



SHENANDOAH[®]
U N I V E R S I T Y

Division of Physician Assistant Studies

Community Impact Pathway Admissions Policy

Purpose:

The Shenandoah University Physician Assistant (SUPA) Division affirms its commitment to recruiting, admitting, and enrolling students who not only demonstrate academic and professional excellence but also align with the mission, values, and community of Shenandoah University. To further this goal, the Division will launch a SUPA and Community Impact Pathway (CIP) for admissions during the 2026-2027 admissions cycle.

Rationale:

The purpose of this policy is to create a structured opportunity within the admissions process for a limited number of applicants who have demonstrated a high level of engagement with SUPA or Shenandoah University, and who have expressed a strong likelihood of matriculating if offered admission. Similar policies at peer physician assistant programs have been shown to strengthen program retention, enhance community alignment, and foster diversity of experience and background within the cohort.

Policy Overview:

1. Designation:

- This policy will authorize up to three (3) applicants per annual admissions cycle to be invited to interview under the SUPA and Community Impact pathway, regardless of their initial reader review pre-interview score or ranking.

2. Eligibility Criteria:

Applicants considered for this designation must:

- Meet all admissions qualifications and requirements currently outlined in the SUPA Admissions criteria including minimum GPA, prerequisite coursework, CASPA submission standards, and completion of all required application components.
- Identify Shenandoah University as their first-choice PA program, as determined through application materials, correspondence, or interview interactions.

And demonstrate one or both of the following:

- Documented impact with Shenandoah University (e.g., alumni, current graduate or undergraduate students with active participation in SU-affiliated programs or service initiatives).

- Documented impact with the SUPA Program (e.g., volunteer participation, clinical preceptorship affiliation, or consistent involvement in SUPA-sponsored outreach or pipeline programs).

3. Nomination and Selection Process:

- Candidates may be nominated by SUPA faculty, staff, Shenandoah administration or through identification by the Admissions Committee during application review.
- Candidates must supply their nominator with a letter of interest addressed to the Admissions Committee. This letter of interest must include evidence of their eligibility under the Eligibility Criteria (see above).
- Nominations and interest letters will be submitted through a dedicated Google Form by the nominator. <https://forms.gle/U8BksMnJ3iC97PXo7>
- Verification of Eligibility: The Program Director and Admissions Committee will first review all nominations to verify that the candidate meets the foundational admissions qualifications and requirements, as well as at least one of the three Community Impact Pathway (CIP) eligibility criteria.
- Qualitative Review and Ranking: Eligible nominations will be qualitatively reviewed and ranked based on the depth, duration, and demonstrated impact of the candidate's engagement with Shenandoah University or the SUPA Division, and the clarity of their commitment to matriculate.
- Selection for Interview: Based on this ranking, the top three (3) candidates will be selected to receive a formal invitation to interview under the SUPA and Community Impact designation.
- Final selection for interview invitations under this designation must be approved by the Program Director.

4. Scoring and Ranking:

- The standard admissions scoring and ranking process will remain unchanged.
- Candidates invited under this policy will participate in the full interview day and will be evaluated using the same rubric and criteria as all other applicants.
- This policy does not guarantee admission; it provides only an opportunity for an interview.

5. Review and Evaluation:

- Following each admissions cycle, the impact of this CIP pathway program will be evaluated, including candidate performance, matriculation rates, and alignment with SUPA's mission and values.
- Program continuation, revision, or discontinuation of the policy will be based on outcomes and stakeholder feedback.

Effective Term:

This policy is subject to annual review by the SUPA Admissions Committee and Program Director.