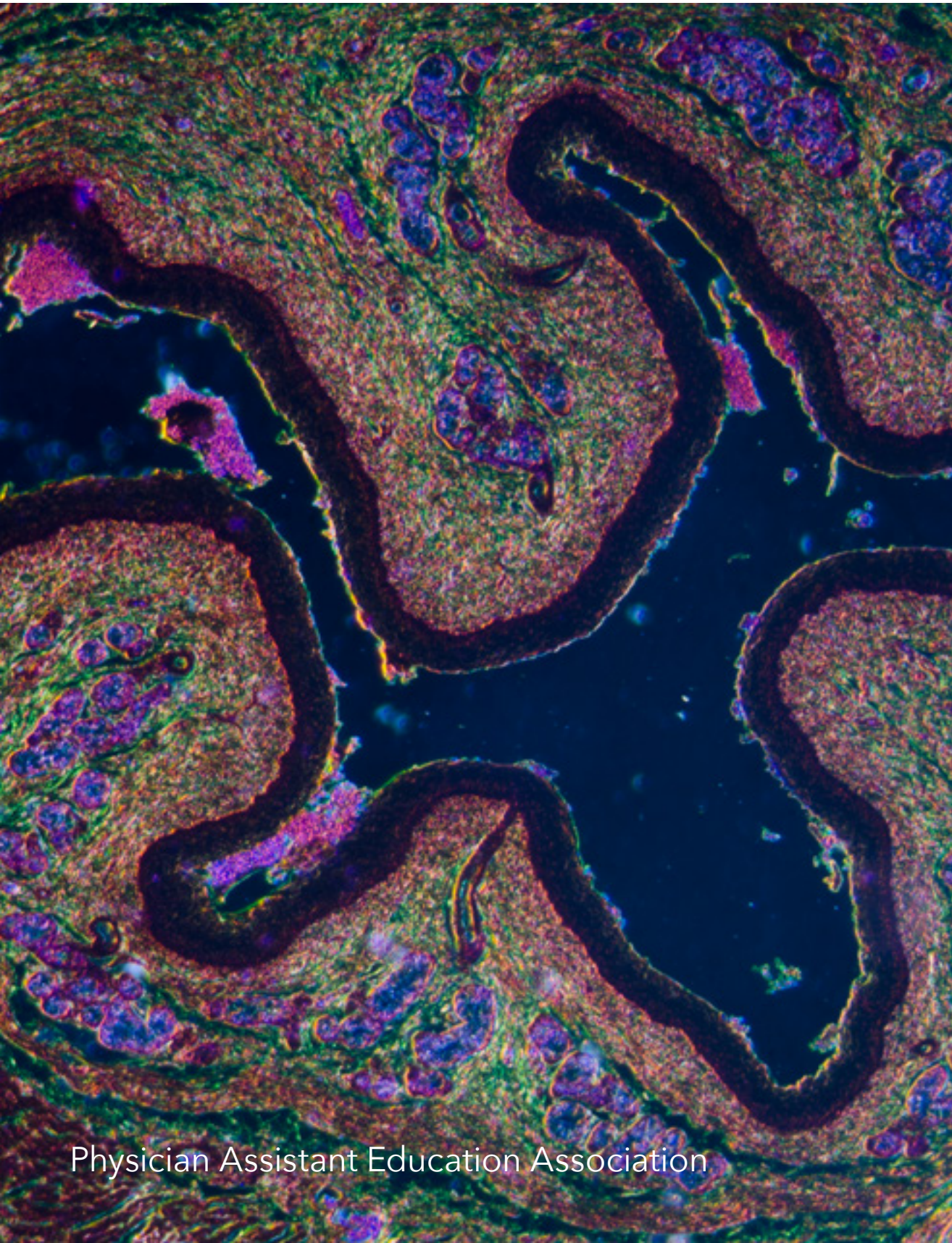


# BY THE NUMBERS

2015

MATRICULATING STUDENT SURVEY



Physician Assistant Education Association



**COPYRIGHT** © 2016 by the Physician Assistant Education Association

This report is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International license. A reference copy of this license may be found at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nd-nc/1.0/>

#### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

PAEA acknowledges the Research Council and its current chair, Richard Dehn, MPA, PA-C, for their review and guidance. The PAEA Research Department staff was responsible for the development and administration of the survey as well as for the preparation of this report.

For any questions regarding the contents of this report, please contact [research@PAEAonline.org](mailto:research@PAEAonline.org).

**Anthony A. Miller**, MEd, PA-C, Chief Policy & Research Officer, PAEA

**Rachel A. Hamann**, MPPA, Director, Research & Policy, PAEA

**Lindsey M. Huang**, MA, Director, Research & Senior Analyst, PAEA

**Elizabeth Alesbury**, Director, Public Affairs

**Tracy Mextorf**, Manager, Graphic Design

The PAEA Research Council and Research Department staff would like to thank the program directors and faculty who facilitated the distribution of the survey, as well as the 5,244 students and 165 programs who participated in the survey. Seventy-four programs (45% of all responding programs) achieved the minimum 80% response rate to be entered into drawings for either a complimentary registration to the 2016 Education Forum in Minneapolis or a gift card for a student event.



**RECOMMENDED CITATION**

Physician Assistant Education Association, *By the Numbers: Matriculating Students 2015*, Washington, D.C.: PAEA, 2016. doi: 10.17538/MSS2015.003



# LIST OF TABLES

## STUDENT PROFILE & DEMOGRAPHICS

TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF STUDENTS AND PROGRAMS BY U.S. CENSUS BUREAU REGION .....	1
TABLE 2. CHOOSE AN OPTION BELOW THAT BEST DESCRIBES WHEN YOU ENTERED YOUR PA PROGRAM.....	1
TABLE 3. YOUR AGE AT THE TIME YOU ENTERED THE OFFICIAL PA PROGRAM.....	1
TABLE 4. INDICATE YOUR GENDER.....	2
TABLE 5. ARE YOU HISPANIC, LATINO, OR SPANISH IN ORIGIN?.....	2
TABLE 6. WHAT IS YOUR RACE?.....	2
TABLE 7. IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING ENVIRONMENTS DID YOU SPEND THE MAJORITY OF YOUR LIFE? .....	2
TABLE 8. YOUR CURRENT CIVIL STATUS .....	3
TABLE 9. NOT INCLUDING YOURSELF, HOW MANY LEGAL DEPENDENTS DO YOU HAVE?.....	3
TABLE 10. ESTIMATED GROSS INCOME FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY? .....	3
TABLE 11. HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION HELD BY EITHER YOUR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS .....	4

