



Selective Internal Physician Assistant Admissions Pathway Program

Rationale

Health care reform in the United States is well underway. Given the current shortages within the physician workforce, the benefits of increased coverage and access may not be fully realized by those without access to a physician. Estimates suggest that the U.S. is facing an overall shortage of 130,000 active care physicians and almost 66,000 primary care physicians by 2025.¹ The need to educate primary care providers to meet this coming societal need is the reason for the increase in physician assistant studies programs nationwide. Provider shortages could exacerbate the health care access problems many Americans face today.

Presently, representation of under-represented minorities in medicine remains woefully unacceptable and does not represent the pluralistic society we live in. Culturally competent care provides wonderful outcomes and cultural humility can be taught, but studies have shown that this type of care is best delivered by providers who align with their patients' background. Nevertheless, studies have shown a significant gap between the racial and ethnic composition of primary care physicians and physician assistants and the general population.² Several medical campuses have looked to pipeline programs and college-level interventions to increase the diversity of their medical school classes with great results at the Oregon Health Sciences and Wayne State University. Both programs have been leaders in showing that improving the diversity of Alaskan Native and Black or African-American students in medical school occurs when you begin much earlier than standard admissions pathways allow.

The School of Education and Health Sciences, in alignment with North Central College, proposes to strengthen and pursue new programs and policies that eliminate disparities in K-12 education, enhance pipeline programs, college-level interventions, and transform PA school admissions. The Selective Internal PA Admissions Pathway (SIPAAP) is promising ways to increase pre-PA professional mentoring, strive to increase physician assistant diversity and ultimately promote excellence in health care.

SIPAAP Program Admission

The NCC MSPAS Program believes in recruiting and mentoring a diverse PA cohort. Scholars accepted to the Selective Internal PA Admissions Pathway (SIPAAP) will be intentionally mentored by MSPAS Program Faculty during their undergraduate years on campus whilst obtaining a rich foundation in the liberal arts and sciences and engaging in our community. The SIPAAP program gives provisional admissions preference to a select group of high school and first semester NCC sophomores students who meet admissions criteria.

Provided student candidates meet admission qualifications for both the MSPAS program and enrollment to NCC criteria, the NCC/MSPAS program will give admission preference which includes but is not limited to diverse students who meet NCC admissions criteria and have been accepted to the NCC Selective Internal PA Admissions Pathway. Students in the SIPAAP program must meet the institution-defined criteria for admission to NCC, must meet the program-defined criteria for provisional admission to the MSPAS program, and must demonstrate the appropriate curricular competencies while enrolled as an undergraduate at NCC prior to their matriculation to the graduate program. Due to the nature of the pedagogy in these programs, students will be encouraged to fulfill at least one general education requirement by taking a course in either the History of Ideas or Shimer Great Books programs.

SIPAAP program candidates who have met eligibility requirements must complete the online application, which includes a personal statement as to their reasons for becoming a physician assistant. Transfer students are not eligible for the SIPAAP program. The following represents the admissions criteria to be considered for the SIPAAP Program for both admitted high school students and rising sophomores:

Prerequisite High School Courses*	Years
Math including pre-calculus	4
Chemistry	1
Biology	1
English	4
Foreign Language	2
SAT Score*	1240
ACT Score*	26
GPA**	3.5 (unweighted)

* An official copy of SAT or ACT and high school transcripts must be submitted to undergraduate admissions.

**All prerequisite courses must be completed with an unweighted cumulative high school or NCC GPA of 3.50 or greater.

**Transfer students are not eligible for the SIPAAP program

A candidate for the SIPAAP program may apply for the program at two distinct points in time:

- High School Senior-Applies to NCC and then the SIPAAP Program
- NCC Sophomore applies to the SIPAAP program after completing no more than 48 hours of undergraduate course work at North Central College.

The general outline of the Selective Internal PA Admissions Pathway (SIPAAP) can be found in Figure 1.

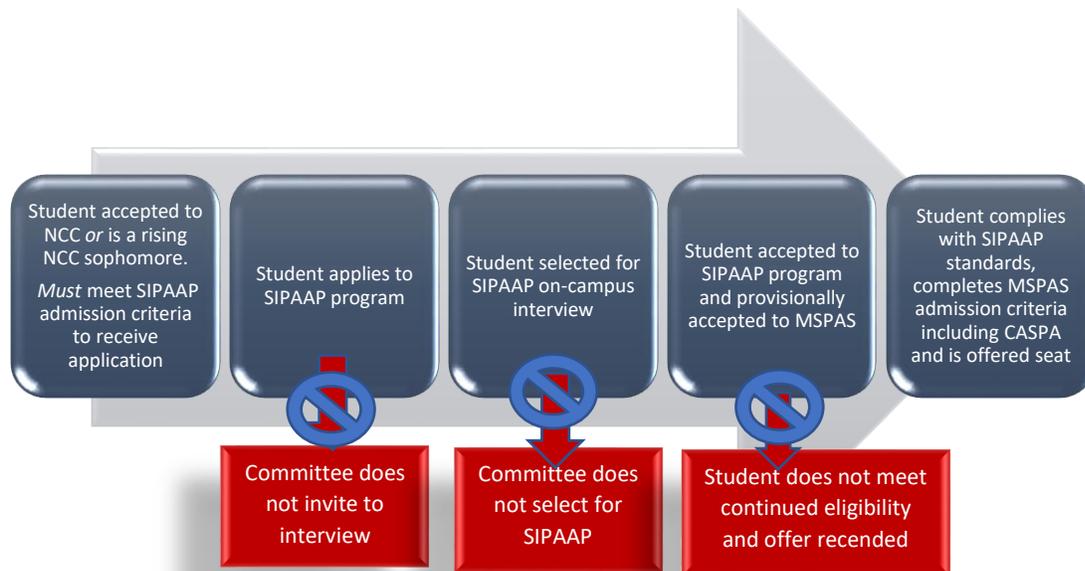


Figure 1. Selective Internal PA Admissions Pathway (SIPAAP) Flowchart

SIPAAP Admission Sub-Committee Members

The SIPAAP admissions subcommittee will be led by the Program Director, who will work closely with the Undergraduate Admissions Director and Premedical Advisor. Soon after the January 1st deadline, the admissions subcommittee will meet and proceed with a holistic admission process for each candidate which includes impressions on how each student will contribute to the cohort, program, PA profession and community. The SIPAAP Admissions Subcommittee will consist of both MSPAS Faculty and cross-campus Faculty and Staff committee members yet to be determined based on time and availability.

