

PROGRAM MODIFICATION PROPOSAL FORM

Name of Institution: Medical University of South Carolina

Briefly state the nature of the proposed modification (e.g., adding a new concentration, extending the program to a new site, curriculum change, etc.):

Two changes necessitate approval as a Program Modification (1) adding a separate hybrid format of the same program and plan of study; (2) minor changes needed to hybrid version's curriculum which sum to more than 13 credits.

Current Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies (MSPAS) [offered only via traditional in person format]

Proposed Name of Program (include degree designation and all concentrations, options, and tracks):

Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies-Hybrid (MSPAS)

Program Designation:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Associate's Degree | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Masters Degree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree: 4 Year | <input type="checkbox"/> Specialist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's Degree: 5-Year
Ph.D. and DMA) | <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral Degree: Research/Scholarship (e.g., |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Doctoral Degree: Professional Practice (e.g., Ed.D., D.N.P., J.D., Pharm.D., and M.D.) | |

Does the program currently qualify for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

- Yes
 No

If No, should the program be considered for supplemental Palmetto Fellows and LIFE Scholarship awards?

- Yes
 No

CIP Code:51.0912

Current delivery site(s) 50501 (on campus)

Proposed delivery site(s) and modes: Add 85500 (blended)

Program Contact Information (name, title, telephone number, and email address):

Helen S. Martin, DHSC, PA-C, DFAAPA

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Division and Program Director

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Institutional Approvals and Dates of Approval:

CHP Leadership Council: October 23, 2024

Education Advisory Council: December 3, 2024

Provost's Council: December 16, 2024

Background Information

The College of Health Professions (CHP) at the Medical University of South Carolina (MUSC) proposes to add a hybrid-delivered physician assistant studies program (PAS-H) in addition to the current residential Physician Assistant Studies (PAS-R) program. The PAS-H program is a 119-credit hour, seven-semester Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program presented in a hybrid classroom format with on-campus immersion sessions throughout the program. These on campus immersion sessions occur as part of specific courses each semester. Those courses are noted in the Curriculum table by an asterisk beside the course number (page 7). Both paths will result in the learner earning the same degree, the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies, and both programs will take 27 months to complete.

A Physician Assistant (PA) is a licensed clinician who practices medicine in every specialty and setting. PAs are dedicated to expanding access to care and transforming health and wellness through patient-centered, team-based medical practice. PAs are educated at the master's degree level. PA programs are typically 27 months in length (three academic years) and include classroom instruction and more than 2,000 hours of clinical experience.

The specific responsibilities of Physician Assistants (PAs) vary depending on their work environment, experience level, area of specialty, and state regulations. Generally, PAs are equipped to obtain medical histories from patients, perform physical examinations, and diagnose and manage various illnesses. They also have the authority to order and analyze diagnostic tests, create comprehensive treatment plans, and prescribe medications. In addition to these tasks, PAs provide counseling on preventive healthcare measures, carry out minor procedures, assist during surgical operations, and conduct patient rounds in hospitals and long-term care facilities. Furthermore, PAs may engage in clinical research activities to contribute to the advancement of medical knowledge and practices.

(<https://www.aapa.org/about/what-is-a-pa/>)

The target audience for the Master of Science in Physician Assistant Studies program is individuals with a bachelor's degree who have completed the necessary prerequisite courses in basic and behavioral sciences. This group may consist of recent college graduates, career changers, and current healthcare professionals, such as paramedics, athletic trainers, medical assistants, or nurses, who are looking to advance their careers in the medical field.

Courses in the curriculum begin with foundational topics and progress to specialized subjects and clinical training. Students will engage in diverse clinical rotations to build competencies in multiple medical fields. The program culminates in a Summative Evaluation, allowing students to demonstrate their accumulated knowledge and skills. Overall, the program aims to produce proficient PAs capable of addressing healthcare challenges, emphasizing evidence-based practices reflective of MUSC's research-oriented approach.

The proposed hybrid PA program, which combines online education and on-campus laboratory experiences with practical clinical training, represents a strategic solution to the rising demand for PAs in both urban and rural areas. This program is designed to eliminate traditional obstacles to medical education, such as geographic isolation and the potential for financial burdens due to relocation associated with conventional on-campus training methods. By providing more accessible and flexible learning opportunities, the hybrid model can attract a diverse pool of candidates, particularly those from rural areas who are likely to return to their communities after completing their education.

At the same time, examining the geographic distribution of PAs in South Carolina reveals significant disparities in healthcare access between urban and rural areas. The existence of counties without any active PAs starkly illustrates the critical gaps in healthcare services in rural regions. The hybrid PA program can target these disparities by allowing students from underserved areas to pursue their education without the need to move, thereby increasing the likelihood that they will practice in their local communities.

