It is our goal at UND to prepare students for any PA program in the country. Seats in PA school entering classes are limited – all together less than 7,000 seats are available nationwide each year. The national ratio of qualified applicants per available seat is approximately 3:1. Getting accepted into any PA school is done through a highly competitive, two stage application process. It is extremely important that you are well prepared and able to present the best possible application to PA schools when you apply - good planning is key!

The Pre-PA Program is not a major or degree granting program at UND. In order to graduate with a degree from UND, you will need to:

1. Choose a Major and complete the specific requirements determined by the department responsible for that major
2. Complete the Essential Studies Requirements
3. Complete 120 semester credits (36 of which must be upper divisional credits)

You will be assigned two advisors while pursuing your degree and the Pre-PA Program at UND:

• A major advisor (from your major department) to help with the planning of your major curriculum
• The Health Sciences Advisor (from the College of Arts & Sciences) to help with all aspects of PA school preparation

Joining the Pre-PA Program is easy!:

1. Incoming freshmen students should plan to attend Summer Orientation - you can declare Pre-PA at that time
2. Current or transfer students can declare Pre-PA by stopping by the A&S main office or by calling us at 701-777-4974

Staying in the Pre-PA Program is hard!:

1. Incoming Freshmen must:
   • Attend all freshmen group advising meetings during the fall semester
   • Attend one freshmen group advising meeting during the spring semester
   • Complete the following courses, with a C grade or better, before the start of sophomore year:
     o Bio 150-151, with labs
     o Math 103 (may test out of this with an ACT Math score of 26, or appropriate Math placement test score)
     o Chem 121-122, with labs
   • Maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.300 or higher during freshman year
2. Transfer students, or current students switching to Pre-PA after freshman year, must:
   • If not already completed at UND or transferred in, complete the following courses with a C grade or better:
     o Bio 150-151, with labs
     o Math 103
     o Chem 121-122, with labs
   • Have a cumulative GPA of 3.300 or higher
3. All continuing Pre-PA students must:
   • Take Pre-PA courses as advised
   • Prepare for and take the GRE
   • Keep cumulative GPA and science GPA competitive
PA schools consider a variety of factors when reviewing applications:

1. **Academics**
   a. **Undergraduate Preparation**
      
      Admission into PA school typically requires completion of a Bachelor’s degree or at least 90 credits from an accredited college or university. All PA schools have specific content or course prerequisites which are included in the UND Pre-PA Program. UND accepts AP and post-secondary transfer credits toward the completion of a bachelor’s degree in accordance with the NDUS policies of General Education Requirement Transfer Agreement (GERTA) and Common Course Numbering (CCN). UND also has numerous articulation agreements and course equivalencies with other academic institutions. You should, however, check with the PA schools on your wish list regarding the post-UND implications of any AP, IB, CIS, CLEP, on-line, distance learning or community college work you plan to complete prior to your undergraduate matriculation.

   b. **Major**
      
      PA schools do not require any particular major. Pre-PA students have completed such majors as Anthropology, Athletic Training, Biology, Classical Studies, Communication, Dietetics, Foreign Language, History, Honors, Interdisciplinary Studies, Kinesiology, Medical Lab Science, Nutrition, Philosophy, Political Science, and Psychology.

      The choice for a major is entirely up to you! You should pick something you are good at, or enjoy studying, or fits your “plan B” if you don’t end up going to PA school. A list of each major and degree offered at UND may be found at: [http://und.edu/academics/registrar/fields-of-study.cfm](http://und.edu/academics/registrar/fields-of-study.cfm). Click on a particular major to see what you will be studying, as well as opportunities and careers associated with that major. For specific requirements and course descriptions, click on the Academics – Check out the courses you’ll take link on the right side of each major page. Four year plans (i.e., schedule of courses) for each degree are listed by college and are posted online at: [http://und-public.courseleaf.com/4yearplan/](http://und-public.courseleaf.com/4yearplan/).

