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## PA Program Achieves Accreditation Milestone

Caroline Tomlinson

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# PA PROGRAM ACHIEVES ACCREDITATION MILESTONE

BY CAROLINE TOMLINSON '22



In September 2022, ARC-PA (the professional accreditor for PA programs in the U.S.) granted Accreditation-Provisional\* status to Cedarville University's PA (Physician Assistant) Studies program. Cedarville plans to enroll its first cohort of 30 students in May 2023.

ARC-PA grants Accreditation-Provisional status to qualified programs that meet its high professional standards for PA education but have not yet enrolled students.

Cedarville's 24-month, full-time Master of Medical Science in PA Studies (M.M.Sc.-PA) will be divided into two phases: a didactic year and a clinical year. Courses during the didactic year will build upon previous undergraduate education and prepare students for their clinical year, focused on giving them relevant professional experiences.

The rigorous and fast-paced curriculum maximizes learning and provides hands-on opportunities to obtain the knowledge, skills, and professional experience necessary to care for patients well as a PA. This accelerated but intense program allows students to enter healthcare practice more quickly.

The second floor of the recently completed expansion to the Callan Athletic Center houses the new PA program. This brand-new facility provides classroom and lab space to facilitate both didactic and hands-on learning necessary to equip highly skilled medical practitioners as well as collaboration and meeting spaces. With a biblical foundation in every area of the program, Cedarville PA graduates will be

able to treat the whole patient, physically and spiritually, and use their vocation as a ministry for Christ.

The journey to this PA program started several years ago as an idea. At an alumni gathering in Virginia Beach, Jason Grahame '98 approached Cedarville's President, Thomas White, asking if Cedarville had ever considered starting a physician assistant graduate program. Grahame was a PA professor at another university at the time, and his inquiry could not have been more timely: Cedarville administration had just begun the conversation surrounding the program, and a market demand study had been initiated.

The road to accreditation officially began in 2017 and included completing a full feasibility study, forming a PA advisory council, undergoing a financial analysis, developing curriculum, and achieving multiple levels of internal and external approvals. The Board of Trustees authorized the development of the PA program in May 2019, with a plan to enroll the first cohort in May 2022. The COVID pandemic delayed the launch by one year. University leadership invited Grahame to serve as the inaugural program director, and he subsequently hired the remaining faculty and staff to make the

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program possible. With Grahame's vision and determination, and the Lord's faithfulness in answering prayers and meeting specific needs, the program pursued and has achieved all necessary milestones to welcome its first class.

Cedarville's PA program is now accepting applications through CASPA (the centralized application system for PA programs) for its inaugural May 2023 cohort. Visit [cedarville.edu/PA](http://cedarville.edu/PA) to learn more about the program and the application process.

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Caroline Tomlinson '22 is Managing Editor of Cedarville Magazine.

\*Accreditation-Provisional is an accreditation status granted when the plans and resource allocation, if fully implemented as planned, of a proposed program that has not yet enrolled students appear to demonstrate the program's ability to meet the ARC-PA Standards or when a program holding Accreditation-Provisional status appears to demonstrate continued progress in complying with the Standards as it prepares for the graduation of the first class (cohort) of students. Accreditation-Provisional does not ensure any subsequent accreditation status. It is limited to no more than five years from matriculation of the first class. The program's accreditation history can be viewed on the ARC-PA website at [arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-cedarville-university](http://arc-pa.org/accreditation-history-cedarville-university).