Overall, the curriculum development process emphasized a thoughtful integration of theory and practice, prioritizing competency-based education in alignment with the established program learning outcomes of the Residential PA program. That is, the competencies earned are identical for the existing on campus MS PA program and the proposed hybrid MS PA program; all students are prepared for the national licensing exam they must pass before practicing as a PA. This ensures that all students possess the necessary tools for success in their careers while being prepared to meet the specific healthcare challenges faced by the populations of South Carolina, all while practicing evidence-based medicine that reflects the high standards of MUSC as a leading research institution.

Assessment of Needs

The examination of the need for a hybrid PAS program reveals a strong demand for Physician Assistant (PA) education in South Carolina and throughout the southeastern United States. Currently, the southeastern U.S. is home to 49 PA programs spread across five states, with Florida leading by hosting approximately 35% of the total programs. Among these, 16 programs are in the provisional phase, including two located in North Carolina. In South Carolina, there

are five accredited PA programs, comprising around 11% of the region's total, with the Medical University of South Carolina being a key contributor to the workforce of qualified PAs. The average cohort size across PA programs in the southeastern region is 52 students, while South Carolina's average is slightly lower at 45.

Projections for job growth indicate a favorable outlook for PA employment throughout the US at 28% growth expected from 2023 to 2033 (<https://projectionscentral.org/longterm>). The need in the southeastern states is even more robust, with Florida expecting a remarkable 46.2% increase, and South Carolina anticipating a 39% rise by the year 2032.

Percentage Change in Employment¹

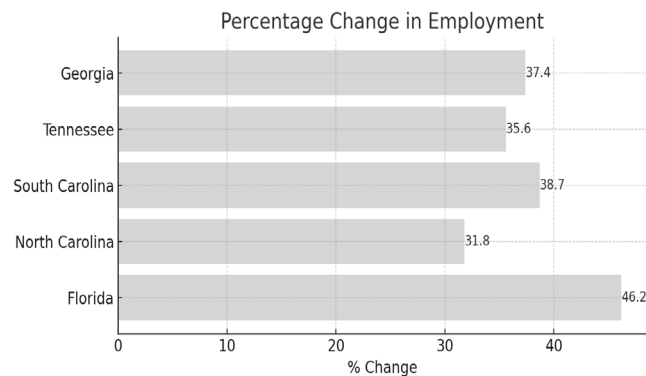


Fig 2. Percentage Change in Employment for PAs in the Southeastern Region of the United States (Projections Central [2020-2030 long-term projections](#))

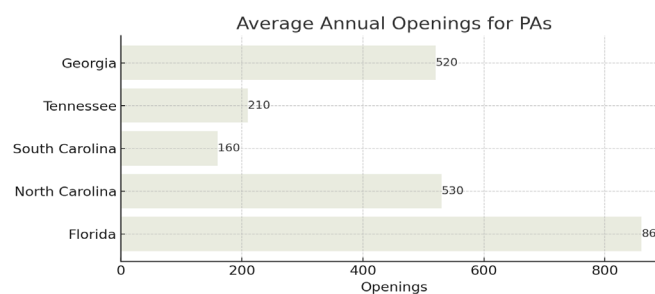


Fig 3. Average Annual Openings for PAs in the Southeastern Region of the United States (Projections Central [2020-2030 long-term projections](#))

¹ Projections Central. (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2024, from <https://www.projectionscentral.org/>

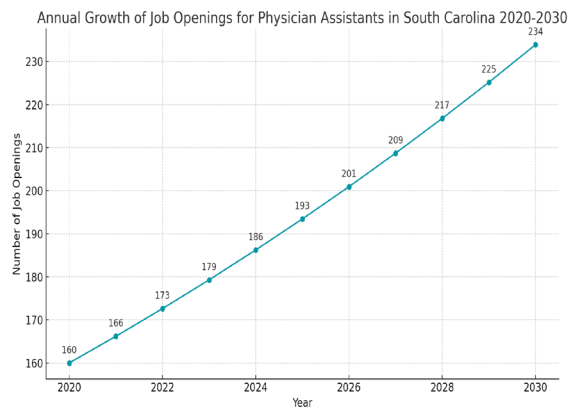


Fig 4. Annual Growth of Job Openings for Physician Assistants in South Carolina 2020-2030²

Job openings for Physician Assistants in South Carolina are projected to increase by 3.87% annually from 2020 to 2030. Beginning with 160 positions in 2020, this consistent growth suggests that there will be increasing opportunities for individuals in this field each year. This trend highlights a growing demand for Physician Assistants in South Carolina, making it an excellent career option for those pursuing a profession in healthcare.

PAs are vital to rural healthcare, often enjoying greater autonomy due to a lower availability of physicians. This level of independence, coupled with a strong emphasis on primary care and family medicine, positions PAs as essential healthcare providers in these communities, enabling them to offer comprehensive medical services and address various health needs in underserved populations.

