UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Medicine
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT STUDIES
MEDICINE.USASK.CA/MPAS

USASK
MPAS

Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) Program
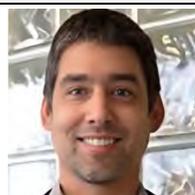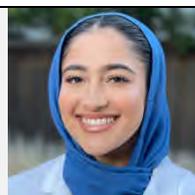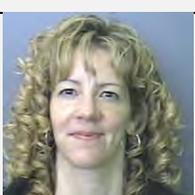
Student Handbook

BE WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS

Contents

Key Contacts

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

	Name	Position / Role		Name	Position / Role
	Dr. Trustin Domes trustin.domes@usask.ca	Academic Director		**Dr. Rahul Mainra** rahul.mainra@usask.ca	Director of Faculty & Clinical Placements
	Mr. Ashley Millman, CCPA ashley.millham@usask.ca	Director of Learners, Clinical Skills Co-Chair PA Professional Practice Co-Chair		**Dr. Muhammad Khan** dr.khan@usask.ca	Director of Assessment & Program Evaluation
	Dr. John Verrall john.verrall@usask.ca	Medical Foundations Co-Chair		**Dr. Jason Hosain** jason.hosain@usask.ca	Medical Foundations Co-Chair
	Dr. Michael Voralia michael.voralia@usask.ca	Clinical Skills Co-Chair		**Ms. Dua Abbas, CCPA** dua.abbas@usask.ca	PA Professional Practice Co-Chair Pediatrics Vertical Theme Lead
	Dr. Robbie Henderson Robert.henderson@usask.ca	Research and Evidence Based Medicine Co-Chair		**Dr. Scott Tunison** scott.tunison@usask.ca	Faculty Development, Teaching and Learning Specialist Research and Evidence Based Medicine Co-Chair
	Dr. Jarol Boan jarol.boan@virtualhealthhub.ca	Virtual Health & Community Engagement Lead		**Dr. Joel Mamchur** joel.mamchur@usask.ca	Interprofessional Education & Active Learning Lead
	Dr. Kirsten Jewitt Kirsten.jewitt@usask.ca	Health Promotion & Prevention Lead			

ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM

	Name	Position / Role		Name	Position / Role
	Gayathri Manoharan gayathri.manoharan@usask.ca	Program Manager		**Camille Audette** camille.audette@usask.ca	Educational Program Specialist
	Anna Taruc anna.taruc@usask.ca	Program Coordinator		**Sara Bryson** sara.bryson@usask.ca	Learner Experience Coordinator
	Michelle Tim michelle.tim@usask.ca	Program Assistant			

WELCOME AND PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Welcome to the inaugural cohort of the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program at the University of Saskatchewan. You are pioneers who will help shape the future of the Physician Assistant profession in Saskatchewan.

The MPAS program is crucial for driving a transformative shift in healthcare delivery across Saskatchewan, addressing workforce shortages, and improving access to care, particularly in rural and underserved communities. We are thrilled to have you as part of this historic journey. Thank you for being part of our story.

MISSION, VISION, AND BELIEFS

OUR MISSION

Provide a comprehensive education that empowers graduates to excel in diverse clinical settings. Alleviate workforce shortages and improve access to health care

OUR VISION

Train and produce Physician Assistants who will lead innovative, collaborative healthcare delivery, enhancing patient care and access, particularly in rural and underserved communities

BELIEFS

Dedicated to social accountability by addressing healthcare disparities and improving access to care for all communities, particularly in Saskatchewan

PROGRAM STRUCTURE AND ACCREDITATION

The MPAS program follows a competency-based medical education model, with curriculum and assessment aligned with CanMEDS-PA Roles and Entrustable Professional Activities (EPAs).

The curriculum is designed to integrate medical knowledge, clinical skills, research skills and professional competencies in a progressive manner. The program is delivered over two years, beginning with the pre-clinical phase, followed by the clinical phase. The pre-clinical phase includes foundational courses in biomedical sciences, research, clinical medicine, and professional practice, delivered through a combination of lectures, small group learning, simulation, and early clinical experiences. The clinical phase consists of supervised clinical placements across a range of medical disciplines and practice settings, including primary care, specialty care, rural and underserved communities, and acute care environments.