      The combination of the Pre-PA Program with a major in the College of Arts and Sciences can usually be finished in 4 years if both major and Pre-PA are started freshmen year. The combination of the Pre-PA program with a major in Athletic Training, Aviation, Dietetics, Engineering, Education, Nursing, Nutrition or Medical Laboratory Science will take longer. Because these majors include busy curricula and/or practicums, in most cases if you plan to combine one of them with Pre-PA, you may need at least 5 years of undergraduate studies to do so.

   c. **GPA**
      
      Since PA school curriculum is considerably more challenging than any undergraduate curricula, you need to leave no doubt of your academic ability by excelling at the undergraduate level. Average cumulative GPA of recent PA school matriculants: 3.5.

2. **GRE**
   a. **Timing**
      
      This rigorous exam is required by over 71% of PA schools – students planning to finish their undergraduate degrees in 4 years typically take the GRE in May or June after their 3rd year (junior year) of college. While retakes are allowed, it is best to “do it right the first time”.

   b. **Preparation**
      
      Since considerable time (20+ hours/week) needs to go into GRE preparation, UND students are encouraged to take a lighter load (12 credits) during the spring semester of their junior year to give them room for reviewing and practice testing on their own.

   c. **Scores**
      
      Average GRE scores for recent PA school matriculants:
      
      - GRE Analytical = 4.14 (60.7th percentile)
      - GRE Quantitative = 155 (61.5th percentile)
      - GRE Verbal = 156 (68.2nd percentile)
3. Life Experiences
   a. Real World - Direct Patient Care Experience => 1,000-2,000+ hours
      • PA schools expect you to spend considerable time working in health care. You need to get a job in which
        you give direct medical care to patients, have a chance to observe PA’s, doctors and other health care team
        members, and have a supervisor observing you (most PA schools require a letter of recommendation from a
        health care work supervisor).
      • You may need to combine several jobs to get the experience and understanding of medicine you need.
        Work settings can include hospital, rehab, clinic, group care home (nursing, disabled children or adults,
        Alzheimer’s unit, VA, etc.), hospice, home health, support services, phlebotomy, EMS, etc.
   b. Shadowing => 20-40 hours
      • The majority of hours need to be with basic care PA’s: family medicine, internal medicine, pediatrics
      • A few of the hours can be with specialists
      • Be sure to include both rural and city experiences
   c. Community Service => These activities will set you apart!
      • Do things that you love, have a passion for, demonstrate your desire to serve others and give back, show
        your love of learning, let your leadership skills shine, etc.
      • These volunteer activities/paid jobs include, but are not limited to:
        o Lifeguards, first responders
        o Coaching/teaching sports (for park boards, travelling leagues, Special Olympics, etc.)
        o Camp counseling (church camps, day camps, medical camps, music camps, etc.)
        o Big Brother/Big Sister, Meals on Wheels, Relay for Life, etc.
        o Volunteering at your local city mission, free clinic, humane society, etc.
        o College organization participation or leadership (clubs, honor societies, sororities/fraternities, etc.)
        o College tutoring or TA positions
        o Medical missions trips (through college organizations, national organizations, or local churches)
        o Church work/sponsored activities (Sunday school teacher, youth worker, mission trips, etc.)
        o American Red Cross, Peace Corps
   d. Research => only expected of students planning to attend top tier PA schools
      • UND has numerous opportunities for doing undergraduate basic science research during summer breaks or
        the school year – you may apply for positions that either pay or give you college credit
      • Regional hospitals, labs, companies may offer summer opportunities
      • National labs (the NIH and the CDC) have some summer positions for college students
   e. Keep a log of all hours
      Although formal documentation is not needed, you should keep a simple personal log for all experiences/work
      in a notebook – be sure to include dates, times, activities, impressions, and note any meaningful patients or
      experiences. You will also need to provide contact information for someone who witnessed you in each
      experience or circumstance, so make note of that as well!

4. Letters of Recommendation
   a. You will need 3-4 letters of recommendation or evaluation for most PA schools.
   b. Letters need to address the personal attributes and academic abilities that make you a good fit for PA school and
      the profession of medicine.
   c. Authors will have to include professors and health care work supervisors who know you very well.