## MILITARY EXPERIENCE

TABLE 12. ARE YOU CURRENTLY SERVING OR HAVE YOU EVER SERVED IN THE MILITARY? .....	5
TABLE 13. YOUR CURRENT MILITARY STATUS .....	5
TABLE 14. IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING BRANCHES OF THE MILITARY DID YOU SERVE (OR DO YOU CURRENTLY SERVE)?....	5
TABLE 15. HOW MANY YEARS WERE YOU/HAVE YOU BEEN ENLISTED IN ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY SERVICE? .....	5
TABLE 16. DID YOU RECEIVE HEALTH CARE-RELATED TRAINING/EXPERIENCE IN THE MILITARY? .....	6
TABLE 17. MILITARY EXPERIENCE, BY GENDER .....	6
TABLE 18. MILITARY EXPERIENCE, BY ETHNICITY.....	6
TABLE 19. MILITARY EXPERIENCE, BY RACE.....	6

## EDUCATION

TABLE 20. HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION YOU COMPLETED BEFORE ENTERING PA SCHOOL. ....	8
TABLE 21. FOR YOUR BACHELOR'S DEGREE, IN WHICH PRIMARY DISCIPLINE DID YOU MAJOR? .....	8
TABLE 22. YOUR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY UNDERGRADUATE OVERALL GRADE POINT AVERAGE (GPA) AT GRADUATION FOR YOUR BACHELOR'S DEGREE? .....	9
TABLE 23. APPROXIMATELY HOW MANY ADDITIONAL SEMESTER CREDITS DID YOU COMPLETE TO SATISFY PRE-REQUISITE REQUIREMENTS ONLY FOR THE PROGRAMS WHERE YOU APPLIED?.....	9

## APPLICATION

TABLE 24. WHEN DID YOU DEFINITELY DECIDE TO BECOME A PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT? .....	10
TABLE 25. HOW MANY YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE YOUR MOST RECENT DEGREE? .....	10
TABLE 26. ESTIMATE THE APPROXIMATE PERCENTAGE OF TIME YOU SPENT ON WORK/VOLUNTEER/COURSEWORK DURING THE PAST YEAR. ....	10
TABLE 27. FOR THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS REGARDING YOUR APPLICATION TO PA PROGRAMS FOR THE CURRENT SCHOOL YEAR, PLEASE ENTER THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER OF PROGRAMS:.....	11
TABLE 28. TOTAL AMOUNT OF MONEY YOU SPENT APPLYING TO PA SCHOOL, INCLUDING FEES AND COSTS RELATED TO INTERVIEWS, THIS YEAR ONLY. ....	12
TABLE 29. FOR EACH OF THE FOLLOWING HEALTH PROFESSION CAREERS, SELECT THE STATUS THAT APPLIES TO YOU. ....	12
TABLE 30. RATE THE INFLUENCE OF EACH OF THE FOLLOWING FACTORS ON YOUR DECISION TO BECOME A PA. ....	13
TABLE 31. RATE THE INFLUENCE OF THE FOLLOWING ON YOUR DECISION TO ACCEPT THE OFFER OF ADMISSION TO THE PROGRAM IN WHICH YOU ARE CURRENTLY ENROLLED.....	14

## **PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE**

TABLE 32. HAVE YOU EVER BEEN EMPLOYED IN A HEALTH CARE FIELD (EXCLUDING INTERNSHIPS OR OTHER EXPERIENCES RELATED TO THE COMPLETION OF A DEGREE)? .....	17
TABLE 33. CHECK THE APPROPRIATE BOX(ES) IF YOU HAVE WORK EXPERIENCE IN ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONS OR FIELDS. ....	17
TABLE 34. HOW MANY WEEKS HAVE YOU WORKED IN A HEALTH CARE FIELD? .....	18
TABLE 35. HAVE YOU EVER PARTICIPATED IN ANY PAID OR VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK? .....	19
TABLE 36. HOW MANY WEEKS DID YOU SPEND IN THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS AND CORRESPONDING SETTINGS DURING YOUR PAID OR VOLUNTARY COMMUNITY SERVICE WORK?.....	19

## **HEALTH & WELL-BEING**

TABLE 37. SELECT THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FEELINGS DURING THE PAST WEEK.....	20
TABLE 38. SELECT THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR LEVEL OF FATIGUE, ON AVERAGE, DURING THE PAST WEEK ..	20
TABLE 39. SELECT THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION OF SOCIAL SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS AND FAMILY DURING THE PAST WEEK.....	21
TABLE 40. SELECT THE NUMBER THAT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR FINANCIAL CONCERNS DURING THE PAST WEEK .....	21

## **FUTURE PRACTICE**

TABLE 41. RATE THE DESIRABILITY OF THE FOLLOWING ENVIRONMENTS IN WHICH YOU WOULD LIKE TO PRACTICE. ....	22
TABLE 42. UPON GRADUATION, HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO CHOOSE TO WORK IN A MEDICALLY UNDERSERVED COMMUNITY?.....	22
TABLE 43. RATE THE DESIRABILITY TO PRACTICE IN THE FOLLOWING SPECIALTY AREAS AFTER GRADUATION .....	23
TABLE 44. THE SALARY YOU EXPECT AT GRADUATION FOR A FULL-TIME POSITION AS A PA. ....	23
TABLE 45. WHEN THINKING ABOUT YOUR CAREER PATH AFTER PA SCHOOL, HOW IMPORTANT ARE THE FOLLOWING CONSIDERATIONS? .....	24
TABLE 46. RANK THE THREE MOST IMPORTANT REASONS YOU CHOSE A PA CAREER. ....	24