Our program will be accredited through Accreditation Canada's EQual program, adhering to the standards established for Canadian Physician Assistant programs.

For a detailed overview of the MPAS curriculum, please visit the program website at https://medicine.usask.ca/mpas/curriculum.php.

COURSE STRUCTURE

There are four courses delivered in each term in year one.

Year 1 - Term 1 August – December 2025	Year 1 - Term 2 Jan – May 2026	Year 1 - Term 3 May – August 2026
MPAS 810 Medical Foundations I	**MPAS 820** Medical Foundations II	**MPAS 830** Medical Foundations III
MPAS 811 Clinical and Procedural Skills I	**MPAS 821** Clinical and Procedural Skills II	**MPAS 831** Clinical and Procedural Skills III
MPAS 812 PA Professional Practice I	**MPAS 822** PA Professional Practice II	**MPAS 832** PA Professional Practice III
MPAS 801.9 (continues throughout the year) Research and Evidence Based Medicine	**MPAS 801.9 (continues throughout the year)** Research and Evidence Based Medicine	**MPAS 801.9(continues throughout the year)** Research and Evidence Based Medicine

The schedule below is a general guide but please refer to One45 for details regarding the exact session timings and schedule details. On rare occasions, an earlier start and evening sessions are required.

Year 1

Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
AM	Foundations (08:30-12:30)	Independent Learning or Early Clinical Exposure	Foundations (08:30-12:30)	Research & Evidence-Based Medicine (8:30-12:00)	Foundations (08:30-12:30)
			LUNCH		
PM	Independent Learning or Early Clinical Exposure	Clinical Skills (13:00-17:00)	PA Professional Practice (13:30-16:30)	Clinical Skills (13:00-17:00)	Independent Learning or Early Clinical Exposure

Understanding Your Schedule

In Year 1 of the MPAS program, you will be enrolled in four core courses. Details of each course is provided in the Course Structure section.

- **Medical Foundations**
- **Clinical and Procedural Skills**
- **Physician Assistant Professional Practice**
- **Research and Evidence-based Medicine**

ONE45
BY ACUITY INSIGHTS **One45** is used to manage schedules, clinical evaluations, and assessment forms. It can be accessed **here**. Use your NSID to login. Training for One45 can be found **here**. You should look to complete the following modules:

1. Accounts & Login
2. Complete Evaluations
3. Find the forms that you have submitted
4. View calendar

The primary tool for managing your **MPAS schedule** is **One45**. This platform will have the most updated schedule, including last-minute changes.   We encourage you to check One45 regularly and review your schedule daily. Any significant last-minute changes that affect you directly will be communicated by email. While we have worked to finalize the Term 1 schedule in advance, some adjustments will be unavoidable. In some cases, such as during Early Clinical Exposure (ECE), students may have individualized schedules, and One45 will reflect those details.

PAWS
Canvas **Canvas** is the primary learning management system used for course materials, announcements, and assignment submissions. It can be accessed through your PAWS account (using your NSID to login). Training for Canvas can be found **here**.

MPAS Course materials are accessed through **Canvas**, the University of Saskatchewan's learning management system. Here you will find all pre-readings, handouts, lecture recordings, and assignment submission links. If you need to submit assignments, they will be uploaded to Canvas. The curriculum utilizes varied methods for teaching delivery and there is a mix of in-person live lectures, pre-recorded sessions, and live virtual Zoom classes. Each module includes an overview of the schedule (document shared via Canvas) indicating which sessions are in person, which are live virtual, and which are pre-recorded to help you plan your time effectively.

We recognize that balancing a complex schedule can be challenging, especially early in the program. We highly recommend becoming familiar with both One45 for scheduling and Canvas for course content. It will be essential to create a study schedule early on and utilize independent learning time for reviewing pre-recorded sessions, preparing for sessions and studying. By keeping these tools up to date and checking them regularly, you will be well-positioned to make the most of your learning opportunities throughout the year. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out and we will support you through this process and provide you with access to tools and resources to help you.