5. Legal Record
   a. Keep legal records clean. All minors and felonies will need to be disclosed on applications.
   b. Keep university records clean. Any institutional actions for code of student conduct violations (behavioral,
      academic, legal, etc.) will need to be disclosed on applications.
   c. Keep personal social media sites clean (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Be sure to demonstrate integrity, maturity,
      wholesomeness and good taste in all postings (verbal, photos, pictures, etc.).

6. Home State Residency
   In general, PA schools consider your home state of residency to be where you graduated high school and/or where your
   parent(s) currently live. You do not become a resident of a state by just attending college there!
Courses included in the **UND Pre-Physician Assistant Program** fall into one, or more, categories. These categories are:

1. Requirements for most regional PA schools
2. Good, additional preparation for PA schools

The checklist below will help you keep track of your progress in the Pre-PA program:

### UND Courses required by most PA schools:

- Biol 150, 150L  General Biology I
- Biol 151, 151L  General Biology II
- Chem 121, 121L  General Chemistry I
- Chem 122, 122L  General Chemistry II
- Organic Chemistry (choose one)
  - Chem 341+L & 342+L  Organic Chemistry I and II
- BMB 301  Biochemistry
- Anat 204, 204L  Human Anatomy
- A Physiology course (choose one)
  - Biol 442, 442L  Physiology of Organs/Systs (for Bio majors)
  - PPT 301  Human Physiology (for other majors)
- Mbio 302, 302L  General Microbiology
- PPT 315  Pharmacology
- Math (choose one)
  - Math 103  College Algebra
  - Math 146  Applied Calculus
  - AP credit for Calculus
- Statistics (choose one)
  - Psyc 241  Psychological Statistics
  - Soc 326  Sociological Statistics
- Engl 110  Composition I
- Engl 130  Composition II
- Psyc 111  Introduction to Psychology
- Psyc 250  Developmental Psychology
- Psyc 270  Abnormal Psychology
- Med 205  Medical Terminology

### UND electives good for PA school preparation (take as many as desired – all are optional):

- Biol 315  Genetics
- Biol 341  Cell Biology
- Biol 364, 364L  Parasitology
- Bio 369, 369L  Histology
- Mbio 328  Immunology
- Nutr 240  Fundamentals of Nutrition
- Comm 212  Interpersonal Communication
- Phys 161, 161L  or  Phys 211, 211L (recommended by Bethel)
Your course schedule at UND will vary depending on your major. Ultimately, all students, regardless of major, will be able to take the courses covering the content they need for PA school. The chart below shows complete major and Pre-PA science and math course schedules for both Biology and Chem/Biochem majors. For students pursuing other majors, only the science and math Pre-PA courses are listed so they will need to "pencil in" their major requirements as well. Also, all UND students will need to add any additional major requirements, Essential Studies requirements, and other electives to each semester in the schedules below as needed or desired:

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* Courses in Group 1 are required for all majors and include: Eng 110 and 130, Psych 111, Psych 250, Psych 270, Soc 110, Comm 110, and a Statistics class such as Psych 241 or Soc 326 or 7; additionally, the Chem/Biochem major requires a level 2 proficiency in a Foreign Language (i.e., Span 101, 102)

**Courses from Groups 2, 3 and 4 include options for Bio requirements/electives or other sensible electives for all majors:**

- **Group 2** Fall courses: Biol 315, Comm 212, Nutr 240
- **Group 3** Fall courses: Biol 364+, Biol 378, Chem 333;
- **Group 4** Fall courses: Biol 390, Biol 420, MBio 328;

- **Group 2** Spring courses: Biol 341, Comm 212, Nutr 240
- **Group 3** Spring courses: MBio 302+L
- **Group 4** Spring courses: Biol 369+, Biol 415, PPT 315

***Chem and BioChem requirements vary greatly from PA school to PA school. To be sure most regional PA school requirements are covered, we recommend Chem 341-342 and MBio 301. If, however, a student wishes to only do Chem 340+L and MBio 301, they should take Anat 204+L in place of Chem 341+L (sophomore fall) on the above schedule. Please see Health Sciences Advisor for details!**