



Sacred Heart UNIVERSITY

PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES

Program Goals

To work towards achieving our Mission, our Program Goals are to:

1. Graduate PA students to work in Primary Care Medicine, with a benchmark of 20% of each cohort employed in a primary care setting after graduation
 - **How we are meeting our goal:** The SHUPA Program was designed to assist in filling the primary care provider shortage; as such, the curriculum places a special focus on primary care topics, including a focused didactic phase course and clinical phase rotation. Primary care topics are woven throughout the entire curriculum to prepare those who wish to practice in this setting adequately.
 - **Benchmark for success:** The program strives for a minimum of 20% of graduates to work in Primary Care, including internal medicine, family medicine, women's health, and pediatrics, as recorded by the Graduate Survey
 - **Supporting Data:**

Graduate Survey Respondents	CO2018 (N=21)	CO2019 (N=29)	CO2020 (N=29)	CO2021 (N=32)	CO2022 (N=30)	CO2023 (N=33)
Percent of Cohort working in Primary Care	33.3%	27.7%	31.0%	21.4%	33.3%	30.3%

2. Emphasize the responsibility of service to the community through the completion of service-learning experiences by ensuring 100% of students are compliant with required volunteer hours.
 - **How we are meeting our goal:** The vision of SHU includes instilling a responsibility to share our resources for the betterment of the human community, especially through service to others, especially the poor. This is echoed in the SHUPA Program Goals; as such, the program expects its students to participate in service to the community during their time as a student.
 - **Benchmark for success:** The program aims for 100% of student participation in community service outreach
 - **Supporting Data:**

Cohort	CO2018 (N=26)	CO2019 (N=33)	CO2020 (N=38)	CO2021 (N=41)	CO2022 (N=39)	CO2023 (N=38)	CO2024 (N=41)	CO2025 (N=38)
Percent of Students who completed minimum hours	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Total Volunteer Hours	570.5	866.5	1117.19	1123.5	1036	980.75	1046	

3. Encourage professional involvement, leadership, and service with a target of 15% of students serving in leadership roles in local, state, and national PA organizations.

- **How we are meeting our goal:** The program supports professional involvement, leadership, and service by providing both financial support and release time to be involved.
- **Benchmarks for success:**
 - Annual Registration of the MPAS Student Society with AAPA
 - This requires that annually there is a faculty advisor, a class president, vice president, secretary, treasurer, historian, state chapter representative, outreach chair, Student Academy Representative, House of Delegates representative, Diversity Chair, Green Chair, and Health & Wellness chair.
 - By filling each of the required positions, this ensures that the program is meeting its benchmark of at least 15% of students serving in a local leadership role.
 - 100% program (faculty/student) membership in ConnAPA
 - Membership is supported by SHUPA for both students and faculty.
 - 100% AAPA faculty membership
 - Membership is supported by SHUPA.
 - 75% AAPA student membership as evidenced by AAPA Challenge Bowl Eligibility and Student Society Registration
- **Supporting Data:**

Cohort	CO2018	CO2019	CO2020	CO2021	CO2022	CO2023	CO2024
AAPA Challenge Bowl Eligible?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes & Placed 2 nd !	Yes	Yes

- One student representative (minimum) at a state or national level

Cohort	Name	Role	Organization
2026	Rebecca Croucher	House of Delegates Representative	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2026	Rachel Sheldon	PA Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2025	Karren Yuan	House of Delegates Representative	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2025	Maura Whaley	PA Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2024	Emily Spellman	House of Delegates Representative	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2024	Mike Maccio	PA Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)

