



## Admission FAQs

### Applicant Process & Pre-Requisite requirements

- When is the application cycle open and close each year?  
Our application opens at the end of April through CASPA each year and closes on October 1st.
- How much does it cost to apply?  
CASPA charges \$179 for the first program you apply to and \$55 for each additional program. CASPA does offer a fee waiver program for more details please visit their website at:  
[https://help.liaisonedu.com/CASPA\\_Applicant\\_Help\\_Center/Starting\\_Your\\_CASPA\\_Application/Getting\\_Started\\_with\\_Your\\_CASPA\\_Application/3\\_CASPA\\_Application\\_Fees](https://help.liaisonedu.com/CASPA_Applicant_Help_Center/Starting_Your_CASPA_Application/Getting_Started_with_Your_CASPA_Application/3_CASPA_Application_Fees)
- When do you begin interviewing applicants?  
We conduct interviews through the summer and fall.
- Are there special preferences given to certain candidates during the admissions process?  
Yes, a list of preferences can be found at <https://www.msj.edu/academics/graduate-programs/physician-assistant-program/pa-admission-requirements/index.html> We also highly value other non-academic attributes such as leadership, volunteerism, diversity of life experiences, success in overcoming adversity, those that are underrepresented medical minorities, First Generation College or economically disadvantaged.
- Can I submit my application if I still have some prerequisites in progress?  
Yes! In fact, you can be offered an interview even though you do not have all prerequisites complete. You must have all prerequisite course work completed by December before you matriculate and start the first semester of PA school in January. We prefer candidates have no more than three prerequisite courses outstanding during the semester prior to starting the program.
- Can I apply to the program before I graduate with my undergraduate degree?  
Yes, you may apply. Please explain in your application your plan to meet all requirements prior to matriculation.
- What is the minimum grade for a pre-requisite course that will be accepted?  
All pre-requisite courses need to be completed with a grade of C minus or higher.
- How do you calculate GPAs? How many times can I re-take a course?  
We look at the cumulative GPA, science GPA and pre-requisite science GPA of every applicant. If you have retaken a course we will take the highest grade to calculate your GPA.
- Does MSJ have a secondary application?  
No, but we do have some additional questions within the CASPA application. There is no additional cost.
- Do you accept AP credit or CLEP credit for pre-requisite courses?  
Yes, we do accept AP credit and CLEP credit but those scores will not be used to calculate your GPA.
- How old can a pre-requisite course be?  
Pre-requisite course work has to have been completed within 10 years of matriculation (at the start of the Program in Jan), except for Anatomy & Physiology I and II with lab, which needs to be completed within 5 years of matriculation. The five (5) year requirement for anatomy and physiology is to ensure that the knowledge of the applicants is fairly recent. The PA Program is a very intense and condensed curriculum and expects the students to enter the program with a solid foundational background. This is to ensure student success in the program and reduce attrition.
- Can I substitute an upper level abnormal psychology course for the Developmental Psychology course?  
No, but you may choose to take the CLEP test <https://clep.collegeboard.org/>. This requires you to correctly answer 50 of the 90 questions correct to pass.

