MASTERS IN PATHOLOGISTS' ASSISTANT (MS PATHA)

The Master of Science in Pathologists' Assistant is a 24-month, full-time, graduate level program requiring 74 semester credit hours over six consecutive semesters. The program is designed to prepare students for a career as Pathologists' Assistants who function as healthcare professionals under the direction and supervision of a licensed pathologist. The program provides an integrated curriculum combining foundational biomedical science, specialized didactic instruction, and comprehensive clinical training in anatomic pathology. The program is designed in accordance with the rigorous accreditation standards established by the National Accrediting Agency for Clinical Laboratory Sciences (NAACLS).

The curriculum emphasizes the development of cognitive, psychomotor, and professional competencies required for the practice of surgical pathology and autopsy pathology. Instruction includes, but is not limited to, human anatomy, histotechnology, pathology, medical terminology, laboratory management, safety, and ethics. Students are trained in gross examination, dissection, description, and sampling of surgical specimens, as well as performance of autopsies, specimen photography, and appropriate documentation.

Clinical rotations will be conducted in partnership with leading healthcare institutions, providing students with practical experience in a variety of healthcare settings, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge while developing technical proficiency, professional communication skills, and an understanding of the multidisciplinary role of the Pathologists' Assistant within the healthcare team. Clinical education ensures exposure to a sufficient volume and variety of cases to meet program learning outcomes.

Graduates of the program will be prepared to:

- Competently perform the gross examination and dissection of human surgical and postmortem specimens under the supervision of a pathologist.
- Demonstrate mastery of anatomic pathology procedures, including specimen preparation, tissue sampling, fixation techniques, and quality assurance practices.
- Apply comprehensive knowledge of pathology, anatomy, medical terminology, and laboratory regulations in clinical decision-making.
- Exhibit professionalism, ethical practice, and effective communication within interdisciplinary healthcare teams.
- Meet the educational and clinical eligibility requirements to sit for national certification through the American Society for Clinical Pathology (ASCP) Board of Certification (BOC).
- Contribute to the healthcare system as certified pathologists' assistants, providing essential support in diagnostic pathology services and laboratory operations.

Upon successful completion of the program, students are eligible to apply for national certification through the ASCP BOC as a Pathologists' Assistant.

Admissions Requirements

Citizenship

Must be a U.S citizen or permanent resident

Degree

A bachelor's degree from an accredited institute of higher education

Required prerequisite courses

All prerequisites must be completed prior to matriculation. Course substitutions will not be considered. All prerequisites must be completed at a regionally accredited institution of higher education.

- 8 credit hours Biology I and II with lab
- 8 credit hours Chemistry I and II with lab
- 3 credit hours Human Anatomy
- 3 credit hours English Composition or comparable
- 3 credit hours Algebra or higher

Grade point average

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0

GRE requirement

The GRE is **not** required for application or admission

Shadowing

Shadowing in surgical pathology is a required component of the application process. There is no minimum number of shadowing hours specified; however, the purpose of this experience is to provide applicants with a comprehensive understanding of the scope of practice of a Pathologists' Assistant. Applicants should be able to clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities associated with this profession based on their shadowing experience.

Application process

The application period is open from **October 1st to February 1st** for classes beginning in **August**. Applications should be submitted online through the Centralized Application Service for Advancing Health Professionals (AHCAS).

- Resume/CV
- Official transcripts
- Three letters of recommendation
- A short essay (200 words or less) describing the role of a Pathologists' Assistant

Interview and Acceptance

PathA program interviews take place between February and May. Competitive applicants will be notified via email by the PathA Admissions Committee with specific details regarding their interview. The interview is designed to evaluate interpersonal skills, emotional intelligence, professionalism, adaptability to social cues, and overall demeanor. These criteria aim to assess the applicant's ability to navigate the professional and collaborative environments integral to success in the PathA program

Acceptance is contingent upon successful completion of outstanding prerequisites (if any), immunization screening (see below), and clearance of a mandatory criminal background check.

Immunizations and Health Records

Refer to the UTHealth Houston General Information Catalog (https://catalog.uth.edu/general-information/student-policies/) student policies for immunization requirements and Student Health Services (https://www.uth.edu/studenthealth/) page for additional information.

Computer Policy

The MS PathA program adheres to the Medical School Information Technology (MSIT) standards. In order to fully utilize the information resources required by the faculty during your education and be able to complete online examinations, the school requires that all incoming students bring a laptop that meets the university's hardware, software, and data security requirements. Computers cannot be more than two years old at the time of orientation.

Tuition and Fees

Please refer to the Office of Bursar website (https://www.uth.edu/bursars/student-resources/tuition-fees/mcgovern-medical-school) for the current MS PathA program tuition and fee schedules. For other fee information, see required fees (https://www.uth.edu/bursars/student-resources/tuition-fees/required-fees-all-schools), course and lab fees (https://www.uth.edu/bursars/student-resources/tuition-fees/mcgovern-medical-school) and student services fees (https://www.uth.edu/bursars/student-resources/tuition-fees/student-service-fees). Additional student information regarding tuition and fee exceptions and/or waivers, veterans education benefits, and the policy for Texas resident tuition can be found on the Registrar's website here (https://www.uth.edu/registrar/current-students/).

The program comprises 74 semester credit hours (SCH) in total, encompassing core courses and clinical rotations.

Semester 1 - Fall
PTHA 5401 Foundation of Medical Science (Human Anatomy) (4 SCH)[1]
PTHA 5402 Disease Mechanisms I (4 SCH)
PTHA 5403 Fundamentals of Pathology I (4 SCH)
PTHA 5204 Microbiology for PathA (2 SCH)

Semester 2 - Spring
PTHA 5412 Disease Mechanisms II (4 SCH)
PTHA 5413 Fundamentals of Pathology II (4 SCH)
PTHA 5205 Histology for PathA (2 SCH)
PTHA 5206 Education and Communication in Pathology (2 SCH)
PTHA 5207 Documentation in Pathology (2 SCH)

Semester 3 - Summer
PTHA 5604 Surgical Pathology Grossing Procedures (6 SCH)
PTHA 5215 Autopsy Pathology Dissection Techniques (2 SCH)
PTHA 5106 Special Techniques (1 SCH)
PTHA 5107 Medical Ethics (1 SCH)
PTHA 5208 Laboratory Management (2 SCH)

Semester 4 - Fall
PTHA 6101 PathA Clinical Rotation I (10 SCH)
PTHA 6201 Pathology Review I (2 SCH)
Semester 5 - Spring
PTHA 6102 PathA Clinical Rotation II (10 SCH)
PTHA 6202 Pathology Review II (2 SCH)

Semester 6 - Summer
PTHA 6803 PathA Clinical Rotation III (8 SCH)
PTHA 6203 Pathology Review III (2 SCH)

[1] Course Fee: $825