detailed regional analysis of the structure of the human body that includes the lower/upper extremity, head/neck and trunk, thoracic/abdominal and pelvic cavities and the central nervous system. Functional correlates to the structures will also be presented and discussed. This course has a discussion component as well as a laboratory component using physical anatomy models, cadaver prosections, and computer/textbook anatomy programs/atlas.

MPAS 201. Clinical Medicine I - Foundations (Pathophysiology). 4 Units.
This course involves the detailed analysis of the structure, function and pathology of the organ systems of the body. Functional correlates to physician assistant and physical therapy care are included.

MPAS 202. Clinical Medicine II. 8 Units.
This is first of a two-semester course that focuses on the anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, etiology, clinical manifestation, diagnosis and management of select medical conditions, syndromes and diseases including the integration and application of knowledge obtained in the Clinical Skills, and Pharmacology and Therapeutics courses. The semester will follow an organ system approach.

MPAS 203. Clinical Medicine III. 8 Units.
This is the second of a two-semester course that focuses on the anatomy, physiology, pathophysiology, etiology, clinical manifestation, diagnosis and management of select medical conditions, syndromes and diseases, including the integration and application of knowledge obtained in the Clinical Skills, and Pharmacology and Therapeutics courses. The semester will follow an organ system and discipline approach.

MPAS 205. Preparation for Clinical Practice. 4 Units.
This is an intensive clinical preparatory course prior to the start of clinical rotations. Clinical year clearance, policy and procedure instruction. Application of clinical and procedural knowledge through various individual and team activities. Culmination evaluations of the didactic portion of the curriculum. Satisfactory completion of the culmination evaluations is required to progress to the clinical year.

MPAS 211. Pharmacology and Therapeutics I. 3 Units.
This is the first of a three-semester course that focuses on general clinical therapeutic principles, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics and pharmacothepeudic application. This semester emphasizes basic pharmacological principles, drug classifications, legal aspects of prescribing, supplements and alternative medicinal therapies, and self-care concepts.

MPAS 212. Pharmacology and Therapeutics II. 3 Units.
This is the second of a three-semester course that focuses on general clinical therapeutic principles, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics and pharmacothepeudic application. This semester presents pharmacological and therapeutic concepts addressed in an organ system approach congruent with Clinical Medicine.

MPAS 213. Pharmacology and Therapeutics III. 3 Units.
This is the third of a three-semester course that focuses on general clinical therapeutic principles, pharmacokinetics, pharmacodynamics and pharmacothepeudic application. This semester presents pharmacological and therapeutic concepts addressed in an organ system and disciple specific approach congruent with Clinical Medicine.
MPAS 215. Primary Care I. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient and/or inpatient setting to obtain exposure to primary care medicine, including health maintenance, disease prevention, patient education and continuity of care. The written examinations for these will focus on family medicine.

MPAS 216. Primary Care II. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient and/or inpatient setting to obtain exposure to primary care medicine, including health maintenance, disease prevention, patient education and continuity of care. The written examinations for these will focus on family medicine.

MPAS 217. Primary Care III. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient and/or inpatient setting to obtain exposure to primary care medicine, including health maintenance, disease prevention, patient education and continuity of care. The written examinations for these will focus on family medicine.

MPAS 218. Periodic and Summative Evaluations/Capstone. 4 Units.
This will be a continuing course throughout the four semesters of the clinical education phase of the program. The periodic evaluations will include end-of-rotation written examinations, OSCEs, and skills assessments. Summative evaluations will consist of a written comprehensive examination and a practical examination (OSCE). All course elements must be completed satisfactorily in order to pass the course and be progressed to graduation. The Capstone Project will continue from the research portion of the Behavioral Sciences course. Under the supervision of a faculty member, students will pose and answer a clinical question on a practice topic of their choice by completing a critical review of the medical literature, and will write a paper suitable for publication on the topic.

MPAS 219. Advanced Clinical Skills. 4 Units.
This will be a continuing course throughout four semesters of the clinical education phase of the program, which builds upon the basic clinical skills coursework. Instruction and application of advanced clinical and procedural skills. Integration and application of clinical reasoning and a comprehensive patient-centered approach through simulation and standardized patient encounters.

MPAS 221. Behavioral Sciences I. 2 Units.
This is the first of a three-semester course that covers human biological and psychological development, social influences on health care, health literacy, evidence-based medicine, and mental health disorders. This semester emphasizes basic psychology concepts, biological and psychological development across the life span, social determinants, and health literacy.

MPAS 222. Behavioral Sciences II. 2 Units.
This is the second of a three-semester course that covers human biological and psychological development, social influences on health care, health literacy, evidence-based medicine, and mental health disorders. This semester emphasizes research design and methods, evaluation and application of clinical research, and clinical decision-making driven by evidence-based medicine.

