

# Application and Admission to the LMU-Knoxville PA Program 2023-2024 CASPA Cycle

## APPLICATION AND ADMISSION TO THE LMU-KNOXVILLE PA PROGRAM

### 2023-2024 CASPA CYCLE

the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program seeks to recruit, matriculate, and graduate highly motivated student applicants whose professional goals are consistent with the mission of LMU and the mission and goals of the program. Applications for admission are only accepted through the Central Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA). Application and admission criteria reflect the academic aptitude, personal attributes, and experiences in healthcare essential for success in the program. The evaluation criteria include the following:

1. Academic performance,
2. Personal statement submitted to CASPA,
3. Evaluation letters submitted to CASPA,
4. Responses to program-specific questions submitted to CASPA,
5. Performance during the student applicant interview,
6. Behaviors demonstrated throughout all communications with the program, and
7. Healthcare experiences.

### Admissions Process

Application for the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program is separate from the LMU-SMS-Harrogate PA Program. The LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program follows a rolling admissions cycle. Applications are reviewed after they are received by the program. A CASPA-verified application, Graduate Record Examination (GRE) scores, and a minimum of 24 hours of shadowing a PA, MD, DO, DPM, or NP with direct observation of patient interaction must be submitted before student applicants are considered for a student applicant interview. Student applicants with stronger academic profiles are more likely to be selected for a student applicant interview. Student applicants selected for a student applicant interview are contacted via telephone and/or email to schedule a student applicant interview, which begins in the fall of each year. The Admissions Committee meets after one or more student applicant interview sessions and makes one of three decisions: (1) offer admission, (2) place on the waitlist, or (3) decline the offer of admission. Student applicants are notified of the Admissions Committee's decision in writing as soon as possible following their student applicant interview. Student applicant interviews continue until the maximum class size of 100 is reached. Student applicants benefit from completing their application early in the CASPA cycle.

### Application Process

Applications for admission are only accepted through CASPA. Only applications verified by CASPA are reviewed. Grade point averages (GPAs) calculated by CASPA are applied. Student applicants are also required to submit GRE scores and a minimum of 24 hours of shadowing a PA, MD, DO, DPM, or NP before consideration for a student applicant interview. Please note that submission of a complete application does not guarantee an invitation for a student applicant interview, and completion of a student applicant interview does not guarantee an offer for admission.

- GPAs: Cumulative and science GPAs are calculated by CASPA. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.8 and a minimum science GPA of 2.8 are required for application; however, students with stronger academic profiles are more likely to be invited for student applicant interviews.
- GRE Scores: Student applicants must request submission of official GRE scores from Education Testing Services (ETS) to the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program using the Designated Institution (DI) Code 4376. The date of the GRE scores must be within five years of the date of application to the program. There is no minimum GRE score required for application; however, students with stronger academic profiles are more likely to be invited for student applicant interviews.

- Evaluation (Reference) Letters: Student applicants must submit three professional evaluation letters to CASPA that address the student applicant's readiness for the rigor of the program's curriculum and professional conduct. At least one evaluation letter must be from a PA, MD, DO, DPM, or NP, including their observations of the student applicant in the clinical setting. The program does not consider personal recommendations.
- Shadowing and Healthcare Experience Requirements: Student applicants must provide verification of a minimum of 24 hours of shadowing a PA, MD, DO, DPM, or NP before consideration for a student applicant interview. Shadowing must be completed through in-person direct observation of patient interaction by a PA, MD, DO, DPM, or NP. Work hours (patient care experience) completed with a PA, MD, DO, DPM, or NP do not meet the program's shadowing experience requirements.
- Admission Seat Deposit: Student applicants who are offered admission to the program must submit a non-refundable seat deposit of \$500.00 to secure their seat. The seat deposit is applied to the balance of tuition and fees for the first semester. The seat deposit is not refunded to students who do not matriculate into the program.
- Deferral of Admission Offer: Students may request to defer their admission offer to the next student cohort once. This request must be submitted in writing to the Program Director no less than 90 days prior to the first day of class. Any student who does not matriculate with the next student cohort following approval for deferral for admission offer loses their offer of admission but is eligible to reapply to the program.
- Reapplying to the Program: Any student reapplying to the program must follow the same application procedure as new student applicants and is evaluated using the same process as new student applicants. The program does not maintain student application records for student applicants who do not matriculate into the program.
- CASPA Code of Conduct: Student applicants are held to CASPA's Code of Cooperation and Conduct Policies. As such, all student applicants are expected and required to take full responsibility for their application throughout the application and admissions process and abide by CASPA's Profession Code of Conduct.
- Preferences:
  - Appalachian Region: Consistent with the mission of LMU and the vision and mission of the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program, preference is given to student applicants with permanent residence in the Appalachian region of the following states: TN, KY, VA, NC, OH, WV, PA, AL, and GA. The preference is applied with a 3-tiered system. The greatest preference is given to student applicants with permanent residence in the Appalachian region of Tennessee. Student applicants with permanent residence in the Appalachian region of KY, VA, NC, and WV are given greater preference than applicants with permanent residence in the Appalachian region of OH, PA, AL, and GA.
  - LMU's GPA Program: LMU undergraduate students enrolled in LMU's GPA Program, who apply to the program through CASPA are guaranteed a student applicant interview if they meet the program's criteria for application. Students enrolled in LMU's GPA Program must complete the same application process as all other student applicants.
  - Military Service: Student applicants with military service including honorably discharged veterans, active duty, guard, and reserve members, are given preference.
  - Articulation Agreements: The program has articulation agreements with the higher education institutions listed below whereby students of these institutions, who apply to the program through CASPA, are guaranteed a student applicant interview if they meet the program's criteria for application. Students enrolled in these institutions must complete the same application process as all other student applicants.
    - Tusculum University
    - Hampton University
- International Student Applicants: Student applicants must be a United States Citizen or a permanent resident of the United States. All prerequisite course requirements must be completed in the United States at a regionally or nationally accredited college or university. Student applicants who completed courses and/or degree(s) outside of the United States must submit a transcript evaluation from World Education Services, Educational Credential Evaluators, or Josef Silny and Associates, Inc. to CASPA. Student applicants whose native language is not English must submit scores from the combined Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and Test of Spoken English (TSE) examination unless the student applicant is a graduate of a regionally or nationally accredited college or university in the United States. The minimum accepted score is 79 for Internet-Based Testing (IBT) and 26 for the speaking component.

