

## DMSc MASTER'S EQUIVALENCY OPTION Guidelines for Approval

The **Master's Equivalency Option** provides an opportunity for licensed PAs, without a graduate degree, to qualify for admission to the DMSc program. PAs, with an earned bachelor's degree in physician assistant studies, are eligible for admission if they meet one of the following criteria:

1. A Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) offered by the NCCPA; or
2. A PA specialty certificate program and/or PA residency or fellowship (3-month minimum); or
3. At least 15 credit hours of post-secondary education toward a master's degree with a 3.0 minimum GPA

**The following guidelines are used in determining the equivalency.**

1. Completion of a Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) offered by the National Certification of Physician Assistants (NCCPA). The CAQ is a voluntary credential that Certified PAs can earn in seven specialties:

- a. Cardiovascular & Thoracic Surgery
- b. Emergency Medicine
- c. Hospital Medicine
- d. Nephrology
- e. Orthopaedic Surgery
- f. Pediatrics
- g. Psychiatry

*Verification of equivalency: Certificate signed by the NCCPA.*

2. Completion of a PA Specialty Certificate, Residency, or Fellowship (3-month minimum). These programs allow the Physician Assistant (PA) with specific training for job advancement and increases in salary. Certifications, residency programs, and fellowships generally provide PAs with more in-depth coursework. Specialty certifications are specifically designed for working PAs to enhance their skills and proficiency in a field of their choice. The following are examples of certificate programs that will qualify but do not represent the only programs that will provide credit.
  - a. The Emory Critical Care Center NP/PA post-graduate residency is a one-year training program that teaches residents to become highly skilled in the multidisciplinary, collaborative and evidence-based management of complex and challenging patients in the intensive care unit.
  - b. YNHH Emergency Medicine APP Residency Program. The primary goal of this residency program is to provide an intense clinical and educational experience that will produce a highly competent provider of emergency medicine.
  - c. Mayo Nurse Practitioner or Physician Assistant Emergency Medicine Fellowship
  - d. NP/PA Certificate of Advanced Education. The NP and PA Certificate of Advanced Education in Obesity Medicine offers physician assistants an opportunity to earn a certificate in obesity medicine and demonstrate to their patients an extensive knowledge of evidence-based obesity treatment approaches and an ongoing commitment to their health.

*Verification of equivalency: Signed certificate by the Sponsoring Organization documenting a minimum of a 3-month program.*

3. Fifteen credit hours earned toward a Master's Degree from a U.S. accredited institution of higher learning. Minimum GPA of 3.0 (or Pass for P/F).

*Verification of equivalency: Official transcripts listing a minimum of 15 completed master's level credits and a 3.0 minimum GPA.*

## **DMSc MASTER'S EQUIVALENCY OPTION**

### **Guidelines for Approval**

#### **FAQs:**

- What is the approval process for the DMSc Master's Degree Equivalency?
  - *This equivalency option has been approved by senior leadership at A.T. Still University after consultation with the Higher Learning Commission.*
- Will I still take the same courses as any other matriculant?
  - *Yes, the equivalence option only waives the requirement of a master's degree to qualify for admission to the DMSc.*
- I completed a clinical certificate from The Point-of-Care Ultrasound Certification Academy™ which offers Clinical Certificates which is designed to help the PA demonstrate clinical proficiency in ultrasonography. Will this count?
  - *Yes, this course is comprehensive, and you have 180 days to complete all of the Clinical Case Assessments and the Peer Evaluation.*
- I completed a two-day training in ACLS and received a certificate. Will this meet the requirements for the master's Equivalency option?
  - *No. This does not meet the requirements of at least a 3-month equivalency training program.*
- My master's level work is not in healthcare or medicine, will it still count towards the master's equivalency?
  - *Yes, as long as it is from an accredited U.S. institution of higher learning and you earned a minimum of a 3.0 GPA (or Pass on all courses for P/F).*

## The Masters Equivalency Option Petition

Name					
Phone					
Email					
State of Licensure		PA-C License #		Expiration Date	

	<b>I am requesting the master's Equivalency option based on:</b>	<b>X</b>
1	An approved military or civilian post-professional PA residency or fellowship	
2	An approved medical specialty certificate program (i.e. public health certificate)	
3	A Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) offered by the NCCPA	
4	At least 15 credit hours of post-secondary education toward a master's degree	

Please attach to this petition one or more of the following:

- Written verification of the criteria used, such as:
  - a. official transcripts of the post-secondary master's courses,
  - b. official certificates of completion for the certificate or post-professional residency or fellowship, and/or
  - c. official verification from the NCCPA of the CAQ
- A signature (digital signatures will be accepted) from the candidate that the material and information submitted is true and accurate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Petitioner Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Official Use Only**

Date Received			
Approved		Forward copy to Admissions	
Denied		Reason for Denial	
Petitioner Notified			