



**University of Toronto
Physician Assistant Professional Degree Program
YEAR 1 & 2 COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS**

PAP 111H1 - Introduction to the Physician Assistant Role

This course will describe the PA profession and the roles and responsibilities of a PA in practice. The focus of the course will be on the Canadian and Ontario perspective on the role of the PA and the development of the PA profession in Canada. The scope of practice and expected competencies for an "entry to practice" PA will be discussed. The role of the PA will be understood within the context of interprofessional patient-centered care. In particular, the supervising physician/physician assistant relationship will be examined. Physician Delegation and Medical Directives will also be introduced. Topics pertaining to the National PA Competency Profile, CanMEDS-PA, such as professionalism, health advocacy, communication, and collaboration will be explored.

This course will also introduce the structure of the Ontario and Canadian Health Care system and how the two interact. Students will develop their skills in reflective practice, and identify their own individual learning styles and strategies to support them in the demands of the PA program curriculum, and prepare them for their future as life-long learners.

PAP 112H1– Anatomy

This course will introduce the functional anatomy of the head, neck and trunk, including the major organ systems. Learning opportunities include examination of prosected wet and plastinized anatomical specimens in the laboratory, and of numerous medical images, animations, and computer-based simulations. The core content of the course is covered in a series of pre-recorded lectures with accompanying lecture notes, which are available to registered students through the portal. Anatomy will be studied from two perspectives. Regional anatomy, in which the major organs and their anatomical relations are studied in situ within the head, thorax, abdomen and pelvis, will be addressed in the anatomy laboratory during the residential part of the course. Systemic anatomy, in which each organ system will be studied as a functional unit, will be addressed during the non-residential part of the course. The course will be divided into modules of varying lengths. Each module includes a list of specific learning objectives, available learning resources and methods of evaluation.

PAP 113H1 – Physiology

This course is designed to provide a general overview of major areas of human physiology. Students will learn about the function of the human body by systems (Nervous, Endocrine, Musculoskeletal, Cardiovascular, Blood and Immunity, Respiratory, Renal, Digestive, Gastrointestinal, Genitourinary). The course will begin with cellular functioning and homeostasis and conclude with addressing the integration of all systems. There are two components: the lecture component comprising 51 illustrated video lectures; and the active learning (AL) component that complements the lectures, and includes the computer simulation activities in the PhysioEx, which correspond to the lectures materials.

PAP 114H1 - Clinical Skills I

Students will develop skills for effective patient-centered communication. The focus will be on integrating concepts from concurrent courses in Anatomy, Physiology and Intro to the PA Role. Students will be expected to apply their knowledge as they develop the competencies for demonstrating a medical history and physical examination for the healthy patient with uncomplicated presentations. Students will be introduced to the approach of critical thinking and differential diagnoses.

PAP 122H1 – Pathology

The pathology course reviews the pathogenesis and the changes in disease that occur at the tissue, cellular and molecular levels and how these correlate clinically. By understanding how the pathogenesis and structural alterations associated with disease impact upon the physical and emotional health of the patient, one can use this information to plan strategies for prevention, diagnosis and treatment.

The approach used in this course is to cover the important and relevant principles of the pathobiological components of disease. Specific diseases will be presented as examples of major principles.

Major categories of the course include pathobiology (consisting of the cellular and molecular responses to injury, inflammatory diseases, hemodynamic disorders and neoplasia), microbiology (bacteriology, virology, mycology, parasitology), genetics and genetic diseases, immunology and disorders of the immune system.

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PAP 124H1 - Clinical Skills II

Students will apply techniques and skills learned in Clinical Skills I. Students will continue to develop skills for working in teams. The focus will be on integrating concepts from concurrent courses in Pathology, Pharmacology and Diagnostic Techniques and Procedures. Students will be expected to apply their knowledge as they develop the competencies for demonstrating a thorough medical history and physical examination for the patient with more complicated presentations begin to apply investigations and develop management plans. Using Problem Based Learning (PBL) as the main learning method, students will continue to direct their own (content-based) learning objectives while developing critical thinking and



problem solving skills within the patient-centered clinical method.

