

Physician Assistant Program Competencies

In the following Competencies, a graduate from the PA program at UC Davis will be able to:

Competency 1: Medical Knowledge

Medical knowledge includes the synthesis of pathophysiology and patient presentation, including epidemiology, signs and symptoms, medical interviewing, physical assessment, diagnostics, differential diagnosis, pharmacologic and non-pharmacologic intervention, health promotion, and disease prevention.

- 1.1 Demonstrate core knowledge of biomedical, social, behavioral, and clinical services fundamental to patient care.
- 1.2 Demonstrate preventive care and health promotion/maintenance screening methods.

Competency 2: Interpersonal Skills:

Interpersonal and communication skills encompass the verbal, nonverbal, written, and electronic exchange of information

- 2.1 Communicate effectively with patients and/or their partners/family.
- 2.2 Communicate and collaborate effectively with physicians and other healthcare team members.

Competency 3: Clinical and Technical Skills, Clinical Reasoning and Problem-Solving

Proficiency in clinical/technical skills and clinical reasoning that is effective, patient-centered, safe, compassionate, and culturally appropriate for the treatment of medical problems and the promotion of health.

- 3.1 Gather information about a patient and their health status through history taking
- 3.2 Perform a clinically relevant physical examination
- 3.3 Perform basic medical procedures safely and accurately.
- 3.4 Synthesize essential patient information to make clinical decisions
- 3.5 Develop patient management plans
- 3.6 Recognize system-based determinants influencing healthcare decisions
- 3.7 Demonstrate engagement in critical analysis and self-reflection of one's knowledge, skills, and attitudes to improve practice.

Competency 4: Professional Behaviors

Professionalism is the expression of positive values and ideals in the delivery of care. Foremost, it involves prioritizing the interests of those being served above one's own. Physician Assistant students must acknowledge their professional and personal limitations.

- 4.1 Demonstrate a commitment to carrying out professional responsibilities
- 4.2 Demonstrate a commitment to ethical principles pertaining to the provision of healthcare
- 4.3 Demonstrate respect, compassion, integrity, and accountability to the health needs of patients.

References:

ARC-PA Standards, 6th edition, Compliance Manual. Retrieved October 10, 2025, from
<https://www.arc-pa.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Compliance-Manual-6e-pub-10-09-25.pdf>

Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA). (September 7, 2019). Core Competencies for New Physician Assistant Graduates. Retrieved November 1, 2025, from <https://paeaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/core-competencies-for-new-pa-grads-097119.pdf>