According to the American Academy of Physician Associates (AAPA), a substantial number of PAs in rural areas focus on primary care, which is critical in light of the heightened healthcare demands and unique challenges faced by rural populations, such as aging demographics, increased prevalence of certain health issues, and greater dependence on Medicaid.³

Employment Outlook

1. **Job Availability:** According to projections from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the employment of physician assistants is expected to grow by 31% from 2020 to 2030, which is much faster than the average for all occupations.
2. **Salary and Financial Stability:** According to the Occupational Outlook, in 2023 the median annual wage for PAs was around \$130,000 with the potential for higher earnings depending on experience, specialization, and location. This level of compensation enables PAs to manage and repay student loans effectively, which is a crucial consideration for those entering the field.

² Projections Central. (n.d.). Retrieved February 22, 2024, from <https://www.projectionscentral.org/>

³ American Academy of PAs. (2018, June). PAs in Rural Locations Ready to Meet Primary Care Needs. Retrieved from <https://www.aapa.org/news-central/2018/06/pas-rural-locations-ready-meet-primary-care-needs/>.

3. **Contributions to the Tax Base:** Besides their financial benefits, the employment of PAs contributes significantly to the overall tax base. As they earn a stable income, PAs pay income taxes and contribute to social security and other governmental programs. This, in turn, supports public services and infrastructure, illustrating the broader economic impact of this healthcare profession.
4. **Diverse Opportunities:** PAs have the flexibility to work in various settings, including hospitals, clinics, and private practices, and can specialize in areas such as emergency medicine, surgery, pediatrics, and more. This diversity not only enhances job opportunities but also allows PAs to find roles that align with their interests and goals.

The positive employment outlook for physician assistants is a promising indication that individuals entering this field can find fulfilling job opportunities that provide financial stability to manage student loans while making meaningful contributions to the healthcare system and the economy as a whole.

Transfer and Articulation

Identify any special articulation agreements for the modified proposed program. Provide the articulation agreement or Memorandum of Agreement/Understanding.

Not applicable

Description of the Program

Projected Enrollment						
Year	Spring Headcount		Summer Headcount		Fall Headcount	
	New	Total	New	Total	New	Total
2027	97	97	0	97	0	94
2028	97	191	0	191	0	189
2029	97	285	0	190	0	188
2030	97	285	0	190	0	188

We anticipate that we can enroll a cohort of 97 well-qualified students in the inaugural class of the hybrid MS PA program at MUSC, both because of trends in applications nationwide and based on the number of applicants to our current MS PAS on-campus program.

Overall applicant numbers in the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA) for all programs using the centralized application have increased by 23% over the last 6 years – or an average of 4% YOY. The number of matriculated students also increased 25% from 2019 to 2023 – or an average of 6% YOY (2023-2024 matriculant data was not available). The largest percentage of applicants each year come from CA, NY, and TX ([CASPA Applicant Data Spreadsheet](#)).

Over the last three years, MUSC’s residential PAS applications grew from 1,969 in 2022 to 2,345 in 2023 and up to 2,698 in the current application cycle for an increase of 729 applications over 3 years. During each application cycle, program resources will be evaluated and allocated to ensure that adequate leadership, instructional faculty, and clinical site placements are available.

Upon request, PAEA provided applicant and matriculation numbers for 2022-2023, and applicant numbers for 2023-2024 (matriculation numbers are not available) for South Carolina residents. In 2022-2023, there were 476 applicants with residency in SC, with 42% of those applicants matriculating into a program. In 2023-2024, the applicant counts for SC residents increased almost 10% to 520, slightly higher than the overall YOY increase for all applicants.

The MUSC residential PAS program had 298 in-state applicants during the 2023-2024 cycle. There were more qualified applicants than available slots in our program. The flexibility of a hybrid option may draw in greater numbers of instate applicants, especially those in rural areas, and provide a greater opportunity for MUSC to train PAs who may elect to remain in state.

Attrition estimates above for the hybrid program are based on current experiences of the residential program. This attrition is accounted for in the budget and enrollment projections.

Curriculum

The following curriculum is proposed for the PAS hybrid program, which would begin in Spring of 2027. Courses with asterisk reflect those that require brief in person immersion sessions.