2023	Dawud Mohamad	House of Delegates Representative	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2023	Mackenzie Winslow	PA Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2022	Molly O'Neill	PA Program Student Representative	CT Physician Assistant Foundation
2022	Tricia LePage	PA Program Student Representative	CT Physician Assistant Foundation
2022	Justyna Zazdzyk	PA Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2021	Eryka Bradley	Director of Diversity and Outreach	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2021	Victoria Ho	Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay, Transgender (LBGT PA) Caucus Fellow	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
2021	Erica Ramos	Northeast Regional Director	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2021	Karina Arrelucea	House of Delegates Representative	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2021	Joy Helwig	PA Program Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2020	Ashton Ogle	PA Program Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2020	Ashton Ogle	Northeast Regional Director	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA) Student Board
2019	Madison Altweis	PA Program Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2018	Kathryn LaFleur	Student Board Advocacy & Policy Committee	American Academy of Physician Assistants (AAPA)
2018	Christopher Marks	PA Program Student Representative	Connecticut Academy of Physician Assistants (ConnAPA)
2018	Sarah Bailey	Student Health Policy Fellow (SHPF)	Physician Assistant Education Association

4. Expand recruitment efforts to target qualified applicants from diverse backgrounds

The Program seeks to bring together a class of students from varied backgrounds and experiences to foster a learning environment that prepares PAs to address the needs of a diverse society.

- **How we are meeting our goal:** This goal was developed in Summer 2022 at the Annual MPAS Program Retreat to reflect the program mission. Data provided below reflect previous efforts to matriculate a diverse cohort; moving forward the program will also report on the below listed benchmarks.
- **Benchmark for success:** Faculty participate in at least 75% of Sacred Heart University sponsored open house events and offer at least one career day presentation to students in the greater Bridgeport, Stamford, or other Medically Underserved Area.
- **Supporting Data:** Data for the above two benchmarks for success will be captured starting with AY2022-23; information below provides insight into program diversity.

Supporting Data	AY2022-2023	AY2023-2024	AY2024-2025
PA Faculty Participation in University Sponsored Open House Events	100%	100%	100%

Supporting Data	AY2022-2023	AY2023-2024	AY2024-2025
PA Career Information Presented in Medically Underserved Areas	Profs. Sandy Narciso-Owen and Michael Chase Western Connecticut State University to meet with the Pre-PA group to discuss our PA Program February 6, 2023 Inaugural Year Participation in PAEA PA Diversity Recruitment Virtual Fair led by Prof.	Prof. Michael Chase participating and presenting at Fairchild Wheeler Magnet Highschool's Career Fair in Bridgeport, CT May 22, 2024 PAEA PA Diversity Recruitment Virtual Fair run by principal faculty	Prof. Michael Chase participating and presenting at multiple local High Schools and Boys & Girls Clubs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boys and Girls Club of Springfield, MA, 8/5/25 • Kolbe Cathedral Preparatory High

	<p>Michael Chase with participation from Dr. Eric Nemec, Dr. Reynold Jaglal, Profs. Sandy Narcisco-Owen, Barbara Kodzodziku, Beth Downes</p> <p>July 15, 2023</p>	<p>July 10, 2024</p>	<p>School of Bridgeport, CT, 11/8/24 & 3/25/25</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boys and Girls Club of Bristol, CT, 3/27/25 Career Day at Stamford High School of Stamford, CT, 4/9/25 <p>Profs. Michael Chase & Eric Nemec, & Lexi Klinkowski PA '24 NCCPA Step-Up Grant for Recruitment</p> <p>PAEA PA Diversity Recruitment Virtual Fair run by Prof. Michael Chase & principal faculty</p> <p>Healthcare Professions Awareness Day Events run by Prof. Michael Chase & other College of Health Professions faculty and students</p>
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Other Student Data:

Cohort	CO2018	CO2019	CO2020	CO2021	CO2022	CO2023	CO2024	CO2025	CO2026
Percent of applicants evaluated for both cognitive and non-cognitive attributed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Student Demographic Information:

