

Minimum Admissions Requirements

Undergraduate Degree

A bachelor's degree from a regionally or nationally accredited institution is required at the time of enrollment. The field of study can be varied as long as all prerequisite requirements are met. Undergraduates in their final years are eligible to apply if the bachelor's degree will be completed prior to the MSPA program start.

International graduates: please see "International Applicants" section below.

Required Prerequisites

The KGI MSPA program requires seven prerequisite courses prior to entry into the program. All must be completed through a regionally or nationally accredited institution with a grade 'C' or higher within 10 years of the application deadline. Applicants are allowed to have up to two outstanding prerequisites (no more than 8 semester hours or 12 quarter hours total) at the time of application. However, all prerequisites must be satisfactorily completed by June 15 of the enrollment year.

Please note that credit for Advanced Placement (AP), College Level Examination Program (CLEP), and International Baccalaureate (IB) will not be accepted for prerequisite courses.

Note that online accelerated courses for science prerequisites (such as those designed to be completed in 6 weeks or less) are accepted but are strongly discouraged for courses foundational to future PA practice such as human anatomy and human physiology.

KGI offers many of the required prerequisite courses during the summer in online or on-campus formats, depending on the course. Please see the [Summer Undergraduate](#)

[Courses at KGI](#) website for more information. Note that completion of prerequisite courses at KGI does not qualify as an admissions preference for the MSPA program.

- **Human Anatomy and Physiology with Lab (2 courses total)**

Minimum Semester Hours: 8

Minimum Quarter Hours: 10

Course Information: For this requirement, students must either complete a full sequence of Anatomy and Physiology (at one or more institutions) OR two separate, standalone courses (i.e., one Anatomy course and one Physiology course). The course sequence must cover the entire human body.

- **Microbiology**

Minimum Semester Hours: 3

Minimum Quarter Hours: 4

Course Information: No lab is required. Must cover bacteria, viruses, and fungi. The course may be lower division or upper division.

- **Medical Terminology**

Minimum Semester Hours: 1

Minimum Quarter Hours: 1.5

Course Information: Must be a comprehensive medical terminology course that includes an understanding of basic elements, rules of building and analyzing medical words, and medical terms associated with the body as a whole.

- **General or Inorganic Chemistry with Lab**

Minimum Semester Hours: 4

Minimum Quarter Hours: 5

Course Information: One semester of a general or inorganic chemistry course with a laboratory component. A combination overview course with inorganic/organic/biochemistry cannot be used to satisfy this prerequisite.

- **Organic or Biochemistry**

Minimum Semester Hours: 3

Minimum Quarter Hours: 4

Course Information: One semester of organic chemistry or biochemistry. No lab is required. A combination overview course with inorganic/organic/biochemistry cannot be used to satisfy this prerequisite. A combination course with organic/biochemistry is acceptable to satisfy this requirement. A general chemistry course will not meet this requirement.

- **Statistics**

Minimum Semester Hours: 3

Minimum Quarter Hours: 4

Course Information: May be taken through a math or psychology department.

Other departments to be considered on a case-by-case basis. The course may be lower division or upper division.

Grade Point Average (GPA)

MSPA program applicants must have a minimum cumulative and science GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale) as calculated by CASPA at the time of application submission.

Standardized Testing

MSPA program applicants are not required to submit results of any standardized tests, including the GRE, MCAT, and/or PA-CAT. The program does not use these scores to make any admissions decisions.

Patient Care Experience

A minimum of 1,000 hours of direct patient care experience completed in the past five years is required at the time of application. In the admissions review process, patient care hours are evaluated based on the quantity and quality of hands-on patient care experience.

- Quantity: applicants with a higher number of patient care hours are considered more competitive than those with the minimum number of hours required for application.



- Quality: applicants with paid experiences that include formal training; a high degree of hands-on patient care; active clinical decision-making; and/or a high level of responsibility for the patient are considered to be most competitive.

Examples of direct patient care experiences include:

- Paramedic
- Emergency medical technician
- Dietitian
- Respiratory therapist
- Radiological technician
- Medical assistant (back office hours only)
- Nurse (LPN, RN, MSN)
- Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA)
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist
- Surgical technician
- Clinical research assistant (only those hours spent interacting with and caring for patients directly)
- Medical scribe
- Pharmacist
- Phlebotomist

Unacceptable patient care experiences include: hours obtained in optometry, podiatry, veterinary, or dental settings; administrative roles in hospital or office settings; and those hours obtained as a lifeguard, aesthetician, in home care services, caregiving/taking, or in non-clinical research (i.e., laboratory setting only).