## **INDEBTEDNESS**

TABLE 47. DO YOU HAVE ANY OUTSTANDING EDUCATIONAL LOANS OR SERVICE INDEBTEDNESS FOR YOUR COLLEGE/PRE-PA EDUCATION THAT YOU ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO PAY OR FULFILL?.....	26
TABLE 49. HOW WERE YOUR COLLEGE/PRE-PA EDUCATION COSTS PAID? .....	26
TABLE 50. HOW DO YOU PLAN TO FINANCE YOUR PA EDUCATION? .....	27
TABLE 51. DO YOU HAVE ANY NON-EDUCATIONAL CONSUMER DEBT THAT YOU ARE LEGALLY REQUIRED TO REPAY? .....	27
TABLE 52. TOTAL AMOUNT OF NON-EDUCATIONAL CONSUMER DEBT YOU CURRENTLY HAVE. ....	28
TABLE 53. WHAT DO YOU ANTICIPATE YOUR TOTAL DEBT (EXCLUDING PERSONAL DEBT) WILL BE FROM ATTENDING PA SCHOOL?.....	28



# INTRODUCTION

---

## BACKGROUND

The Matriculating Student Survey (MSS) collects information from entering PA students with the aim of improving education, recruitment, and retention. This survey was based on a previous student survey administered in collaboration with the American Academy of PAs, along with question items from the Association of American Medical Colleges Matriculating Student Questionnaire and the Higher Education Research Institute's College Senior Survey. The first Physician Assistant Education Association (PAEA) Matriculating Student Survey was developed and administered in 2013. *By the Numbers: Matriculating Student Survey 2015* is the second full report issued by PAEA.

## METHODOLOGY

Human subjects review determined that the study was exempt. The MSS was emailed to 187 PAEA member program directors at the beginning of each month in 2015, which corresponded to the time of year that their program admitted first-year students into class. Program directors were instructed to forward a survey link to their students and encourage participation. In addition, program directors were asked to provide a head count of their first-year class in order to calculate program and national response rates. To achieve an adequate response rate, PAEA research staff sent reminder emails to non-respondents and conducted follow-up phone calls to programs with a response rate less than 80%. Following the identification of duplicate cases, the survey garnered 5,244 unique responses. Based upon program director class size responses and data from the 2015 Annual Program Survey, we estimated a response rate of 60%.

## DATA EDITING AND REPORTING

In general, analyses of the data consisted of producing descriptive statistics on the variables of interest (i.e., percentage, arithmetic mean (*M*), median (*Mdn*), standard deviation (*SD*), range, and percentiles). Data were not reported when there were fewer than five values in a category for sensitive data fields (e.g., gender, ethnicity, and race). In some cases, data were not reported and are indicated by "NR." For some tables and figures, percentages will not equal 100% due to rounding or when multiple responses were allowed.

Beginning this year, PAEA will publish student data in a series of tables with longitudinal data in order to better identify changes or trends among PA students. This year's report will include data from 2014 and 2015 for most data sets.

Issue briefs (<http://paeaonline.org/publications/issue-briefs/>) on topics of interest will continue to be published periodically when interesting trends are identified. Researchers interested in conducting further analysis of the MSS data may request data sets by visiting the PAEA Data Request and Sharing Policies webpage (<http://paeaonline.org/research/paea-data-request/>).

# STUDENT PROFILE & DEMOGRAPHICS

**TABLE 1. Distribution of Students and Programs by U.S. Census Bureau Region**

	Students		Programs	
	n	%	n	%
Northeast	1,402	26.8	59	31.6
Midwest	1,068	20.4	43	23.0
South	2,062	39.4	61	32.6
West	700	13.4	24	12.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,232</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note: See Appendix A for U.S. Census Bureau Regions.*

**TABLE 2. Please choose an option below that best describes when you entered your PA program.**

	n	%
Directly admitted into the professional phase of the program	4,470	86.1
Entered into a pre-professional program	660	12.7
3+2 program	222	4.3
4+2 program	331	6.4
Other type of pre-PA program	39	0.7
Entered a pre-PA program but now enrolled in a different program	68	1.3
Other	60	1.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,190</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 3. Please enter your age at the time in which you entered the official PA program.**

	n	M	SD	P10	P25	Mdn	P75	P90	% Reporting
<b>2014</b>	5,081	26.3	5.62	22.0	23.0	24.0	28.0	33.0	95.3
<b>2015</b>	5,105	26.1	5.25	22.0	23.0	24.0	28.0	33.0	97.3

**TABLE 4. Please indicate your gender.**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Female	3,680	72.9	3,499	73.0
Male	1,347	26.7	1,261	26.3
Prefer not to answer	24	0.5	31	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,051</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,791</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 5. Are you Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish in origin?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	313	6.2	359	7.5
No	4,625	91.8	4,344	90.8
Prefer not to answer	100	2.0	83	1.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,043</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,786</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 6. What is your race?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
White	4,146	82.4	3,906	81.9
Asian	405	8.1	371	7.8
Black or African American	157	3.1	133	2.8
Multi-racial	58	1.2	136	2.9
American Indian or Alaskan Native	37	0.7	24	0.5
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	29	0.6	10	0.2
Prefer not to answer	130	2.9	124	2.6
Other	71	1.4	65	1.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,033</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,769</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 7. In which of the following environments did you spend the majority of your life?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Suburban	2,274	46.4	2,281	48.2
Rural	1,071	21.9	1,000	21.1
Urban	383	7.8	392	8.3
Inner city	116	2.4	148	3.1
Overseas	43	0.9	36	0.8
Military	3	0.1	21	0.4
Prefer not to answer	2	0.0	0	0.0
Other	1	0.0	6	0.1



	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
More than one environment	1,008	20.6	847	17.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,901</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,731</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 8. Which of the following best describes your current civil status?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Single	3,541	70.2	3,474	72.2
Married	1,282	25.4	1,144	23.9
Divorced	104	2.1	81	1.7
Domestic partnership/civil union	61	1.2	35	0.7
Separated, but still legally married	27	0.5	19	0.4
Other	32	0.6	30	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,047</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,047</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: "Other" includes "widowed" and "prefer not to answer."

**TABLE 9. Not including yourself, how many legal dependents do you have?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
0	4,582	86.0	4,151	86.5
1	272	5.1	255	5.3
2	248	4.7	221	4.6
3	139	2.6	113	2.4
4 or more	89	1.7	57	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,330</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,797</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 10. What is the estimated gross income for you and your family?**

	2014				2015			
	Dependent		Non-Dependent		Dependent		Non-Dependent	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Less than \$25,000	35	2.1	1,038	30.6	34	2.2	1,205	37.4
\$25,000 to \$49,999	106	6.5	689	20.3	110	7.2	702	21.8
\$50,000 to \$74,999	180	11.1	494	14.5	173	11.3	473	14.7
\$75,000 to \$99,999	233	14.3	289	8.5	226	14.8	218	6.8
\$100,000 to \$149,999	390	24.0	237	7.0	357	23.3	192	6.0
\$150,000 to \$199,999	206	12.7	87	2.6	176	11.5	77	2.4
\$200,000 or greater	203	12.5	84	2.5	224	14.6	48	1.5
Do not know/prefer not to answer	275	16.9	479	14.1	231	15.1	311	9.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,628</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,397</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1,531</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>3,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: "Dependent" indicates students were claimed by their parent(s)/guardian(s) for tax reasons, while "non-dependent" indicates students claimed themselves for tax reasons.