SIPAAP Admission Sub-Committee Duties

The Admissions Subcommittee on SIPAAP will meet and review candidate applications and invite students for on-campus interview, and review candidates for SIPAAP selection post-interview. Students who do not meet criteria or are not invited for an on-campus interview, or are not accepted after interview, will be notified via email and certified mail. All studies who are not accepted into the SIPAAP program are still welcome to apply via the Standard Pathway.

Admissions Interview for SIPAAP Program:

The Deadline to apply the SIPAAP program will be January 1st, starting in 2022. Both High School and NCC sophomore students will be notified of their on-campus interview via email and through certified mail. The SIPAAP interview and selection of students will occur January-March 2023. After the interview, the sub-committee on admissions will meet and select candidates for the SIPAAP program based on interview scores. High

School Seniors already admitted to NCC and NCC sophomores will be notified of their acceptance to the SIPAAP program on April 1st.

Matriculation into the SIPAAP Program and Provisional Admission to the MSPAS Program

The MSPAS program will notify all candidates of their status on April 1st, starting in 2022 for seating in the 2023 cohort. After the student receives their notification, they must provide in writing their acceptance of the SIPAAP program offer within 7 days. Failure to notify the program of their acceptance of the SIPAAP program will result in withdrawal from the program. Once enrolled, the SIPAAP student will receive a faculty mentor from the PA program and be required to attend quarterly activities within the program. SIPAAP program students must also provide grade updates to the program and a list of scheduled courses for the upcoming term. Failure to report grades, attend mentoring sessions or program relating activities may result in probation and/or withdrawal from the program and loss of the reserved seat. Students may use AP credits to fulfill their degree undergraduate degree requirement.

The students in the SIPAAP program are given the freedom to pursue any major, but must keep their cumulative GPA at or above a 3.5 at the end of the academic year while on campus. Completion of all of the admissions requirements required of the Standard Admissions Pathway, including a completed and verified application to CASPA. The students must confirm their seat in writing in the year of matriculation and proceed with the admission matriculation process in order to maintain their reserved seat in the class.

The SIPAAP Student must maintain and complete the following to remain in the program:

- Maintain a course load that will result in graduation at the end of four years (16 credit hours per semester)
- Maintain a cumulative GPA at or above 3.5 by the end of each academic year while at North Central College
- Attend mentoring sessions wherein courses and grade updates and official transcripts are discussed (two sessions per semester-one must be after semester grades are obtained)
- Attend quarterly PA program activities.
- Should the student be unable to comply with the minimum 16-hour credit load, this must be discussed with the SIPAAP Faculty Mentor and Program Director. Failure to disclose this will result in withdrawal from the program. Deferral of graduate admission is possible, but reasons for such must be approved by the SIPAAP Faculty Mentor and Program Director. Each case will be decided upon on a case-by- case basis.

The SIPAAP student must comply both with the SIPAAP Student Responsibilities and with the admissions requirements of the Standard Admissions Pathway, matriculating in the year stated in the provisional letter of acceptance. Failure to conform to the admissions matriculation requirements will result in withdrawal of seat. The student must accept (or rescind) their seat by April 1st of the year they are scheduled to matriculate in writing. Failure of the student to confirm in writing their intention will result in withdrawal of offer of a seat in the Cohort.

Withdrawal of Admission to the SIPAAP Program and Provisional Admission to the MSPAS Program

The NCC MSPAS Program may withdraw the provisional acceptance or refuse admission to the cohort based on the following criteria:

- Inability to maintain cumulative GPA of 3.5 by the end of each academic year
- Non-compliance with mentoring program or quarterly PA programmatic events
- Non-compliance with Admissions requirements expected of standard applicants
- Criminal or drug related activity not disclosed in CASPA application
- Non-supportive letters of recommendations
- Behaviors noted by the North Central Behavioral Intervention Team and Associate Vice President of Student Affairs while an undergraduate student at North Central inconsistent with the professional behaviors expected to the profession.

A student who may be in jeopardy of having their provisional acceptance rescinded will be notified in writing through both email and certified mail by their SIPAAP Faculty Mentor. Should the student remain in non-compliance with the terms of the provisional acceptance, the student will be required to meet with the Program Director and SIPAAP Faculty Mentor to discuss the reasons for withdrawal from the program and will receive supplemental career counseling. All students who have had their provisional acceptance withdrawn have the right to appeal this decision to the Dean of the School of Education and Health Sciences. The Dean of the School of Education and Health Sciences has the final decision on all appeals.

References

1. The impact of health care reform on the future supply and demand for physicians updated projections through 2025. Washington, DC: Center for Workforce Studies, Association of American Medical Colleges, 2010. Available at: https://www.aamc.org/download/158076/data/updated_projections_through_2025.pdf. Accessed July 30, 2014.
2. Grumbach K, Mendosa R. Disparity in human resources: Addressing the lack of diversity in the health professions. *Health Aff.* 2008;27(2):413-422.