Hours obtained during volunteer, shadowing, or training programs are not counted towards patient care hours (e.g., certified nurse assistant, medical assistant, medical school, or PA school). Those hours attained after graduation are accepted, such as residency hours.

Direct patient care experience hours must be completed in the United States, U.S territories, or as part of U.S. organizations such as the military, peace corps, etc. Acceptance of U.S. organization-based patient care hours is at the discretion of KGI.

The program will determine which hours are counted towards the PCE based on what the applicant writes as a description of duties. If duties are unclear, the program reserves the right to determine how many hours will be accepted based on the description.

Personal Statement and Supplemental Application

All applicants are required to complete a personal statement and supplemental application for KGI through CASPA. These two submissions provide the Admissions Committee with a multi-dimensional view of the applicant, including their background, strengths, commitments, and personal goals.

Letters of Reference

A total of three references are required for application to the program. These references will help guide the Admissions Committee on the candidate's personal goals and attributes that would prepare them for success as a PA student and a future professional PA.

The letters have specific requirements as outlined below:

- One letter must be from a healthcare provider who is a PA, Doctor of Medicine (MD), Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO), or Nurse Practitioner (NP). This letter must discuss your suitability for the medical profession based on their interactions with you. This can be from a shadowing experience but is stronger if you have worked with that individual.



- The second letter must come from one of three types of individuals: 1) a second healthcare reference that can be another provider or any other person who works with patients such as a Registered Nurse (RN), Respiratory Therapist (RT), etc.; 2) an academic reference from a professor with whom you took a course or an academic advisor from your college/university; or 3) a research reference from one of your supervisors/leads for a research project on which you had significant participation.
- The third letter is your choice. You may choose another one of the above or select another type of reference, such as from volunteer experiences.

Please note that we will not accept any letters written by a personal friend, family friend, or relative. All three required letters must have been *requested* through CASPA at the time of application submission to CASPA and must be completed by your references no later than December 31 of the application year. We do not accept reference letters sent directly to our program.

International Applicants

International applicants are defined by the KGI MSPA program as citizens of any country outside of the United States (including Canada) who do not hold a United States permanent resident visa (green card). Permanent resident visa status is equivalent to U.S. citizenship for the purposes of our admission process and U.S. federal student loan programs.

International applicants that have completed their degree outside of the United States must meet two major requirements for admission:

- **International Transcripts:** An accredited foreign credentialing agency must evaluate all transcripts. The credentialing agency must determine that the coursework is equivalent to a bachelor's degree or higher to be considered for admission.



- Prerequisites: Without exception, all prerequisites (a minimum of 24 semester hours or 34 quarter hours) must be completed in an accredited U.S. institution.

TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score is not required. All other requirements remain the same across all applicants.

DACA Applicants: The MSPA program welcomes applications from individuals who qualify for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA). While the MSPA program does not consider an applicant's financial status in the selection process, DACA students must be prepared for the cost of their education. DACA applicants are not currently eligible for federal financial aid, but they are eligible for KGI international student loans and institutional scholarships.

For more information regarding international student requirements and procedures, please see KGI's international student [webpage](#).

Technical Standards

The KGI MSPA program requires that all matriculating students must meet the [KGI Technical Standards for Admission, Progression, and Graduation](#).

Admissions Preferences

In alignment with the MSPA program mission, our program will provide additional consideration to an applicant with one or more of the following characteristics:

- **First Generation in Family to Attend College**
Neither mother nor father attended college; as indicated on the CASPA application.