IMPORTANT DATES

August 22, 2025 – Orientation Day for MPAS Students
August 25, 2025 – First day of Term 1 classes
November 10, 2025 – Reading week
November 27, 2025 –National Physician Assistant Day
December 19, 2025 – Last day of Term 1 classes/exams
January 5, 2026 – First day of Term 2 classes
February 16, 2026 – Reading week
May 1, 2026 – Last day of Term 2 classes/exams
May 4, 2026 – First day of Term 3 classes
August 21, 2026 – Last day of Term 3 classes/exams

USask Academic Calendar   **MPAS Term 1 Assessment Calendar**

ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC SUPPORTS

The MPAS program is committed to supporting students in all aspects of their academic and non-academic challenges. The **Learner Experience Coordinator** serves as the primary contact for students seeking assistance, whether related to academic challenges, career planning, or personal concerns that may affect learning. This includes connecting students with on-campus resources such as counselling services, Indigenous student supports, accessibility and academic accommodations, and wellness programs.

Students are encouraged to reach out early when challenges arise so that appropriate supports can be arranged. The Learner Experience Coordinator works collaboratively with faculty, program leadership, and student services to create an environment that fosters both academic success and personal growth. This includes organizing wellness activities, promoting healthy work-life integration, and helping students navigate university services. The program recognizes that success in graduate studies depends not only on academic ability but also on the ability to maintain well-being and resilience.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Saskatchewan provides academic accommodation services through **Access and Equity Services (AES)**. Students who require accommodations are responsible for registering with AES as early as possible and for participating actively in the accommodation planning process. The program is committed to supporting students in accordance with its **Accessibility and Academic Accommodations Policy**, which can be accessed online.

ACADEMIC APPEALS

Appeals regarding evaluation, grading, and academic standing will be managed according to University Council's Procedures for Student Appeals in Academic Matters. The first formal step in a grievance procedure is to be taken within 30 days of the alleged grievance. http://policies.usask.ca/policies/student-affairs-and-activities/student-appeals.php

Students are expected to familiarize themselves with Standard of **Student Conduct in Non-Academic Matters and Procedures for Resolution of Complaints and Appeals**.

ASSESSMENT AND ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

The MPAS Assessment Policy outlines guiding principles, assessment types, and progression standards. Further details are provided in the **Academic Expectations, Advancement, and Promotion Policy**.

ATTENDANCE EXPECTATIONS

Given the nature of the program, regular attendance and active participation are expected in all scheduled learning activities. Please review the **MPAS Attendance Expectations Policy** for full details.

ATTIRE AND DRESS CODE

Students in the MPAS program are expected to present themselves in a manner that reflects the Physician Assistant role and profession. Appropriate attire supports a respectful learning environment, fosters trust in clinical settings, and demonstrates readiness to engage as a healthcare professional.

In classroom settings, students are expected to dress in a manner consistent with professional academic standards. Clothing should be clean and in good condition. In simulation labs, clinical skills sessions, and all clinical placements, students must wear professional clinical attire.

Attire should align with workplace safety requirements and infection prevention protocols.

CERTIFICATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Throughout the MPAS program, students are required to maintain current and valid certifications in order to participate fully in both academic and clinical activities. Basic Life Support (BLS) certification must be valid at all times during the program. Students will also complete respiratory fit testing prior to any clinical activities, ensuring compliance with workplace safety and infection prevention requirements.

In the second year of the program, all students must successfully complete an in-person Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) Provider course that is endorsed either by the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada or the American Heart Association. ACLS certification obtained solely through an online course will not be accepted. The MPAS Office will arrange and cover the cost of BLS, respiratory fit testing, and ACLS certification for all students. Detailed information regarding scheduling, locations, and any preparation requirements will be provided directly to the cohort in advance.

CODE OF ETHICS AND STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT

The MPAS program adopts the **Canadian Association of Physician Assistants (CAPA) Code of Ethics**, which outlines professional values and behaviours expected of all Physician Assistants.

As the inaugural cohort, students will have a unique opportunity to work alongside members of the MPAS program to review and refine the **MPAS Student Code of Conduct**. This collaborative process will take place during the first week of the program and will ensure that the code reflects shared expectations for professionalism, respect, and accountability.