MPAS 223. Behavioral Sciences III. 2 Units.
This is the third of a three-semester course that covers human biological and psychological development, social influences on health care, health literacy, evidence-based medicine, and mental health disorders. This semester emphasizes evaluation and management of behavioral and mental health disorders.

MPAS 225. Primary Care/Pediatrics. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient and/or inpatient setting to obtain exposure to pediatric primary care medicine. The written examination for this rotation will focus on pediatric medicine.

MPAS 231. Professional Practice and the Health System I. 1 Unit.
This is the first of a three-semester course that explores the healthcare system from a professional, legal, economic, and patient care perspective. This semester includes the history and status of the PA profession and professional organizations, the physician-PA team relationship, PA scope of practice and legal regulations. An introduction to healthcare delivery systems, health policy, and related governmental agencies. Exploration of team-based patient care through interprofessional education activities.

MPAS 232. Professional Practice and the Health System II. 1 Unit.
This is the second of a three-semester course that explores today’s healthcare system from a professional, legal, economic and patient care perspective. This semester emphasizes legal aspects of health care, patient-provider interactions, confidentiality, risk management, and malpractice. Exploration of team-based patient care through interprofessional education activities.

MPAS 233. Professional Practice and the Health System III. 1 Unit.
This is the third of a three-semester course that explores today’s healthcare system from a professional, legal, economic and patient care perspective. This semester emphasizes the economics of health care, including billing and coding, utilization review and electronic medical records (EMR). Exploration of team-based patient care through interprofessional education activities.

MPAS 235. Primary Care/Women’s Health. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient and/or inpatient setting to obtain exposure to women’s health care. The written examinations for this rotation will focus on women’s health and reproductive health.

MPAS 241. Clinical Skills I. 4 Units.
This three-semester course focuses on four main topic areas: history and physical examination, diagnostic studies, application through case-based learning, and procedural skills. This semester builds a foundation of student knowledge in the four topic areas through focused study in the following areas: communication, documentation, history and review of systems, fundamentals of diagnostic studies, medical microbiology, external anatomy, and utilization of diagnostic equipment. Case-based discussions emphasize clinical reasoning through knowledge application.

MPAS 242. Clinical Skills II. 4 Units.
This three-semester course focuses on four main topic areas: history and physical examination, diagnostic studies, application through case-based learning, and procedural skills. This semester presents the concepts in an organ system approach congruent with Clinical Medicine. Case-based discussions emphasize clinical reasoning through knowledge integration and application. Organ system-specific procedures are covered.

MPAS 243. Clinical Skills III. 4 Units.
This three-semester course focuses on four main topic areas: history and physical examination, diagnostic studies, application through case-based learning, and procedural skills. This semester presents the concepts in an organ system approach congruent with Clinical Medicine. Case-based discussions emphasize clinical reasoning through knowledge integration and application. Organ system and discipline-specific procedures are covered.

MPAS 245. Primary Care/Behavioral and Mental Health. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient and/or inpatient setting to obtain exposure to behavioral health care. The written examination for this rotation will focus on behavioral health.

MPAS 255. Internal Medicine. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in an outpatient, inpatient and/or long term care setting to obtain exposure to primary care and chronic disease management. The written examination for this rotation will cover internal medicine and geriatrics.
MPAS 265. Surgery. 4 Units.
Students will be placed with general surgeons and/or surgical specialists to obtain exposure to surgical principles. Student will obtain intraoperative experience during this rotation. Pre- and post-operative care concepts may be addressed in this rotation or any other rotation. The written examination for this rotation will focus on general surgical principles, including pre- and post-operative management.

MPAS 275. Emergency Medicine. 4 Units.
Students will be placed in a hospital based emergency room to gain exposure to urgent and emergent care. The written examination for this rotation will focus on emergency medicine.

MPAS 285. General Elective I. 4 Units.
Students in good academic standing will have the opportunity to complete elective rotations in a desired area of specialty or Pathway Track, if available. Elective rotations may occur in any healthcare setting in any field in which PAs are allowed to practice within the state where the practice is located. The Program reserves the right to utilize elective rotations in the best interest of the student to address knowledge and/or skills deficiencies.

MPAS 286. General Elective II. 4 Units.
Students in good academic standing will have the opportunity to complete elective rotations in a desired area of specialty or Pathway Track, if available. Elective rotations may occur in any healthcare setting in any field in which PAs are allowed to practice within the state where the practice is located. The Program reserves the right to utilize elective rotations in the best interest of the student to address knowledge and/or skills deficiencies.

MPAS 287. General Elective III. 4 Units.
Students in good academic standing will have the opportunity to complete elective rotations in a desired area of specialty or Pathway Track, if available. Elective rotations may occur in any healthcare setting in any field in which PAs are allowed to practice within the state where the practice is located. The Program reserves the right to utilize elective rotations in the best interest of the student to address knowledge and/or skills deficiencies.

MPAS 293. Special Topics. 4 Units.