PAP 125H1 - Diagnostic Techniques and Procedures I

This course is largely self-directed Online Learning with Mandatory Online Check-In Sessions. Students will focus on interpretation of diagnostic investigation skills such as ECG interpretation and clinical laboratory tests.

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with knowledge, skills and attitudes that they will be able to demonstrate earliest and most often in their clinical education and beyond. This is the first of a two-part course series.

PAP 127H1 - Pharmacology

This course will introduce you to Pharmacotherapeutics, which is the study of the appropriate use of drugs, and will build on knowledge gained in previous and concurrent courses including: clinical skills 1 and 2, physiology, anatomy, and pathology.

This course will review important topics including: medication safety, prescription basics, pharmacokinetic and pharmacodynamic principles, influence of the pharmaceutical industry on prescribing and appropriate use of drug information resources.

This course will also teach you a rational prescribing framework that will be utilized throughout this course. We will apply this framework to the management of common cardiovascular conditions, select infectious diseases, and the appropriate use of vaccines and non-systemic corticosteroids. This framework, however, can also be utilized for patients with other disease states. For this reason, this course will serve as a critical building block in your training as a PA. The knowledge, skills and attitudes learned in this course can be directly applied to your future clinical practice.

PAP 110H1/120H1/130/H1 - Longitudinal Clinical Experience

This is a longitudinal half-day per week clinical placement over the duration of Year 1. Students will shadow clinicians in various clinical setting in order to be exposed to the clinical environment and meet the course goals and objectives. Examples of clinical experiences include but not limited to: family medicine clinic, community outpatient lab, medical imaging department, pharmacy, social work, physiotherapy, home care, long term care institution.

In this course students will utilize the foundations of inter-professional collaboration as a base for their experiences. Students are expected to fulfill the LCE clinical requirements and find placements independently, with the guidance of the course director. As part of participation in an LCE, students are expected to submit the site information into the LCE log and participate in Discussion Board. Students are also required to log patient encounters on PDX.

PAP 131H1 - Primary Care Medicine I

The focus of this course is to build on the knowledge acquired in the previous semesters and integrate clinical information for the purposes of diagnosis and management. Modules will be framed using a



systems-based approach to diseases to cover the material relevant to the practice of medicine at the primary care level. This will be the first of two Primary Care Medicine courses throughout the PA program curriculum.

Disease topics will be covered in the following areas: Musculoskeletal, Neurology, Cardiology, Respiratory, Gastroenterology, General Surgery, Endocrinology Nephrology, Urology, Gynecology. Students will practice skills of clinical reasoning, formulating a differential diagnosis, identifying appropriate testing and management plans based on specific clinical presentations. Preventative medicine and therapeutics will also be explored. Material will be presented in a variety of teaching and learning modalities, including lectures, synchronous and asynchronous discussions and presentations.

PAP 134H1 - Clinical Skills III

This face to face course uses simulation and small group learning to continue to develop clinical competencies. Components of medical history, physical examination, documentation and clinical reasoning will be emphasized. Focus will be on Neurologic and Musculoskeletal systems, as well as special populations (pediatrics, geriatrics, women's health) and completing a comprehensive history and physical examination. Concepts will be integrated from concurrent courses in Behavioural Medicine, Diagnostic Techniques and Procedures II and Primary Care Medicine I. Students will apply techniques and skills learned in Clinical Skills I and II, and will continue to develop skills for working in teams.

PAP 135H1 - Diagnostic Techniques and Procedures II

The goal of this course is to deepen students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes in common clinical procedures and diagnostic techniques. Topics chosen reflect the clinical experiences that students will likely be exposed to earliest and most often, as PA students in clinical rotations and as entry-to-practice PAs.

This course is a continuation of Diagnostic Techniques and Procedures I (PAP135). We will continue to build on skills and diagnostic techniques covered in the first course, such as ECG interpretation; as well as introduce new topics, such as suturing; radiography interpretation; and orthopedic splinting. Students will develop hands-on, practical skills in performing common clinical therapeutic and diagnostic techniques and procedures.