COMMUNICATION AND EMAIL EXPECTATIONS

Email is the primary means of communication between the MPAS program and its students. All official program correspondence will be sent to the University of Saskatchewan email account assigned to each student at the time of admission. Students are responsible for checking their university email regularly, to ensure that important updates, notices, and requests for information are received in a timely manner.

Students are expected to respond to program communications promptly, especially when a message requests confirmation, action, or the submission of materials. Failure to monitor or respond to university email does not excuse a student from being unaware of program requirements or deadlines. Maintaining reliable and professional communication habits is considered part of a student's professional responsibility in the MPAS program.

CONFIRMATION OF ENROLMENT

Students who require confirmation of enrolment can request this document through the **University of Saskatchewan's PAWS system**. Go to the My Records channel in PAWS to view the different options available for generating and submitting your confirmation of enrolment.

DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND MISTREATMENT PREVENTION

The University of Saskatchewan is committed to providing a positive and safe environment for all students, staff, and faculty. This commitment includes a shared responsibility to uphold respectful behaviour and to prevent mistreatment, discrimination, and harassment in all forms. These commitments align with the **Saskatchewan Human Rights Code** and with the **Saskatchewan Occupational Health and Safety Regulations**.

The MPAS program is dedicated to ensuring that all members of our learning community feel respected, supported, and safe. We are committed to maintaining an environment where concerns are heard, taken seriously, and addressed appropriately.

Our program has its own confidential reporting process for mistreatment. If you experience or witness mistreatment, harassment, or discrimination, you are strongly encouraged to report the incident using the **secure online form**. You may choose whether or not to include your name. The amount of information you share is entirely your decision and will help determine the nature of follow-up that is possible.

Our approach is to be proactive and not only reactive. Even if something seems minor, your feedback is valuable in helping us identify patterns, offer support, and address issues before they escalate. Speaking up makes a difference and helps us build a safer, more respectful community for everyone.

EDUCATIONAL LICENSURE

To participate in clinical activities during the MPAS program, students must be registered as educational licenses with the **College of Physicians and Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CPSS)**.

The MPAS program will cover the cost of the initial educational license for each student. The program will provide clear instructions and timelines for completing the registration process, including any forms, identification documents, or other information required by CPSS. Students are responsible for following these instructions carefully, meeting all deadlines, and maintaining active registration throughout the clinical phase of the program. Any delay or failure to complete the licensing process may affect a student's ability to participate in clinical placements, which could in turn delay progression in the program.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTS

Information on student loans, bursaries, awards, and other financial supports is available on the program's **Student Supports page**. Students are encouraged to review these resources and apply for relevant opportunities.

GENERATIVE AI (GENAI) USE IN THE MPAS PROGRAM

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools—such as Microsoft Copilot, Gemini, and ChatGPT—are increasingly integrated into education and healthcare. In the MPAS program, GenAI is intended to **augment, not replace** your learning and clinical decision-making. Human judgment, critical thinking, and patient-centered care remain at the core of professional practice.

KEY PRINCIPLES

Ethical and Effective Use – Use GenAI in ways that enhance learning and uphold academic integrity.
Transparency – Always disclose when and how you've used GenAI in academic work.
Academic Integrity – Unacknowledged use is considered academic misconduct under USask policies.
Privacy – Never input confidential patient information or protected health data into GenAI tools.
Follow Site Policies – When on clinical placement, comply with the host organization's GenAI rules.

LEVELS OF ACCEPTABLE USE

GenAI use is permitted at different levels depending on the activity:

No Use Permitted – For core knowledge and skills assessments.
Planning & Scaffolding – Brainstorming or outlining only.
Editing & Refinement – Grammar, clarity, and structure checks.

1. **Collaborative Use** – Assisting in content creation with critical review and disclosure.
2. **Full Use** – Extensive, transparent use for defined learning purposes.

When in doubt, check with your instructor about what level of GenAI use applies.

Full MPAS GenAI Usage Guidelines

MENTORSHIP – MPAS PATHFINDERS

Rooted in the Cree principle of wahkohtowin (kinship and interconnectedness) and inspired by military "pathfinders", the first to guide those who follow. The MPAS Pathfinders mentorship program connects students with some of the first practicing Physician Assistants in Saskatchewan. It is designed to help students navigate the challenges of the MPAS program and early practice. It entails 2-hour meetings every 3 months, for a total of 8 sessions over the entire program. The focus is on leadership, professionalism, resilience, and camaraderie. Session themes explore wellness, identity, and career development. As part of the program, students are automatically enrolled and assigned a mentor.