Proposed MUSC PAS Curriculum Sequence (Hybrid)				
Year	Semester	Course	Course Title	Credit Hours
1	Spring	PA 607	Introduction to PA Profession	1
		PA 631	Bioethics/Research Methodology	1
		PA 644	Human Anatomy	4
		PA 649	Human Physiology and Basic Pathophysiology	3
		PA 600*	Physical Exam /Documentation I	2
		PA 657	Introduction to Clinical Medicine	3
		PA 656	Public Health	1
		PA 700	Care of Underserved and Vulnerable Populations	2
				Total Semester Credit Hours
1	Summer	PA 662	Pathophysiology	3
		PA 604*	Diagnostic Medicine/Radiology	1
		PA 624	Pharmacotherapeutics I	2
		PA 617	Clinical Problem Solving I	1

		PA 658	Hematologic Systems	2
		PA 692	Dermatologic Systems	2
		PA 694	Ear/Nose/and Throat	2
			Total Semester Credit Hours	13
1	Fall	PA 659	Cardiovascular Systems	6
		PA 664	Pulmonary System	3
		PA 666	Renal System	2
		PA 689	Genitourinary System	2
		PA 697	Psychiatry and Behavioral Science	3
		PA 601*	Physical Examination/Doc II	2
		PA 625	Pharmacotherapeutics II	3
		PA 618	Clinical Problem Solving II	2
		PA 688*	Clinical Skills	1
			Total Semester Credit Hours	24
2	Spring	PA 671	Gastrointestinal System	4
		PA 673	Endocrine System	2
		PA 675	Neurologic System	3
		PA 677	Musculoskeletal System	3
		PA 681	Reproductive System	3
		PA 626	Pharmacotherapeutics III	3
		PA 619	Clinical Problem Solving III	2
		PA 699	Clinical Year Orientation	1
		IP 710	Foundations and Teamsteps	1
			Total Semester Credit Hours	22
			Total Didactic Year Semester Credit Hours	74
2	Summer	PA 670	Clinical Rotation I	5
		PA 672	Clinical Rotation II	5
		PA 674	Clinical Rotation III	5
			Total Semester Credit Hours	15
2	Fall	PA 676	Clinical Rotation IV	5
		PA 678	Clinical Rotation V	5
		PA 679	Clinical Rotation VI	5
			Total Semester Credit Hours	15
3	Spring	PA 680	Clinical Rotation VII	5
		PA 682	Clinical Rotation VIII	5
		PA 701*	Summative Evaluation	3
			Total Semester Credit Hours	13
			Total Clinical Year Semester Credit Hours	43
			Total Program Semester Credit Hours	119

Courses Eliminated from Program	Courses Added to Program	Core Courses Modified
IP 711 Elective (1 cr)	Physical Exam I /Doc I (2 cr)	Clinical Skills (1 cr)
Clinical Skills II (2 cr)	Diagnostic Medicine/Radiology (1)	
Clinical Rotation Elective (5)	Physical Exam/Doc II (2 cr)	
	Summative Evaluation (3 cr)	
Sum= -8	Sum=+8	

The courses above noted to be eliminated are only eliminated from the hybrid version of the program; they remain in place for the in-person version.

New Courses Descriptions

PA 600; Physical Exam and Documentation I (2 credits)

Physical Diagnosis/Documentation I is an introductory course designed to provide students with essential skills in conducting physical examinations and documenting patient interactions accurately. This course emphasizes the fundamental techniques needed to perform comprehensive physical assessments and focuses on developing effective documentation skills.

PA 604: Diagnostic Medicine/Radiology (1 Credit)

The Diagnostic Medicine and Radiology course provides students with a comprehensive overview of diagnostic imaging and laboratory diagnostics essential for effective clinical decision-making. This course is designed to enhance students' understanding of various diagnostic tools and techniques employed in modern medicine. Key components include the review and interpretation of laboratory tests, with an emphasis on understanding their clinical significance. Students will learn to read and analyze X-rays and develop foundational knowledge in advanced imaging modalities such as ultrasound, MRI (Magnetic Resonance Imaging), and CT (Computed Tomography) scans. Additionally, the course covers the basics of EKG (electrocardiogram) interpretation, equipping students to assess cardiac function.

PA 601: Physical Exam and Documentation II (2 credits) Physical Diagnosis/Documentation II builds upon the foundational skills acquired in Physical Diagnosis/Documentation I, providing students with advanced training in physical examination techniques and documentation processes. This course will focus on mastering complex physical exams and the nuances of documenting findings effectively across the life span.

PA 701: Summative Evaluation (3 credits)

The summative evaluation course is designed to comprehensively assess students' preparedness for clinical practice in the Physician Assistant (PA) program. Conducted within the final four months of the curriculum, this course includes three essential components: the Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE), the PAEA End of Curriculum Exam (EOCE), and a Professionalism Multiple Choice Question (MCQ) exam, along with a Summative Professionalism Student Evaluation Rubric. Through these evaluations, students will

demonstrate their clinical and technical skills, clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities, interpersonal skills, medical knowledge, and professional behaviors. Successful completion of all components is required for graduation, ensuring that graduates are equipped to provide high-quality patient care.