**TABLE 11. What is the highest level of education held by either your parents or guardians?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Some high school	174	3.5	134	2.8
High school/General Education Development (GED)	731	14.5	566	11.9
Some college	560	11.1	404	8.5
Associate's degree	410	8.2	394	8.3
Baccalaureate degree	1,663	33.1	1,579	33.2
Master's degree	976	19.4	1,129	23.7
Academic doctorate (e.g., PhD, EdD)	124	2.5	135	2.8
Professional doctorate (e.g., MD, DO, PharmD, JD)	389	7.7	415	8.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,027</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,027</b>	<b>100.0</b>

# MILITARY EXPERIENCE\*

**TABLE 12. Are you currently serving or have you ever served in the military?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	226	4.4	184	3.7
No	4,839	95.3	4,767	96.1
Prefer not to answer	15	0.3	8	0.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,080</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,959</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 13. What is your current military status?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Commitment complete	139	62.3	118	64.1
Regular military, active	19	8.5	6	3.3
Reserve military, active	40	17.9	34	18.5
Reserve military, inactive	23	10.3	24	13.0
Prefer not to answer	2	0.6	2	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>223</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>184</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 14. In which of the following branches did you serve (or do you currently serve)? If you serve(d) in more than one branch, please select the branch where you serve(d) the most time.**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Army	147	65.9	96	52.5
Air Force	46	20.6	26	14.2
Navy	69	30.9	46	25.1
Marines	30	13.5	11	6.0
Coast Guard	3	1.3	2	1.1
Other	2	0.9	2	1.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>297</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note: Respondents were able to make more than one answer selection in the 2014 questionnaire; thus, the total does not equal 100%. Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire, and respondents to this question item could only select one answer choice.*

*\*Note: For all tables in this section, data from the Interservice Physician Assistant Program (IPAP), the United States Military's physician assistant program, were excluded.*

**TABLE 15. How many years were you/have you been enlisted in active duty military service?**

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	% Reporting
<b>2014</b>	221	6.9	5.39	5.0	97.8
<b>2015</b>	173	7.4	5.84	6.0	94.0

**TABLE 16. Did you receive health care-related training/experience in the military?**

	2014		2015	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Yes	165	73.7	112	60.9
No	57	25.4	67	36.4
Prefer not to answer	2	0.9	5	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 17. Military Experience, by Gender**

	2014		2015	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Male	161	72.9	121	68.0
Female	59	26.7	56	31.5
Prefer not to answer	1	0.5	1	0.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 18. Military Experience, by Ethnicity**

	2014		2015	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Non-Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish in origin	22	10.0	157	88.7
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish in origin	193	87.7	15	8.5
Prefer not to answer	5	2.3	5	2.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 19. Military Experience, by Race**

	2014		2015	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
White	179	79.2	139	78.1
Asian	12	5.3	10	5.6
Black or African American	10	4.4	8	4.5
Multiracial	–	–	10	5.6
Prefer not to answer	14	6.2	6	3.4
Other	11	1.8	5	2.8

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note: Edits were made to to the 2015 questionnaire to include "Multiracial" as an answer option. "Other" race includes "American Indian or Alaskan Native" and "Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander."*

# EDUCATION

**TABLE 20. Please indicate the highest level of education you completed before entering PA school.**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
High school diploma/GED	90	1.7	69	1.4
Some college but no degree	289	5.6	205	4.1
Associate's degree	73	1.4	43	0.9
Bachelor of Arts	815	15.7	759	15.0
Bachelor of Science	3,369	65.0	3,347	66.3
Other bachelor's degree	22	0.4	100	2.0
Some graduate education, but no degree	11	0.2	14	0.3
Master's degree (health or science related, e.g., MPH)	310	6.0	329	6.5
Master's degree (not health or science related, e.g., MBA)	127	2.5	120	2.4
Academic doctorate	18	0.3	23	0.5
Professional doctorate	27	0.5	12	0.2
Foreign medical graduate	20	0.4	22	0.4
Other	3	0.1	3	0.1
Prefer not to answer	8	0.2	6	0.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,182</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>5,052</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 21. For your bachelor's degree, in which primary discipline did you major?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Natural sciences (e.g., biology, chemistry)	2,107	50.8	1,966	46.9
Applied sciences (e.g., nursing, radiology)	600	14.5	769	18.4
Health sciences (e.g., premedical studies)	813	19.6	572	13.6
Social sciences (e.g., psychology, political science)	521	12.6	439	10.5
Business	155	3.7	140	3.4
Humanities (e.g., history, philosophy)	72	1.7	85	2.0
Public health	65	1.6	55	1.3
Mathematics, engineering, and technology	61	1.5	47	1.1
Foreign language	86	2.1	37	0.7
Fine arts (e.g., studio art, performing arts)	28	0.7	31	0.7
General studies	41	1.0	26	0.6
Other	21	0.5	19	0.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,570</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,186</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire to collect more informative data about students' educational experiences; respondents were asked if they completed a double major and in what discipline. Results regarding second major are not presented in this report.*

**TABLE 22. What was your college/university undergraduate overall grade point average (GPA) at graduation for your bachelor's degree?**

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	% Reporting
<b>2014</b>	4,945	3.58	0.27	3.60	97.1
<b>2015</b>	4,131	3.58	0.27	3.60	98.5

**TABLE 23. Approximately how many additional semester credits did you complete to satisfy prerequisite requirements only for the programs where you applied?**

	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mdn</i>	% Reporting
<b>2015</b>	3,037	14.6	12.19	12.0	72.4