## **Admission and Enrollment Requirements**

- Academic Standards:

- **GPA's:** Cumulative and science GPAs are calculated by CASPA. A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.8 and a minimum science GPA of 2.8 are required for application.
- **GRE Scores:** The date of the GRE scores must be within five years of the date of application to the program. There is no minimum GRE score required for application.
- **Prerequisite Course Requirements:** Prior to matriculation, all prerequisite courses must be completed at a regionally or nationally accredited college or university in the United States with a course grade of "C" or higher. Course grades of Pass (P), Satisfactory (S), or equivalent for prerequisite courses completed during the spring and summer 2020 semesters that were converted from a letter grade are acceptable. Student applicants with greater than 16 credit hours of prerequisite courses to complete prior to their student applicant interview are not considered for admission. Student applicants must self-report course information on the CASPA application prior to submission to the program. Official transcripts, from all institutions attended, confirming course grades must be submitted directly from the degree-granting institution to CASPA. Survey science courses are not considered. Student applicants are advised to complete a thorough review of course material for any science course completed more than four years prior to matriculation. Advance Placement (AP) courses are considered. Credit is not offered for prior experience. Advanced standing is not offered.

## Prerequisite Courses Table

Course	Minimum number of total credit hours	Clarifications
Biology	7	Two courses/two semesters of biology. General biology and/or upper-level biology courses will be considered. Any course(s) fulfilling the microbiology prerequisite will not count as biology prerequisites. A laboratory component for at least one of the biology courses is recommended.
Microbiology	3	One course/one semester of microbiology. This course should include the study of microorganisms.
Organic Chemistry or Biochemistry	3	One course/one semester of organic chemistry or biochemistry. Any course(s) fulfilling the organic or biochemistry prerequisite will not count towards additional chemistry prerequisites.
Chemistry	7	Two courses/two semesters of any combination of inorganic chemistry, organic chemistry, or biochemistry. Any course(s) fulfilling the organic or biochemistry prerequisite will not count towards additional chemistry prerequisites. A laboratory component for at least one of the chemistry courses is recommended.
Human Anatomy	4	One course/one semester of human anatomy, or *two courses/two semesters if combination course. This course should cover all organ systems. A laboratory component is recommended. Course must be completed within 8 years of application *If a combined human anatomy and physiology course is completed, eight (8) credit hours is required.
Human Physiology	4	One course/one semester of human physiology, or *two courses/two semesters if combination course. This course should cover all organ systems. A laboratory component is recommended. Course must be completed within 8 years of application. *If a combined human anatomy and physiology course is completed, eight (8) credit hours is required.
Psychology	3	One course/one semester of psychology. A psychology course covering the full spectrum of psychological development from childhood to advanced age and an abnormal psychology course will best prepare an applicant for success in the Program.
Statistics	3	One course/one semester of statistics. This course should cover descriptive and inferential statistics.
English Composition	3	One course/one semester of English composition. Other writing-intensive courses will be considered.
Medical Terminology	1	One course/one semester of medical terminology. This course should cover all organ systems. Certificates are not accepted.