PA 688: Clinical Skills (1 credit)

The Clinical Skills course provides foundational training in the essential skills required for effective patient care in various clinical settings. Designed for Physician Assistant students, this hands-on course emphasizes the development of both technical and interpersonal skills necessary for patient assessments, diagnosis, and management. Students will engage in interactive learning experiences, including simulations and practical exercises, to master techniques such as history-taking, physical examinations, basic procedural skills, and communication strategies.

Similar Programs in South Carolina offered by Public and Independent Institutions

Identify the similar programs offered and describe the similarities and differences for each program.

Program Name and Designation	Total Credit Hours	Institution	Similarities	Differences
Charleston Southern University	99	Private	Master Level	24 - month program, smaller class size, (35 Students). Traditional residential format only
North Greenville University	108	Public	Master Level	24 - month program, smaller class size, (30 Students). Traditional residential format only
Presbyterian College	112	Private	Master Level	24 – month program, smaller class size, (35 Students). Traditional residential format only
University of South Carolina	114	Public	27-month program, Master Level	Smaller class size, (30 Students). Traditional residential format only
MUSC Residential PAS	116	Public	27-month program, Master Level	97 Students. Traditional residential format

State whether new faculty, staff or administrative personnel are needed to implement the program modification; if so, discuss the plan and timeline for hiring the personnel. Provide a brief explanation of any personnel reassignment as a result of the proposed program modification.

Position	Year	Advertise Position	Projected Date Hired	Anticipated Credentials
Program Director	2024	---	Oct 2024	Filled - Doctorate
Medical Director	2024	---	Oct 2024	Filled - PhD
Faculty 1 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2025	Oct 2024	Mar 2025	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 2 (new faculty)- Instructor/Assistant Professor	2025	Oct 2024	Mar 2025	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 3 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2025	April 2025	Sept 2025	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 4 (new faculty) Adjunct	2025	Apr 2026	Sept 2026	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 5 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2025	Apr 2026	Sept 2026	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 6 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2025	Apr 2026	Sept 2026	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 7 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2025	Apr 2026	Sept 2026	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 8 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2026	Apr 2026	Sep 2026	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 9 (new Faculty) Clinical Team Manager Instructor/Assistant Professor	2026	Jan 2026	Sept 2027	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 9 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2026	Aug 2027	Jan 2028	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 10 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2027	Aug 2027	Jan 2028	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate
Faculty 11 (new faculty) Instructor/Assistant Professor	2027	Aug 2027	Jan 2028	Terminal degree for PA profession, PhD or Doctorate

Admin Asst	2025	Oct 2024	Mar 2025	High School Diploma
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The number of faculty was determined based on college faculty workload guidelines and on current faculty and staff FTE requirements in CHP academic programs of similar size, accreditation requirements, quantity of clinical rotations, and complexity.

For accreditation purposes, the program must have a Certified Physician Assistant professional serving as program director as well as a physician medical director. Additional physician assistant faculty will be hired to provide didactic and laboratory instruction. Faculty will be hired to collaborate with the clinical education staff for clinical site management and to provide instruction for the practicum courses in the program's 2nd year. Adjunct faculty will be hired to instruct in their areas of expertise to ensure the quality of the didactic curriculum.

The number of faculty/staff and portion of effort will increase as the program approaches student matriculation for the inaugural cohort (anticipated spring 2027), and then maximum enrollment is reached. Utilization of CHP resources will increase as accreditations are secured and next steps are undertaken to develop a tangible infrastructure and market the program to prospective students. Importantly, there will be no overlap in faculty for the hybrid and in-person programs, ensuring dedicated teaching and support for each format.

A portion of FTEs for additional staff and administrative support are factored into the program budget and plan. Current CHP resources are adequate to support the Physician Assistant program; 4.0 FTEs will be provided among a business manager, fiscal tech, human resources manager, student services coordinator, and other administrative support.

Total new FTEs:

Faculty FTEs: 10.2

Staff FTEs: 3.5 FTE

Resources

Library Resources

The MUSC library serves as an invaluable resource for the residential Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program, and the same resources will be used for the hybrid option. The hybrid program will utilize the library's extensive collection of medical textbooks, journals, and electronic resources to support its curriculum and enhance student learning.

In addition to traditional print materials, the library offers access to a wide range of online databases and digital resources that the hybrid program students can access anytime and anywhere, making it easier for them to conduct research and complete assignments. The library also provides study spaces, group collaboration areas, and technology-equipped rooms, all of

which will be beneficial for hybrid students to engage in collaborative learning and prepare for clinical experiences.

Furthermore, the library hosts workshops and training sessions that the hybrid program will leverage to enhance students' information literacy skills. These sessions will teach students how to effectively locate, evaluate, and utilize medical literature, thereby supporting their academic success and professional development.