Cohort	CO2022	CO2023	CO2024	CO2025	CO2026	CO2027
AK	0	0	0	0	0	0
AZ	0	0	0	0	0	1
CA	6	2	2	1	4	0
CO	0	0	1	1	1	0
CT	14	19	21	23	11	12
DC	0	0	0	0	1	0
FL	2	0	1	0	1	0
GA	0	0	0	0	1	0
GU	0	0	0	0	0	0
IL	0	0	0	0	1	0
KY	0	0	0	0	0	0
LA	0	0	0	0	0	0
MA	9	10	10	3	4	6
MD	0	1	0	1	1	0
ME	2	1	0	1	0	0
MI	0	0	0	0	0	0
MN	0	0	0	0	0	1
MO	2	0	0	0	0	0
NE	0	0	0	0	0	0
NV	0	0	0	1	0	0
NC	0	0	0	1	0	2
NH	0	0	0	0	0	2
NJ	0	0	0	2	0	1
NY	3	6	3	3	6	8
OK	0	1	0	0	0	0
OR	1	0	0	1	1	0
PA	1	1	1	0	0	1
RI	0	0	1	1	1	0
TX	0	0	0	1	1	0

UT	1	0	1	0	1	0
VA	1	0	0	1	0	1
VT	0	0	1	0	0	1
WA	0	1	0	0	0	2
WI	0	0	0	0	0	0
WV	0	0	0	0	0	0

- The PA Studies student cohorts are composed of students of diverse ages, ethnic, geographic, and experiential backgrounds.
- Students apply to our Program from a variety of age ranges. The average age of the SHU PA Studies student is similar to the national average PA Student age, 24.9 years (PAEA 2024).

Cohort	CO2027	CO2026	CO2025	CO2024	CO2023	CO2022	CO2021	CO2020
20-24	29	21	29	35	25	21	19	9
25-30	10	11	11	5	14	18	21	24
30+	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	9
Average Age	23	24	23.2	23.5	24.36	25.5	25.22	27.73

- Nationally, PA students report gender as 76% female and 23.9% male (PAEA, 2024).

Cycle	2024-2025	2023-2024	2022-2023	2021-2022	2020-2021	PAEA 2023
Cohort	CO2027	CO2026	CO2025	CO2024	CO2023	
Female	88%	94%	73.80%	79%	62%	78.20%
Male	12%	6%	26.20%	21%	14%	21.40%

- Demographic data is reported by applicants through the Centralized Application for Service for Physician Assistants and aggregated using the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS, 2020) reporting standards.

Overall Ethnicity Demographics

Ethnicity	CO2022	CO2023	CO2024	CO2025	CO2026	CO2027
Black	2	2	2	2	6	4
Asian	6	7	7	5	4	11
Asian Indian	1	2	0	4	0	0
White	31	30	34	25	16	20
Hispanic	5	8	3	3	3	0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0
2 or More Races	12	6	9	3	12	3
Did Not Report	3	2	0	0	0	2

- NB: This is applicant self-reported data; The option of “two or more races” was not an option until the CO2021 admissions cycle.

	CO2018	CO2019	CO2020	CO2021	CO2022	CO2023	CO2024	CO2025	CO2026	CO2027
1st Gen College Student	19%	29%	19%	24%	21%	17%	17%	34%	37%	30%

5. Maintain first-time Physician Assistant National Certifying Exam (PANCE) pass rate at or above the national average

- **How we are meeting our goal:** After reviewing the PANCE pass rates of the first few cohorts, the program noted that we had an opportunity to improve the first time PANCE pass rate. Thus, this goal was developed in Summer 2022 at the Annual MPAS Program Retreat to serve as a focal point for assessments and improvements of the program such that the first-time taker pass rate improves to be on par with national data. While we will continue to make data-driven improvements, outcomes from the adoption of this goal will not be fully captured until the CO2024 sits for the PANCE.
- **Benchmarks for success:** The Nation Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA) publishes the National Exam Pass Rate by graduation year. The SHUPA First Time taker average pass rate should meet or exceed the national average.
- **Supporting Data:** Data for the benchmarks for success will be captured starting with AY2022-23; the information below provides insight into program outcomes. We met our goal for AY2023-2024 with a 94% first-time test taker pass rate, compared to the national average of 92%.

Cohort	CO2018	CO2019	CO2020	CO2021	CO2022	CO2023	CO2024
National First Time Taker Exam Pass Rate	98%	93%	95%	93%	92%	92%	92%
SHUPA First Time Taker Pass Rate	85%	97%	89%	88%	95%	95%	97%