PROGRAM EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK

The MPAS program values feedback from students as an essential part of continuous quality improvement. Students are encouraged to provide timely and constructive feedback on courses, faculty, and program activities. The program also invites students to submit personal reflections or thank-you notes when a faculty member, preceptor, or staff member has made a meaningful impact on their learning experience. Blank thank-you cards are available from the Learner Experience Coordinator for this purpose.

STUDENT RECORDS AND PRIVACY

The University of Saskatchewan maintains student records in accordance with its policies on privacy and access to information. Your student records are confidential and protected. You have the right to access your own records, with certain exceptions outlined in university regulations. For full details, please see our MPAS Program **Guidelines**.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

As a member of the Master of Physician Assistant Studies (MPAS) program and the University of Saskatchewan community, each student holds both rights and responsibilities. These expectations reflect the values of the university, the standards of the Physician Assistant profession, and the principles of respectful, safe, and inclusive learning environments.

Student Rights

Students in the MPAS program have the right to:

- Learn in an environment that is respectful, supportive, and free from discrimination, harassment, or mistreatment.

- Receive clear, timely, and accurate information regarding program policies, academic requirements, and assessment processes.

- Be assessed and evaluated fairly and in accordance with the program's published standards and procedures.

- Access academic and non-academic supports, including advising, counselling, wellness resources, and accessibility services.

- Have concerns or complaints heard and addressed through fair, transparent, and confidential processes.

- Participate in the program's continuous quality improvement through feedback and representation in appropriate committees or meetings.

Student Responsibilities

Students in the MPAS program are expected to:

- Conduct themselves in a professional and ethical manner, consistent with the CAPA Code of Ethics and the program's Student Code of Conduct.

- Comply with all program and university policies, as well as the policies of affiliated clinical sites.

- Demonstrate integrity, honesty, and accountability in all academic and clinical activities.

- Maintain patient confidentiality and privacy in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and institutional policies.

- Communicate respectfully and promptly with faculty, staff, peers, and members of the healthcare team.

- Attend and actively participate in scheduled learning activities, clinical placements, and professional events.

- Accept feedback as an opportunity for growth and engage in self-directed learning and reflection.

The MPAS program recognizes that rights and responsibilities go hand in hand. By exercising your rights and meeting your responsibilities, you contribute to a learning community that upholds the highest standards of professionalism, collaboration, and patient-centered care.

APPENDICES AND QUICK LINKS

The appendices section contains direct links to MPAS program policies, the CAPA Code of Ethics, campus maps, and emergency procedures.

MPAS Policies and Procedures

CAPA Code of Ethics

Emergency Procedures

Maps *Note that maps can now be found in PAWS
Health Sciences Building A-D Wing
Health Sciences Building E Wing
Campus Interactive Map
MPAS Staff Offices on A-Wing ground floor (marked with star)

Health Sciences Building

A-WING | B-WING | C-WING | D-WING

Ground Floor

AED on this Floor

HEALTH SCIENCES BUILDING KEYPLAN

D-Wing
C-Wing
B-Wing
A-Wing
E-Wing
Dentistry

GD45

GD80 Loading Dock

e7

GD40

GD30 Office Suite

GD80.2

GD80.1

e8

GD50 Large Atrium

e6

GB29 GB33 GB37 GB41

GD10 Research Lab

B18 Health Sciences Supply Centre (HSSC)

B4 / B35A

B38

B42

B5 / B32

GD07 Small Atrium

B17

B9

B46

GC01 Student Lounge

e2

GD04 Conf. Room

GC10 Meeting Room

e1

GB80 Classroom

GB10 Classroom

GB06 Lecture Theatre

GB03 Lecture Theatre

GB01 B-Wing Foyer

e3

e4

Tunnel Access

Entrance

Link to RUH

GA70 Computer Lab

GA30

e5

GA10 Office Suite

GA40

Entrance

GA20 Office Suite

Link to E-Wing

GA50

GA20.26 Meeting Room

GA20.14 Meeting Room

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