Overall, the MUSC library is a critical resource that the hybrid PAS program will actively engage with to promote a rich, integrated educational experience and ensure that students have the tools they need to excel in their studies and future careers.

Centrally on campus, the 108,000-square-foot Colbert Education Center and Library is located on the MUSC Horseshoe and is open to all MUSC students, faculty, and staff. This library building sits between MUSC's Main Hospital and the Basic Sciences Buildings and is accessible via a catwalk from both buildings. Students have 24/7 access to the Library Building via their MUSC ID badge. There are 56 security cameras inside and nine outside, covering the horseshoe and the north and south sides.

The library has a seating capacity of over 900 seats. It offers a variety of mixed-use spaces on the building's 2nd, 3rd, and 4th floors to meet students' unique study and collaboration preferences throughout the building. The space features open study areas with seating options for individual and group collaboration, 145 individual study carrels, [34 group study/collaboration rooms](#), two walking treadmills, and 390 lockers.

The library has a comprehensive and relevant collection of materials and literature in biomedical and health sciences that supports education for every degree offered at the university, biomedical research, and evidence-based clinical practice. The library provides access to databases to meet the needs of all health professions, including PubMed, CINAHL, UpToDate, PsycInfo, Lexidrug, Clinical Key, Trip, Bates' Visual Guide to Physical Examination, and Complete Anatomy, as well as the major bibliographic databases browsable on the library's [AtoZ Databases](#).

Physician assistant studies faculty, students, and staff can access almost all resources from anywhere in the world via the Internet using their MUSC NetID login and password.

Mobile Apps & Technology Lending

The Research and Education Services staff is very active in making the students aware of mobile apps they can download to their mobile devices, smartphones, and iPads. There is a LibGuide to mobile apps <http://musc.libguides.com/mobiledevices>. Mobile apps for drug information, clinical resources, patient education resources, eBooks, productivity, and other apps are available. Library Learning Commons technologists will help students with their laptop computers and mobile devices, including smartphones. Unless the problems are very involved, on-demand service is provided.

The Library's [Technology Lending](#) service offers a variety of laptops, tablets, medical models, mobile hot spots, projectors, cameras, and other technology for students, faculty, and staff to check out.

Equipment

New equipment and supplies will be purchased and are needed to accommodate the additional cohort of students and coursework including exam screens, duplication of prospective anatomy models, virtual anatomy equipment, otoscopes and ophthalmoscopes, and content-specific equipment to conduct curricular activities when onsite. Cost sharing is a standard approach within our current residential programs and hybrid programs. When possible, the costs of purchases will be divided between the two programs.

Shared Laboratory Space

The shared laboratory space for the Physician Assistant programs serves both the residential and hybrid PAS programs, encompassing approximately 1085 square feet. According to the curriculum design, this space will facilitate hands-on clinical lab immersions for the hybrid program for a minimum of one week in each of the months of April, May, and August. Time-sharing will be coordinated effectively with the residential program to ensure optimal use of the facilities.

This laboratory is equipped with fifteen (15) exam tables, nine (9) classroom tables and chairs, two (2) Smart Boards, two (2) sinks, storage areas, and four (4) private Objective Structured Clinical Examination (OSCE) rooms. These OSCE rooms are outfitted with video recording capabilities, examination tables, sinks, otoscopes/ophthalmoscopes, and stools.

For on-campus lectures, the hybrid program will utilize classroom space in the College, which accommodates up to 97 students. Additionally, the Drug Discovery (DD) auditorium can accommodate 294 students, while the Bioengineering (BE110) auditorium can hold 185 students, thus easily accommodating the needs of 97 hybrid students.

Technology

The hybrid PAS program will utilize the same technological resources as the residential program. These resources include wireless computer access, interactive SMART technology, and a master control room for technological support. Furthermore, the PAS program employs various platforms such as ExamSoft (for testing), RXPreceptor (for clinical rotation scheduling), CourseEval (for student course evaluations), Typhon Tracking (for clinical rotation and preceptor tracking), PAEA Exam Driver (for PACKRAT and End of Rotation Exams), and the Brightspace Management System. Brightspace is designed to provide faculty and students with an accessible online course tool that promotes integration, collaboration, activity-based learning, and critical reflection.

Simulation

The hybrid program will utilize the Simulation Center which serves all academic programs and is strategically located on campus as a multi- and interprofessional facility. The center offers over 11,000 square feet of educational space equipped with a diverse array of simulators. The Simulation Center fosters 12 simulation rooms, 3 classrooms, and an extensive inventory of 30 high-fidelity simulators spanning all age groups, from newborns to adults, as well as dozens of task trainers and several virtual reality trainers.

