AACC/UMB Collaborative Physician Assistant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

1. **Do I have to apply through CASPA?**
   YES, all applicants must apply through CASPA and the application must be completed and received by AACC by September 1 for consideration. AACC will send notification via e-mail when the application is received and instructions regarding how to proceed with the admission process.

2. **Do my prerequisites need to be completed by the application deadline?**
   All prerequisites must be posted with grades on official transcripts submitted to CASPA.

3. **Does my degree need to be completed by the application deadline?**
   Conferred degree and date must be posted on official transcripts submitted to CASPA.

4. **Does the type of bachelor’s degree matter?**
   No, any bachelor’s degree or higher from a nationally recognized institution is acceptable.

5. **If I retake a course, which grade will count for my GPA?**
   For cumulative GPA and science GPA (as calculated by CASPA) ALL courses will be counted in the GPA. AACC uses the GPA calculated by CASPA.

6. **Do I still need to take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) if I already have a master’s degree or higher?**
   Yes, official scores within the last five years must be submitted from ETS directly to CASPA using the identified code for the AACC/UMB Collaborative Physician Assistant Program. The UMB Graduate School normally requires GRE scores for admission and uses GRE scores as part of the data on which it bases its admission decisions. The scores, however, are never the sole criteria for admission.

7. **Can I work while I am in the AACC/UMB Physician Assistant program?**
   The program is very challenging and students need a time commitment for studying and clinical education. For your success in the program, **we do not recommend** that you work while matriculating in this program.

8. **Can I get credit for previous academic work or work experience?**
   No, the AACC/UMB PA Program does not grant credit for prior academic or work experience. Prerequisite requirements and work experience are factored into the ranking system used to evaluate applicants. Work experience is verified as needed through the admission and CASPA application process.

9. **How often do you admit students?**
   Once a year. Since the CASPA cycle opens mid-April, we recommend submitting a CASPA application by July 1 so that a completed CASPA application is received by AACC by the deadline date of September 1. Interviews are held in the fall for competitive applicants and selections are made for the new class that begins in the following May of each year.
10. **Do you offer a part-time PA program?**
   No, our program is a 25-month, full-time program.

11. **I am a foreign educated applicant; will you accept my foreign transcript?**
    After completing the CASPA application, AACC may request official evaluations for all foreign
    transcripts (for all higher-level institutions attended), evaluated by one of the following
    organizations:
    - World Education Services (WES) at [www.wes.org](http://www.wes.org) or
    - Educational Credential Evaluators (ECE) at [www.ece.org](http://www.ece.org) or
    Anne Arundel Community College will not evaluate these documents prior to going through this
    process. No other evaluation services will be accepted.

12. **I am a foreign educated applicant; do I have to take the TOEFL?**
    All foreign educated students whose native language is not English must take the Test of English as a
    Foreign Language (TOEFL) prior to submitting their CASPA application. The minimum acceptable
    TOEFL score (reflected on the CASPA application) for admission is 250 for the computer-based test
    and 100 for the internet-based test. Please note that TOEFL scores are only valid for two years from
    the date the CASPA application is submitted.

13. **If I send letters of recommendation to CASPA, do I need to submit them to AACC as well?**
    No, AACC obtains letters of recommendation from CASPA. It is the student’s responsibility to make
    sure that CASPA receives all three letters of recommendation.

14. **I do not have a background in the health care field. How can I obtain patient contact experience?**
    Patient contact experience is recommended; however, it is not required. A student who does not
    have patient contact experience can take a one-semester course and possibly earn a professional
    certificate in just four months and begin to accrue patient contact experience hours as a paid health
    professional (or nationally certified professional such as an EMT). Some of the courses are offered
    during the fall and spring semesters at Anne Arundel Community College. Some are even offered
    during the summer session. Volunteer and student hours are not considered under the program’s
    current definition for patient contact experience.

15. **What are the PANCE first-time pass rates?**
    Please visit: the AACC [Physician Assistant Department](http://www.umd.edu) web page and click on NCCPA PANCE
    Summary Report under Additional Resources for pass rates.

16. **How many seats are available in the PA program?**
    There are 40 seats available.

17. **How many applications does your program typically receive?**
    The typical number of applications received is more than 500.

18. **If I am offered a seat in the program, how do I apply for financial aid?**
    Financial aid for the program is completed through the University of Maryland Baltimore (UMB)
    Office of Student Financial Assistance. The school code is 002104 and you can contact them directly
    at 410-706-7347 or email: aidtalk@umaryland.edu or visit