*Note: Data are not available for 2014.*



# APPLICATION

**TABLE 24. When did you definitely decide to become a physician assistant?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Before high school	41	0.8	36	0.7
During high school/before college	656	12.8	595	12.1
During the first two years of college	1,039	20.2	1,036	21.0
After receiving an associate's degree	71	1.4	61	1.2
During junior year of college	815	15.8	773	15.7
During senior year of college	388	7.5	418	8.5
After receiving a bachelor's degree	896	17.4	853	17.3
After receiving an advanced degree	193	3.8	196	4.0
While working in health care	846	16.4	829	16.8
While serving in the military	200	3.9	133	2.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,145</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,930</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 25. How many years have passed since your most recent degree?**

	n	%
Less than 1 year	1,280	28.3
1 - 2 years	1,778	39.3
3 - 4 years	545	12.0
5 years or greater	920	20.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,523</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire, so data are not comparable to 2014 answer categories. For 2015, Mean = 3.7 years (SD = 3.71, N = 3,623)*

**TABLE 26. Please estimate the approximate percentage of time you spent on the following activities during the past year.**

	n	M	SD	Mdn	% Reporting
Worked to fulfill pre-PA health care requirements (paid)	2,865	43.8	24.57	40.0	54.6
Worked in another career	1,316	35.7	25.64	30.0	25.1
Continued coursework to fulfill PA program requirements	3,125	27.6	21.36	20.0	59.6
Worked to improve finances	2,718	25.2	20.75	20.0	51.8
Pursued graduate studies	750	23.4	23.88	10.0	14.3
Helped fulfill family obligations	3,701	20.8	16.57	15.0	70.6

	<b>n</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Mdn</b>	<b>% Reporting</b>
Took pre-PA courses for the first time	749	17.6	16.09	10.0	14.3
Volunteered/shadowed to fulfill pre-PA health care requirements (unpaid)	3,074	13.2	11.57	10.0	58.6
Other	473	25.9	22.12	20.0	9.0

Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire, so data are not comparable to 2014 answer categories.

**TABLE 27. For the following statements regarding your application to PA programs for the current school year, please enter the appropriate number of programs:**

Number of Programs	Year	Submitted an application		Granted an interview		Accepted into the program	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
1	2014	800	17.2	1,491	32.5	3,041	65.4
	2015	579	13.8	1,240	29.8	2,698	64.3
2	2014	401	8.6	979	21.4	968	20.8
	2015	289	6.9	905	21.8	910	21.7
3	2014	353	7.6	714	15.6	412	8.9
	2015	316	7.5	666	16.0	339	8.1
4	2014	350	7.5	480	10.5	138	3.0
	2015	296	7.0	463	11.1	125	3.0
5	2014	469	10.1	324	7.21	60	1.3
	2015	407	9.7	303	7.3	59	1.5
6	2014	340	7.3	195	4.3	20	0.4
	2015	350	8.3	211	5.1	30	0.7
7	2014	325	7.0	141	3.1	0	0.0
	2015	304	7.2	117	2.8	18	0.4
8	2014	303	6.5	104	2.3	2	0.0
	2015	276	6.6	104	2.5	5	0.1
9	2014	196	4.2	52	1.1	1	0.0
	2015	198	4.7	48	1.2	4	0.1
10	2014	298	6.4	42	0.9	2	0.0
	2015	287	6.8	39	0.9	1	0.0
11 +	2014	823	17.6	63	1.0	3	0.0
	2015	900	21.4	61	1.5	4	0.1
<b>Total</b>	2014	<b>4,658</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,585</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,647</b>	<b>100.0</b>
	2015	<b>4,201</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,157</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,193</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 28. Please estimate the total amount of money you spent applying to PA school, including fees and costs related to interviews, this year only.**

	n	%
\$0	67	1.6
Less than \$500	1,213	29.1
\$501 to \$1,000	1,444	34.6
\$1,001 to \$1,500	464	11.1
\$1,501 or greater	987	23.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,175</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire to include this question item. Cost of applying to PA school includes the fees and costs associated with applications and interviews. Costs not included are those associated with prerequisite coursework or those incurred in previous years.

**TABLE 29. For each of the following health professional careers, select the status that applies to you.**

	Year	Considered		Applied		Accepted		Attended		Completed /graduated		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Medical school (US)	2014	3,167	63.2	309	6.2	53	1.1	13	0.3	1	0.0	5,014
	2015	2,966	62.9	271	5.7	33	0.7	18	0.4	1	0.0	4,715
Nurse practitioner (NP)	2014	1,362	27.4	14	0.3	27	0.5	4	0.1	0	0.0	4,977
	2015	1,518	32.5	10	0.2	28	0.6	3	0.1	0	0.0	4,677
Physical therapy (PT)	2014	1,209	24.3	12	0.2	31	0.6	4	0.1	11	0.2	4,978
	2015	1,199	25.7	28	0.6	26	0.6	13	0.3	4	0.1	4,671
Nursing (other than NP)	2014	1,081	21.8	33	0.7	106	2.1	34	0.7	47	0.9	4,967
	2015	1,166	24.9	30	0.6	121	2.6	24	0.5	88	1.9	4,676
Medical school (outside US)	2014	831	16.8	23	0.5	27	0.5	15	0.3	22	0.4	4,949
	2015	837	18.0	19	0.4	25	0.5	13	0.3	17	0.4	4,648
Public health	2014	837	16.9	10	0.2	42	0.8	18	0.4	91	1.8	4,962
	2015	732	15.7	9	0.2	49	1.1	22	0.5	105	2.3	4,659
Pharmacy	2014	694	14.0	18	0.4	15	0.3	7	0.1	3	0.1	4,964
	2015	710	15.2	10	0.2	14	0.3	9	0.2	2	0.0	4,660
Sports medicine	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	691	14.8	5	0.1	5	0.1	9	0.2	115	2.5	4,669
Emergency technician (EMT)/paramedic	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	567	12.2	18	0.4	13	0.3	17	0.4	752	16.2	4,654
Dentistry	2014	509	10.3	22	0.4	5	0.1	2	0.0	5	0.1	4,926
	2015	514	11.0	22	0.5	4	0.1	2	0.0	6	0.1	4,652
Surgical assistant	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	492	10.6	5	0.1	3	0.1	4	0.1	30	0.6	4,654
Veterinary medicine	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	478	10.3	13	0.3	6	0.1	3	0.1	4	0.1	4,662
Alternative/naturopathic medicine	2014	494	9.9	3	0.1	3	0.1	2	0.0	15	0.3	4,973
	2015	468	10.0	2	0.0	2	0.0	3	0.1	8	0.2	4,673
Occupational therapy (OT)	2014	384	7.8	3	0.1	5	0.1	1	0.0	3	0.1	4,947
	2015	439	9.4	1	0.0	4	0.1	3	0.1	5	0.1	4,655
Optometry	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	317	6.8	4	0.1	1	0.0	3	0.1	0	0.0	4,654
Chiropractic	2014	319	6.4	0	0.0	10	0.2	1	0.0	6	0.1	4,962
	2015	303	6.5	0	0.0	7	0.2	4	0.1	2	0.0	4,656