Impact on Existing Programs

Will the proposed program impact existing degree programs or services at the institution (e.g., course offerings or enrollment)? If yes, explain

Yes

No

The reason we have confidence that the proposed program will not affect existing clinical training programs at MUSC (either the MS PAS traditional program, nor other clinical training programs that require clinical rotations) is that in preparation for developing the hybrid PAS program, we have recruited nearly 800 clinical slots, with further recruitment ongoing. The program plans to have a Clinical Rotation Gatekeeper (included in the budget), to oversee both PA programs and ensure they are adequately supported. Many of the sites that are recruited will serve as backups for both residential and hybrid programs. During the didactic year of the hybrid PAS program, program faculty will also work with students to recruit sites within their home state.

Financial Support

Estimated Sources of Financing for the New Costs						
Category	1 st - FY25	2 nd - FY26	3 rd - FY27	4 th - FY28	5 th - FY29	Total
Tuition Funding	0	0	2,868,678	7,194,467	10,215,238	20,278,383
Program-Specific Fees	0	298,500	589,500	1,014,000	1,294,500	3,196,500
Special State Appropriation						
Reallocation of Existing Funds						
Federal, Grant, or Other Funding						
Total	0	298,500	3,458,178	8,208,467	11,509,738	23,474,883
Estimated New Costs by Year						
Category	1 st - FY25	2 nd - FY26	3 rd - FY27	4 th - FY28	5 th - FY29	Total
Program Administration and Faculty and Staff Salaries	510,474	1,220,309	2,098,593	2,573,823	2,901,160	9,304,359
Facilities, Equipment, Supplies, and Materials	77,500	138,772	1,115,977	2,410,652	3,404,582	7,147,483
Library Resources						
Other (specify)		92,893	1,076,185	2,554,475	3,581,831	7,305,384
Total	587,974	1,451,974	4,290,755	7,538,950	9,887,573	
Net Total (i.e., Sources of Financing Minus Estimated New Costs)	(587,974)	(1,153,474)	(832,577)	669,517	1,622,166	(282,342)

Budget Justification

Provide a brief explanation for all new costs and sources of financing identified in the Financial Support table.

The budget was developed with input from the college financial team, college leadership, and a hybrid PAS Program Director who has experience in academic program development. It is expected that the program will be net positive revenue in year four (as expenses must be incurred before we enroll any students; the budget projects that the program will be net positive revenue two years after the first cohort is enrolled). The initially high expenses (year one and year two) are due to accreditation requirements for the timing of hiring faculty and program leadership, as well as purchasing simulation equipment for student labs.

The line item in the financial support table referring to facilities, equipment, supplies and materials is the comprehensive annual operating budget. Categories included in this line item include Contractual Services, Supplies, Fixed Charges, Entertainment, Equipment, Travel, and Traineeships. Examples of individual expenses in each category above include but are not limited to:

- Contractual Services: Program printing and advertising, course development fees, consulting, lab equipment and repairs, student drug testing, student background checks, telephone charges, accreditation fees, program teaching support, professional development for faculty, standardized patients,
- Supplies: Office supplies, testing, classroom, and lab supplies and disposables
- Fixed Charges: student insurance
- Entertainment: student related events, recruitment fairs, graduation
- Travel: Faculty professional travel, clinical site travel

Revenue will primarily be from student tuition with additional faculty practice revenue. Because this is a hybrid program that will draw students from all over the country, the instate and out state tuition rates are the same and the rate will be \$14,787 per semester. The student program fee is \$1500 per semester to cover technology, clinical, and laboratory fees.

The ranks of the hires will be commensurate with professional degree and experience. It is anticipated that the Program Director is at the Associate Professor rank and the other faculty will be hired at either the Instructor or Assistant Professor rank. The faculty clinical team will be hired in FY27 to prepare for students entering clinical rotations with increasing FTE added as new cohorts of students' matriculate. This position will be at the instructor rank. The Program Director salary is \$262,140 (salary and fringe) annually. It is anticipated that core faculty will be offered salaries in the 125,000-150,000 range. Additional staff are allocated to provide resources for clinical education and clinical placements,

student services, and administrative support. The budget funding includes all faculty and staff that will support the program including full-time faculty and staff as well as shared support services and college leadership.

Evaluation and Assessment

Program Objectives	Student Learning Outcomes Aligned to Program Objectives	Methods of Assessment
The program prepares graduates to enter the workforce as well-trained Physician Assistants.	Students demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the area of Cardiology expected for licensure.	On the Packrat 2 exam, students who ultimately pass the PANCE typically score at least 50% of questions correct on the Cardiology domain of the exam. They take this exam in February of their second year. We aim to have at least 80% of our students reach this threshold (ie,50% of questions correct)
The program prepares graduates to enter the workforce as well-trained Physician Assistants.	Students demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the area of Pulmonology expected for licensure.	On the Packrat 2 exam, students who ultimately pass the PANCE typically score at least 50% of questions correct on the Pulmonology domain of the exam. They take this exam in February of their second year. We aim to have at least 80% of our students reach this threshold (ie, 50% of questions correct)
The program prepares graduates to enter the workforce as well-trained Physician Assistants.	Students demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the area of Gastroenterology expected for licensure.	On the Packrat 2 exam, students who ultimately pass the PANCE typically score at least 50% of questions correct on the Gastroenterology domain of the exam. They take this exam in February of their second year. We aim to have at least 80% of our students reach this threshold (ie, 50% of questions correct)
The program prepares graduates to enter the	Students demonstrate sufficient knowledge in the	On the PackRat 2 exam, students who ultimately pass