- Does the Mount accept online laboratory course work?  
The program may accept online and hybrid courses from regionally accredited institutions, pending review of the syllabus by the Admissions Committee to assure the material delivered is comparable to a similar class delivered in a traditional classroom format. It is highly recommended that the Anatomy and Physiology labs be hands on in a classroom environment.
- Can I apply to the program if I have been dismissed or withdrew from another health professions program?  
No applicant who has been dismissed from, or discontinued their participation in a health professional program due to any academic deficiency or non-academic policy violation(s) will be considered for admission. If there are other life circumstances that led to withdrawal or non-completion of the degree the Admissions committee will consider this on a case by case basis.
- Can I submit additional information to CASPA after my application has been verified?  
CASPA does not notify the PA program when an application is updated after verification. It is in your best interest to contact our admissions office and inform us of any additional supportive documents that have been submitted to CASPA.
- Can direct patient care hours gained while obtaining my academic degree or certification in healthcare count towards my required 500 hours of health care hours?  
Yes, hours gained as part of an educational program can be used towards the required 500 hours of direct patient care hours as long as those hours can be verified and appropriate documentation is submitted. Other ways of gaining the required hours of direct patient care experience is through volunteer or paid activities.
- What type of direct patient care is acceptable to fulfil the 500 hours of health care experience (direct patient care)? We will accept nurse aide, nursing assistant, medical assistant, EMT, medical scribe, and pharmacy technician, paramedic etc. If you have further questions please contact us with details about the hours and experience you have gained and we can give you a more specific answer.
- Do you require community service hours?  
No, but we value candidates who do embody the ideals of service that match our mission and vision for the program. Candidates are encouraged to document those hours of service within the CASPA application.
- Do you require Medical Terminology as a pre-requisite?  
No, a medical terminology course is included in the program curriculum. Students CANNOT obtain advance standing in the program if they have previously completed a Medical Terminology course.
- Do you accept International Applicants?  
International applicants may apply but please note that pre-requisite courses need to be completed at a regionally accredited college. All foreign transcripts from an institution in any country other than the United States must have a course by course evaluation, plus determination of letter grade equivalence. Either of the following agencies may be used for foreign transcript evaluation: World Education Services <http://www.wes.org> or Education Credentials Evaluators <http://www.ece.org> In addition, the program has a TOEFL iBT Requirement for international students or those students who did not attend a high school where English is the primary language. Information can be accessed at <https://www.ets.org/toefl>  
A minimum score of 120 is required with at least a 26 in each of the following categories:  
\*Reading      \*Listening      \*Speaking      \*Writing
- Do you accept virtual shadowing hours?  
The program will consider no more than 20 hours toward the shadowing requirement, if this involves a program with one on one interaction with a practicing PA to discuss the profession, responsibilities and day-to-day activities. This must be documented on the program's shadowing form available on the website.

## GRE Questions

- Does the Mount's PA Program have a minimum GRE requirement?  
We do not have a minimum GRE requirement. To be competitive it is recommended to have a combined score of 300 in the quantitative and verbal sections, as well as a 4.0 or greater on the writing section, which is the average for prior students who were accepted.
- How recent do my GRE scores have to be?  
GRE scores have to be within 5 years of the application date.
- Where do we send our GRE scores?  
7328 is our program identification number with CASPA to send your scores.
- How do you assess GRE Scores?  
We will super-score your GRE results, if you take the GRE more than once. This involves the use of the highest score of each section when calculating the result.
- Can I substitute the MCAT or PA-CAT for the GRE?  
No, the MCAT or PA-CAT cannot be used as a substitute for the GRE

## Other

- Does the program require a background check?  
Yes – every applicant offered admission is required to complete both a BCI and an FBI background check.
- Is MSJ's PA program system based or course based curriculum?  
The curriculum is organ system based
- Does the Mount's PA Program offer advanced standing?  
The policy of the Mount St. Joseph PA program states there is no acceleration or advanced placement regardless of prior experience or degree.
- What is the length of the program?  
Our program is 27 months, starts in January of each year with graduation occurring 27 months later in May.
- What is the structure of the program?  
The program consists of a 12 month didactic phase, followed by a 15 month clinical phase.
- Do you offer tours and information sessions about the program?  
Yes! Please see our graduate admissions website for more details at: <https://www.msj.edu/admission/visit-the-university/graduate-information-sessions/index.html>
- How many students are accepted into the PA Program?  
The program is approved to accept up to 32 students in each cohort.
- Where will I complete my clinical rotations?  
The program has availability for clinical rotations in several affiliated health networks in and around the Tri-State area. We also have individual agreements with many independent and smaller healthcare systems throughout Ohio and surrounding states. Most students will be required to travel outside Cincinnati for some of their required clinical experiences. The program does not provide housing or travel allowances, and students must be prepared to cover their transportation and living expenses during these clinical rotations.
- Can I attend the program part-time?  
No, there is no part time option available.
- Can I work while in the PA program?  
During the didactic phase, students are discouraged from working and prohibited from working during the clinical phase. Students must be available to follow the schedule of the assigned preceptor.
- Is there housing at the Mount for PA students?  
There are a few options available on campus in the dorm. The program will share other local resources with our incoming cohort of students.
- Does the tuition differ for in-state vs out of state residents?  
No, tuition and fees are the same for all students.