	Year	Considered		Applied		Accepted		Attended		Completed /graduated		Total n
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Social work	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	265	5.7	6	0.1	4	0.1	7	0.2	16	0.3	4,653
Audiology/speech pathology	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	219	4.7	5	0.1	2	0.0	3	0.1	8	0.8	4,664
PT assistant	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	142	3.1	6	0.1	4	0.1	15	0.3	16	0.3	4,654
OT assistant	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	71	1.5	0	0.0	1	0.0	2	0.0	3	0.1	4,654
Other	2014	139	6.9	4	0.2	14	0.6	8	0.4	115	5.7	2,006
	2015	96	3.7	10	0.4	15	0.6	9	0.4	177	6.9	2,565

Note: Respondents had the answer choice “did not consider” for each of the health professions listed; these data were included in the analysis but excluded in the data table. Percentages do not total to 100%; however, the total “n” represents the total number of respondents to each individual question. Open-ended answers to the 2014 survey were analyzed, and frequent responses were added as answer choices on the 2015 survey; thus, some answer options do not have data for 2014.

**TABLE 30. Please rate the influence of each of the following on your decision to become a PA.**

	Year	Positive influence		No influence		Negative influence		Total n
		n	%	n	%	n	%	
Friend	2014	4,114	81.1	925	18.2	34	0.7	5,073
	2015	3,925	81.5	865	18.0	27	0.6	4,817
PA acquaintance	2014	3,720	73.6	1,311	25.9	26	0.5	5,057
	2015	3,306	69.2	1,441	30.2	30	0.6	4,777
Family member	2014	3,650	72.0	1,320	26.0	98	1.9	5,068
	2015	3,461	71.8	1,280	26.6	79	1.6	4,820
PA program literature	2014	3,496	69.1	1,544	30.5	16	0.3	5,056
	2015	3,290	68.6	1,496	31.2	11	0.2	4,797
Other health professional	2014	3,444	68.3	1,550	30.8	46	0.9	5,040
	2015	2,894	60.9	1,808	38.0	53	1.1	4,755
PA program faculty/staff	2014	3,301	65.3	1,717	34.0	35	0.7	5,053
	2015	3,147	65.7	1,616	33.7	30	0.9	4,793
PA who treated me/my family	2014	2,963	58.7	2,046	40.6	35	0.7	5,044
	2015	2,659	55.5	2,090	43.7	39	0.8	4,788
College/campus admissions department	2014	2,667	52.8	2,315	45.8	70	1.4	5,052
	2015	2,643	55.2	2,066	43.1	81	1.7	4,790
Physician who treated me/my family	2014	2,507	49.7	2,446	48.5	92	1.8	5,045
	2015	2,426	50.4	2,295	47.7	88	1.8	4,809
Other written publication	2014	2,074	41.5	2,905	58.1	22	0.4	5,001
	2015	1,853	39.1	2,862	60.4	23	0.5	4,738
AAPA website/literature	2014	1,957	38.7	3,082	57.8	20	0.4	5,059
	2015	1,934	40.3	2,851	59.4	17	0.4	4,802
Career counselor (high school or college)	2014	1,574	31.3	3,353	66.7	102	2.0	5,029
	2015	1,514	31.7	3,170	66.4	92	1.9	4,776
Social media (e.g., Facebook, YouTube)	2014	1,542	30.6	3,445	64.5	46	0.9	5,033
	2015	1,596	33.4	3,141	65.7	43	0.9	4,780
PAEA website/literature	2014	1,500	29.7	3,530	69.9	21	0.4	5,051
	2015	1,545	32.2	3,229	67.4	20	0.4	4,794

	Year	Positive influence		No influence		Negative influence		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
PAEA staff	2014	227	4.5	4,749	94.7	39	0.8	5,015
	2015	192	4.0	4,529	95.2	36	0.8	4,757
AAPA staff	2014	221	4.4	4,753	94.8	38	0.8	5,012
	2015	205	4.3	4,520	94.9	39	0.8	4,764
Project Access	2014	213	4.2	4,768	95.0	37	0.7	5,018
	2015	201	4.2	4,523	95.0	38	0.8	4,762
Public media (e.g., television, radio, newspaper)	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	2,169	45.3	2,566	53.6	51	1.1	4,786
Other physician acquaintance	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	2,702	56.6	2,004	42.0	71	1.5	4,777
Other factor	2014	98	4.7	1,937	93.8	30	1.4	2,065
	2015	135	5.5	2,264	92.6	45	1.8	2,444

Note: Open-ended answers to the 2014 survey were analyzed, and frequent responses were added as answer choices on the 2015 survey; thus, some answer options do not have data for 2014.

**TABLE 31. Please rate the influence of the following on your decision to accept the offer of admission to the program in which you are currently enrolled.**

	Year	Positive influence		No influence		Negative influence		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Conversation with program faculty	2014	4,278	84.7	735	14.6	35	0.7	5,048
	2015	4,019	84.0	735	15.4	31	0.6	4,782
Clinical curriculum	2014	3,976	79.1	1,003	20.0	48	1.0	5,027
	2015	3,913	81.8	821	17.2	50	1.0	4,784
Campus atmosphere	2014	3,985	78.8	945	18.7	125	2.5	5,055
	2015	3,888	81.2	776	16.2	127	2.7	4,791
Conversation with current students	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	3,862	80.7	894	18.7	32	0.7	4,788
Program location	2014	4,028	79.9	713	14.1	298	5.9	5,039
	2015	3,785	79.1	739	15.4	262	5.5	4,786
Program reputation	2014	4,055	80.6	925	18.4	53	1.1	5,033
	2015	3,714	77.6	1,004	21.0	67	1.4	4,785
Interview experience	2014	3,738	74.3	1,185	23.6	107	2.1	5,030
	2015	3,658	76.7	997	20.9	117	2.5	4,772
Admissions	2014	3,734	74.0	1,229	24.4	80	1.6	5,043
	2015	3,667	76.5	1,055	22.0	73	1.5	4,795
Class size/student-faculty ratio	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	3,596	75.1	1,045	21.8	149	3.1	4,790
PANCE pass rates	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	3,403	71.2	1,296	27.1	78	1.6	4,777
Program mission	2014	3,610	71.8	1,394	27.7	24	0.5	5,028
	2015	3,385	70.9	1,379	28.9	12	0.3	4,776