workforce as well-trained Physician Assistants.	area of Musculoskeletal expected for licensure	the PANCE typically score at least 50% of questions correct on the Musculoskeletal domain of the exam. They take this exam in February of their second year. We aim to have at least 80% of our students reach this threshold (ie, 50% of questions correct)
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Will any of the proposed modifications impact the way the program is evaluated and assessed? If yes, explain.

- Yes
- No

Will the proposed modification affect or result in program-specific accreditation? If yes, explain; and, if the modification will result in the program seeking program-specific accreditation, provide the institution’s plans to seek accreditation, including the expected timeline.

- Yes
- No

The proposed modification to the PA program will indeed impact program-specific accreditation, as the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA) views this hybrid program as a standalone entity rather than a continuation of the established residential program. This designation necessitates a separate accreditation process. Unlike other allied health disciplines such as Occupational Therapy (OT) and Physical Therapy (PT), which may have designated program tracks, the ARC-PA categorizes this initiative distinctly. The timeline set by ARC-PA for program development is listed below.

The ARC-PA Timeline of Hybrid Program Development and Provisional Site Visit

ARC-PA Timeline for Program Development	
Program Director and Medical Director Must be in Place	October 22,2024
2.0 FTE Principal Faculty and 1.0 FTE Support Staff Must be in Place	April 22, 2025
Application Due	October 30, 2025
Provisional Site Visit	January 22 – 23, 2026
Review at ARC-PA Commission Meeting	June 2026
Program Start Date if Provisionally Accredited	January 2027

Will the proposed modification affect or lead to licensure or certification? If yes, identify the licensure or certification.

Yes

No

Explain how the program will prepare students for this licensure or certification.

To become a licensed and certified Physician Assistant (PA), students must successfully complete a PA program that has been accredited by the Accreditation Review Commission on Education for the Physician Assistant (ARC-PA). Upon graduation, they are eligible to sit for the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE), administered by the National Commission on Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA).

The hybrid Physician Assistant Studies (PAS) program at MUSC is specifically designed to prepare students for this licensure process. Throughout the curriculum, students receive comprehensive training in both clinical and didactic settings, ensuring they acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to excel on the PANCE. The competencies gained in the traditional and hybrid versions of MUSC's MS PA program are identical.

Key components of the program that support students in their preparation for licensure include:

1. **Curriculum Alignment with NCCPA Blueprint:** The curriculum is structured to align closely with the competencies outlined by the NCCPA, covering essential topics such as clinical medicine, pharmacology, and healthcare systems. This ensures that students are well-prepared to tackle the examination.
2. **Hands-On Clinical Experience:** The hybrid program provides extensive hands-on clinical training through supervised rotations in various medical specialties. This real-world experience not only reinforces students' learning but also instills the practical skills required for successful patient care, which is a significant focus of the PANCE.
3. **Comprehensive Review Courses:** The program includes a dedicated review course designed to help students prepare for the PANCE. This course focuses on practice exams, test-taking strategies, and in-depth reviews of core concepts, helping to build students' confidence as they approach the certification exam.
4. **Access to Educational Resources:** Students benefit from access to a wealth of educational tools and resources, including textbooks, online databases, simulation labs, and library facilities. This varied access enhances their learning and aids in the effective preparation for both the PANCE and their future careers as PAs.
5. **Support and Mentorship:** Faculty and staff are committed to providing support and mentorship throughout the program. This includes guidance on exam preparation, career counseling, and strategies to enhance success in the licensure process.

In summary, the MUSC hybrid PAS program is dedicated to equipping students with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to achieve licensure as Physician Assistants through the NCCPA. By integrating academic rigor with extensive clinical experience, the program

ensures that graduates are not only prepared for the certification examination but also for their future roles in the healthcare field.

If the program is an Educator Preparation Program, does the proposed certification area require national recognition from a Specialized Professional Association (SPA)? If yes, describe the institution's plans to seek national recognition, including the expected timeline.

Yes

No

APPENDIX: References

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12. Medical University of South Carolina. (n.d.). *About the program*. College of Health Professions. Retrieved from <https://chp.musc.edu/academics/physician-assistant/about-the-program>