- **Degree Requirements:** Prior to matriculation, student applicants must earn a minimum of a baccalaureate degree from a regionally or nationally accredited college or university. Student applicants must self-report degree information on the CASPA application prior to submission to the program. Official transcripts confirming degree completion must be submitted directly from the degree-granting institution to CASPA. Student applicants who complete their degree after submission of their CASPA application must have their official transcripts confirming degree completion submitted directly from the degree-granting institution to the program ([PAKnox@LMU.net](mailto:PAKnox@LMU.net)).
- **Arrest/Criminal Background Check Policy:** To ensure the safety of students, faculty, colleagues, and most importantly, patients; the PA profession requires that both students and licensed health care professionals be able to pass criminal background checks. Therefore, prior to matriculation and prior to beginning supervised clinical practice experiences

(SCPEs), students must submit to a criminal background check. Students may be required to submit additional criminal background checks, which may include fingerprinting, based on clinical affiliation agreements with the program's clinical sites or at the Program Director's discretion. Students are responsible for all costs associated with criminal background checks. Further information is published in the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program Student Handbook.

- **Drug/Alcohol Screen:** Safe and competent delivery of patient care requires all providers to be free of impairment from drugs and alcohol. Prior to matriculation and prior to beginning SCPEs, students must submit the results of a urine drug screen to the online central screening service by the program's submission due dates. At times students may be required to submit additional drug and/or alcohol screens. Students are responsible for all costs associated with drug and alcohol screenings. Further information is published in the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program Student Handbook.
- **Immunization and Screening Requirements:** Prior to matriculation, students must have a licensed health care provider verify the student's immunization, tuberculosis screening, and urine drug screening status relative to the requirements listed below. Clinical sites may have additional requirements. Students are responsible for all costs associated with obtaining the program's immunization and screening requirements and any additional requirements of clinical sites providing SCPEs for the student. Students must submit their immunization records, tuberculosis screening results, and urine drug screen results to the online central screening service by the program's submission due dates. The program follows the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations for healthcare workers. Students may request a religious or medical exemption to the immunization/vaccination requirements by contacting the Program Director; however, clinical sites that provide SCPEs may not allow for exemptions to the program's requirements and may have additional requirements.

## Immunization Table

Immunization	Details
Hepatitis B	Students are required to provide proof of immunity against hepatitis B virus (qualitative or quantitative Hep B Surface AB titre). Students who do not have serologic evidence of immunity must get a 3-dose series of Recombivax HB or Engerix-B or a 2-dose series of HEPISAV-B and then an anti-HBs serologic test 1-2 (one to two) months after the final dose.
Measles, Mumps, & Rubella (MMR)	Students are required to provide proof of immunity against measles, mumps, and rubella (qualitative or quantitative MMR antibody titre). Students who do not have serologic evidence of immunity against measles, mumps, and rubella or who show insufficient immunity against any of the three components must get a booster vaccination and then a serologic test 6 (six) weeks later.
Varicella	Students are required to provide proof of immunity against varicella (qualitative or quantitative Varicella antibody titre or proof of a prior history of varicella or herpes zoster infection verified by a licensed health care provider). Students who do not have serologic evidence of immunity against varicella must get two (2) doses of the varicella vaccine at least 4 (four) weeks apart and then a serologic test six (6) weeks later.
COVID-19 Vaccination/Booster	Matriculating and enrolled students in the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program are not required but are encouraged to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination/booster. Students may apply for an exemption to the COVID-19 vaccination/booster through LMU. The Program will make every reasonable effort to accommodate clinical site placement for students who do not have proof of COVID-19 vaccination/booster or who have an exemption to the COVID-19 vaccine/booster through LMU; however, since clinical sites may require proof of COVID-19 vaccination/booster and may not accept an exemption to the COVID-19 vaccine/booster, this may result in a delay in graduation or failure to complete the Program curriculum within 54 months of initial matriculation.
Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis (Tdap)	Students are required to provide proof of Tdap vaccination as an adult. Vaccination must be current through graduation.
Influenza	Students are required to provide proof of annual influenza vaccination.
Tuberculosis (TB)	Students are required to provide proof of TB blood test (QuantIFERON-TB Gold Plus [QFT-Plus] or T-SPOT TB test [T-Spot]) or TB skin test (Mantoux tuberculin skin test [TST]). Students with a positive TB test (blood or skin) are required to have additional testing to determine if they have latent TB infection or TB disease.
Urine drug screen	Students are required to submit to a 10-panel urine drug screen. A copy of the urine drug screen results with the list of substances tested is required. A copy of the related prescription is required for any positive findings.

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- **Technical Standards for Enrollment:** The program has identified minimum technical standards all students must meet to ensure successful completion of the program and the delivery of competent, safe, and appropriate patient care during training and following graduation. All students in the program must be able to demonstrate these health

standards, cognitive and motor skills, and professional behaviors, including students with disabilities when reasonable accommodations are made by the program, for Program matriculation, progression, and graduation. Further information is published in the LMU-SMS-Knoxville PA Program Student Handbook.