	Year	Positive influence		No influence		Negative influence		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Program facilities	2014	3,390	67.5	1,455	29.0	176	3.5	5,021
	2015	3,223	67.6	1,387	29.1	158	3.3	4,768
Faculty reputation	2014	3,388	67.5	1,605	32.0	27	0.5	5,020
	2015	3,163	66.2	1,586	33.2	28	0.6	4,777
Credential awarded	2014	3,322	66.1	1,624	32.3	78	1.6	5,024
	2015	3,120	65.5	1,557	32.7	86	1.8	4,763
Prerequisite coursework requirements	2014	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
	2015	3,112	65.4	1,569	32.9	81	1.7	4,762
Entrance requirements	2014	3,243	64.4	1,703	33.8	91	1.8	5,037
	2015	3,013	63.2	1,674	35.1	84	1.8	4,771
Teaching methods	2014	2,809	56.1	2,152	42.9	50	1.0	5,011
	2015	2,689	56.4	2,041	42.8	38	0.8	4,768
Hospital affiliations	2014	2,514	50.0	2,429	48.3	81	1.6	5,024
	2015	2,413	50.7	2,259	47.4	91	1.9	4,763
Conversation with program alumni	2014	3,327	66.0	1,684	33.4	31	0.6	5,042
	2015	2,393	50.2	2,347	49.2	29	0.6	4,769
Sense of security	2014	2,465	49.1	2,346	46.8	206	4.1	5,017
	2015	2,326	48.9	2,302	48.4	131	2.8	4,759
Influence of spouse/partner/friend	2014	2,440	48.6	2,515	50.1	64	1.3	5,019
	2015	2,115	44.3	2,602	54.6	52	1.1	4,769
Career placement services	2014	2,029	40.5	2,951	58.9	32	0.6	5,012
	2015	2,030	42.6	2,704	56.7	32	0.7	4,766
Cost of study	2014	1,915	38.0	1,771	35.1	1,355	26.9	5,041
	2015	1,854	38.7	1,590	33.2	1,343	28.1	4,787
Program literature	2014	1,928	38.5	3,049	61.0	25	0.5	5,002
	2015	1,700	35.8	3,026	63.7	27	0.6	4,753
Diversity of faculty and staff	2014	1,913	38.1	3,043	60.6	64	1.3	5,020
	2015	1,700	35.7	2,993	62.9	68	1.4	4,761
Diversity of students	2014	1,804	36.0	3,109	62.0	104	2.1	5,017
	2015	1,595	33.5	3,048	63.9	125	2.6	4,768
Financial aid	2014	1,704	34.0	2,948	58.8	358	7.1	5,010
	2015	1,537	32.2	2,860	59.9	375	7.9	4,772
Resident tuition status	2014	1,618	30.4	3,033	60.4	368	7.3	5,019
	2015	1,469	30.8	2,929	61.5	364	7.6	4,762
International rotation	2014	1,096	21.9	3,792	75.8	117	2.3	5,005
	2015	1,009	21.2	3,631	76.4	112	2.4	4,752
PAEA website	2014	98	16.0	4,183	83.6	22	0.4	5,003
	2015	853	17.9	3,881	81.6	20	0.4	4,754
Student housing	2014	563	11.3	4,130	82.6	310	6.2	5,003
	2015	564	11.9	3,881	81.7	305	6.4	4,750

	Year	Positive influence		No influence		Negative influence		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Dual degree option	<b>2014</b>	586	11.7	4,320	86.3	100	1.9	<b>5,006</b>
	<b>2015</b>	536	11.3	4,123	86.7	98	2.1	<b>4,757</b>
Other	<b>2014</b>	116	7.0	1,516	92.1	14	0.9	<b>1,646</b>
	<b>2015</b>	160	8.1	1,808	91.0	19	1.0	<b>1,987</b>

*Note: Open-ended answers to the 2014 survey were analyzed, and frequent responses were added as answer choices on the 2015 survey; thus, some answer options do not have data for 2014.*



# PRIOR WORK EXPERIENCE

**TABLE 32. Have you ever been employed in a health care field (excluding internships or other experiences related to the completion of a degree)?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	4,851	95.7	3,845	79.8
No	219	4.3	972	20.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,070</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,817</b>	<b>100.0</b>

*Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire to ask students about their employment only in health care rather than employment and volunteer experience, which most likely accounts for the drop in the number of students with health care experience in 2015.*

**TABLE 33. Please check the appropriate box(es) if you have work experience in one or more of the following health care professions or fields.**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Nursing assistant	1,233	26.3	1,156	30.2
Medical assistant	1,018	21.7	813	21.3
EMT/paramedic	948	20.2	755	19.8
Scribe	488	10.4	535	14.0
Home health aide	552	11.8	335	8.8
Emergency room technician	622	13.3	316	8.3
Phlebotomist	421	9.0	293	7.7
Medical reception/records	432	9.2	192	5.0
Athletic trainer	347	7.4	176	4.6
Pharmacy technician	69	1.5	142	3.7
Medical technician	193	4.1	138	3.6
Physical therapist/physical therapy assistant	407	8.7	136	3.6
Medical laboratory technician	232	4.9	130	3.4
Health care administrator	261	5.6	109	2.9
Health services researcher	261	5.6	97	2.5
Clinical researcher	–	–	89	2.3
Medic or medical corpsman	153	3.3	85	2.2
Radiology technician	114	2.4	80	2.1
Nutritionist/dietitian	109	2.3	74	1.9
Physical therapy technician	–	–	60	1.6