- **Fluency in a Language Other Than English**
Individuals who select “native” or “advanced” in a language other than English on the CASPA application.
- **History of Life Experiences Requiring Perseverance**
Defined as a history of past or ongoing non-academic circumstances impacting the applicant’s life as answered on the supplemental application. This could include (but is not limited to) experiences related to race/ethnicity and/or immigration status, residence in a medically underserved area, personal health issues, mental health and wellbeing, being a primary caregiver for a loved one, financial hardship, or inability to access financial aid.
- **Significant Personal Achievement**
Individuals who have accomplished a significant personal achievement, received a major award, started a service organization, co-authored a journal publication, etc. Does not include academic or GPA-related achievements. Must be listed under the ‘Achievements’ section of the CASPA application.
- **History of Military Service**
Includes veteran, active, and/or reserves.
- **Commitment to Service**
Defined as a history of ongoing service to a single organization of at least 40 hours or multiple organizations with more than 100 hours in the last two years.
- **A Current Student or Graduate of KGI and/or the Claremont Colleges**
Individuals who are pursuing or have received a certificate or a degree at KGI or one of the Claremont Colleges, as indicated in the Supplemental Application. Courses taken at KGI or the Claremont Colleges that are or were not part of a certificate or degree program do not qualify for this additional consideration.

Admissions Policies

- **Advanced Placement**
Transfer credits for didactic and clinical phase courses are not accepted. All KGI

MSPA program courses within the curriculum are required for graduation. No credit or advanced placement is granted for prior experiential learning, coursework, degrees, certifications, or advanced training.

- **Student Employment**

The KGI MSPA program strongly discourages students from engaging in any form of employment while enrolled in the MSPA program. The fast-paced, intensive nature of the program requires full-time attendance and a significant time commitment outside of class/clinical experiences. Outside employment obligations cannot be used to excuse absences from scheduled learning activities. In addition, the program will not consider outside employment as a reason for poor performance or for modifying program requirements.

The KGI MSPA program also does not allow students to work for the program (paid or voluntary).

KGI MSPA students cannot substitute for or function as instructional faculty. Students with specific prior knowledge, experiences, and skills may voluntarily assist faculty in didactic and laboratory sessions to share their knowledge and skills. However, students are not to be the primary instructor or instructor of record for any component of the curriculum.

KGI MSPA students are also unable to function as clinical or administrative staff at KGI or a clinical site. If a student is asked to substitute for a staff person on a clinical rotation, they must contact the Director of Clinical Education. Once information is collected and reviewed, the clinical team in conjunction with the MSPA Program Director will determine if continued use of the preceptor and/or clinical site is appropriate.

- **Clinical Sites for Supervised Clinical Practice Experiences**

Prior to the clinical phase, students will have the opportunity to submit their ideal

clinical sites/preceptors and locations. Prospective and enrolled MSPA students are not required to provide or solicit clinical sites or preceptors for the MSPA program. Students may voluntarily submit information about potential preceptors or clinical sites to the Director of Clinical Education if desired. The Director of Clinical Education (assisted by the clinical team) must identify, contact, and evaluate clinical sites and preceptors for educational suitability prior to creating an official affiliation.

There is no direct or implied guarantee that the student will be assigned a rotation with any requested clinical site or preceptor.

- **Criminal History and Background Check Requirements**

Several states have recently passed “Ban the Box” laws for higher education, which prohibit post-secondary institutions from asking applicants about their criminal history during the admissions process. The law further prohibits offering an applicant provisional acceptance to a program subject to a criminal background check. In 2020, California became the fifth state to enact this type of law (Cal Educ. Code 66024.5).

As a result, criminal history questions have been removed from the Centralized Application Service for Physician Assistants (CASPA), and a criminal background check is not required to matriculate into the KGI MSPA program.

Prior to acceptance, all applicants to the KGI MSPA program must acknowledge the following:

- An admitted student’s ability to complete the MSPA program successfully and gain PA licensure could be negatively impacted by their criminal history.
- Clinical experiences are a critical piece of the MSPA program’s requirements for



graduation. Many clinical sites will not place a student on a clinical rotation unless they have successfully passed a criminal background check. Background check results that limit the MSPA program's ability to secure supervised clinical practice experiences (SCPEs) may prevent a student from progressing or graduating from the program.

- As a part of the licensing process, many states require that graduates undergo a comprehensive background investigation. This process requires the applicant to disclose all past criminal convictions, even if they have been set aside or expunged.

If you have any questions regarding the impact of the "Ban the Box" law, please contact admissions@kgi.edu.

- **CASPA Code of Conduct Violations**

Please note that anyone who is found to have a code of conduct violation on CASPA (e.g., plagiarism) will be denied.

Scholarship and Loan Info

We also encourage you to review the [Funding Your Degree](#) page for valuable scholarship and loan information and relevant deadlines for both domestic and international students.