PAP 138H1 - Behavioural Medicine

The course will focus on developing a framework for interviewing patients to identify biopsychosocial stresses that impact on the health of the patient. The skills required to perform an empathic interview which may include adapting to specific patient needs based on age, cultural factors or disability will be identified. The use of the interview as an initial therapeutic tool will be emphasized. The diagnosis, and further management and treatment of mental health issues will be discussed.

The course will focus on providing the knowledge and tools to the student to assist them in the initial management of mental health problems and seek out other appropriate treatment modalities when required. The course will review a number of categories of major psychiatric disorders: mood disorders, anxiety disorders, psychosis, substance abuse, organic disorders, adjustment disorders, somatoform disorders, personality disorders, and eating disorders. Psychotherapeutic interventions and

psychopharmacological treatment will be reviewed and explored.

The behavioural medicine course will provide a biopsychosocial approach to the patient so that psychosocial aspects which may be triggering or exacerbating patient symptoms or complicating recovery may be identified early on and dealt with in an expedient and knowledgeable manner. The course will utilize interactive lectures, online material as well as simulated patients.

PAP 241H1 – Primary Care Medicine II

Building on previous knowledge and competencies, this year 2 longitudinal course will use lectures and cases to integrate the knowledge skills and attitudes expected of a PA in a generalist medicine setting. Common conditions with atypical presentations will be addressed, as well as focus on some rare, yet important conditions. Important core concepts in ophthalmology, ENT, emergency medicine, dermatology, obstetrics, pediatrics, and geriatrics will be addressed to allow students to develop related competencies in these relevant areas that may not be as readily available in the clinical setting.

PAP 258H1 – Health Promotion and Education

This course provides an introduction to public health and the relationship with clinical care, and specifically focuses on health promotion (a core public health function and approach for empowering patients towards optimal health). Patient education, a key health promotion action, will be further examined. The course will be taught in eight modules: Introduction to Public Health and Health Promotion; Determinants of Health; Communicable Disease; Immunization; Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Tobacco Control; Chronic Disease and Screening; Healthy Environments; and Injury Prevention. Students will explore these themes through clinical case studies, develop a familiarity with a variety of health promotion resources, and learn to access and develop resources for their own patients.

PAP 265H1 – Evidence Based Medicine

Evidence-based Medicine (EBM) or Evidence-based practice (EBP) provides the best and most relevant evidence to help in clinical decision-making. EBM seeks to assess the strength of evidence of the risks and benefits of different diagnostic tests and treatments that are required in patient management. This course is based on the following modules: Introduction to EBM, Formulation of a clinical question, searching the biomedical literature for EBM, Critical appraisal of the evidence, Applying evidence to a patient problem, and Evidence-based guidelines

PAP269H1 – Medical Ethics

Expanding on previously acquired competencies in the curriculum, this Year 2 course integrates concepts from the Introduction to the Physician Assistant Role course in a culminating course. Utilizing a patient centred care framework, this course discusses principles of health care in Canada, and issues of autonomy, confidentiality, informed consent, ethical conduct of the professional, and health equity and gender equality in health care.

PAP250H1/260H1 – Clinical 1 & 2

The clinical year consists of 40 weeks of direct supervised patient encounters to further develop the student's clinical competencies, including expanding clinical knowledge and skills in patient care. Focus will be on **Primary Care/Family Medicine, Emergency Medicine, General Surgery, Internal Medicine/Hospitalist, Women's Health, Paediatrics, Mental Health** and up to 2 **Electives**. Students will be under the supervision of a preceptor: an academic physician or physician assistant.

The day to day schedule for students on clinical placements is designated by the primary preceptor. The schedule may include weekends, evenings, nights and/or being on-call. Students are expected to participate in clinical activities for **4 days a week** (or 8 "half-days"), not including on-call activities. Students are expected to have one day a week (2 "half-days") as protected time for their academic course work. Each Wednesday morning is designated as one of the "academic half days"