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Dental assistant/hygienist	141	3.0	58	1.5
Nurse, registered	105	2.2	58	1.5
Respiratory technician	53	1.1	51	1.3
Case manager	87	1.9	46	1.2
Surgical technician	–	–	44	1.2
Ophthalmic assistant	–	–	42	1.1
Alternative/complementary/naturopathic medicine	138	2.9	39	1.0
Social worker	66	1.4	39	1.0
Behavioral/psychology technician	–	–	33	0.9
Cardiac/rehabilitation technician	–	–	24	0.6
Optometrist	34	0.7	23	0.6
Physician	365	7.8	23	0.6
Chiropractor	96	2.0	20	0.5
Sonographer	32	0.7	20	0.5
Clinical laboratory	–	–	19	0.5
Occupational therapist/occupational therapy assistant	77	2.3	18	0.5
Exercise physiologist	36	0.8	17	0.4
Nurse, licensed practical	26	0.6	13	0.3
Veterinary technician	–	–	11	0.3
Other	933	19.9	300	7.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>10,049</b>	<b>–</b>	<b>6,598</b>	<b>–</b>

Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire to ask students about their employment only in health care rather than employment and volunteer experience, which most likely accounts for the drop in the number of students holding health care experience in 2015, as well as some answer categories not represented. Respondents were able to select more than one answer choice; thus, answers do not total 100%.

**TABLE 34. How many weeks have you worked in a health care field?**

	Year	n	M	SD	P10	P25	Mdn	P75	P90	% Reporting
Direct patient care	2014	4,117	141.0	231.51	12.0	32.0	70.0	150.0	312.0	84.9
	2015	3,448	139.2	202.38	20.0	40.0	78.0	150.0	312.0	89.7
Other health care experience	2014	2,425	89.7	185.30	5.0	10.0	35.0	100.0	200.0	49.9
	2015	1,690	87.5	165.35	7.0	16.0	40.0	100.0	200.0	44.0
<b>Total health care experience</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>4,370</b>	<b>182.6</b>	<b>287.82</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>46.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>200.0</b>	<b>416.0</b>	<b>90.1</b>
	<b>2015</b>	<b>3,680</b>	<b>161.4</b>	<b>202.63</b>	<b>30.0</b>	<b>52.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>183.5</b>	<b>359.7</b>	<b>95.7</b>

Note: Some respondents may have reported the amount of their health care experience in hours rather than weeks, as suggested by the prevalence of extreme values. Values exceeding 2,000 weeks were coded as outliers and excluded from analysis. Future surveys will ask students to confirm they are reporting health care experience in weeks rather than hours.

**TABLE 35. Have you ever participated in any paid or voluntary community service work?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	2,202	44.4	2,304	49.0
No	2,757	55.6	2,396	51.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,959</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 36. How many weeks did you spend in the following locations and corresponding settings during your paid or voluntary community service work?**

	n	M	SD	Mdn	% Reporting
Paid international medical setting	39	142.0	221.94	50.0	1.9
Paid international non-medical setting	25	130.6	382.84	24.0	1.2
Paid U.S. medical setting	341	222.9	890.60	78.0	16.2
Paid U.S. non-medical setting	108	115.6	234.82	40.0	5.1
Volunteer international medical setting	590	8.95	34.29	2.0	28.0
Volunteer international non-medical setting	402	22.0	63.97	3.0	19.1
Volunteer U.S. medical setting	1,029	46.4	93.79	20.0	48.8
Volunteer U.S. non-medical setting	1,000	40.1	90.02	10.0	47.4
International medical service learning experience	56	14.9	33.60	2.0	2.7
International non-medical service learning experience	71	6.9	8.01	4.0	3.4
U.S. medical service learning experience	191	26.1	40.99	10.0	9.1
U.S. non-medical service learning experience	175	20.2	36.05	10.0	8.3

*Note: Some respondents may have reported the amount of their volunteer and community service experience in hours rather than weeks, as suggested by the prevalence of extreme values. Values exceeding 2,000 weeks were coded as outliers and excluded from analysis. Future surveys will ask students to confirm they are reporting health care experience in weeks rather than hours. Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire to distinguish between paid and unpaid experiences as well as service learning experiences; therefore, data are not comparable to 2014 results.*

# HEALTH & WELL-BEING

**TABLE 37. Please select the number that best describes your feelings during the past week, including today. "1" represents "as bad as it can be" and "10" represents "as good as it can be." How would you describe the following statements?**

	Year	As good as it can be		Neutral		As bad as it can be		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Overall mental well-being	2014	3,502	67.5	1,573	30.3	107	2.0	5,182
	2015	3,095	61.4	1,815	36.0	129	2.6	5,039
Overall emotional well-being	2014	3,289	63.5	1,761	34.0	127	2.5	5,177
	2015	2,869	57.0	1,997	39.7	168	3.3	5,034
Overall quality of life	2014	3,813	61.4	1,297	25.0	79	1.6	5,189
	2015	3,439	68.2	1,503	29.8	105	2.0	5,047
Overall physical well-being	2014	3,173	61.1	1,896	36.5	115	2.2	5,184
	2015	2,777	55.0	2,123	42.0	144	2.9	5,044
Spiritual well-being	2014	3,094	60.1	1,919	37.2	145	2.7	5,158
	2015	2,822	56.3	2,005	40.0	183	3.7	5,010
Level of social activity	2014	2,370	45.7	2,328	44.9	483	9.3	5,181
	2015	2,081	41.3	2,304	45.7	654	13.0	5,039
Overall level of stress	2014	1,646	31.7	2,873	55.7	669	12.9	5,188
	2015	1,558	30.9	2,738	54.2	749	14.8	5,045

Note: Respondents were asked to rate the above statements on a scale of 1-10, with "10" representing the most positive end of the scale and "1" representing the most negative end of the scale. For dissemination purposes, scale points 8-10, 7-4, and 3-1 were collapsed and represent the positive, neutral, and negative parts of the scale, respectively.

**TABLE 38. Please select the number that best describes your level of fatigue, on average, during the past week, including today. "1" represents "constant tiredness" and "10" represents "no fatigue."**

	Year	No fatigue		Neutral		Constant fatigue		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Level of fatigue	2014	1,151	22.1	3,109	59.9	919	17.8	5,179
	2015	1,013	20.1	2,990	59.5	1,030	20.5	5,033

Note: Respondents were asked to rate the above statements on a scale of 1-10, with "10" representing the most positive end of the scale and "1" representing the most negative end of the scale. For dissemination purposes, scale points 8-10, 4-7, and 1-3 were collapsed and represent the positive, neutral, and negative parts of the scale, respectively.

**TABLE 39. Please select the number that best describes your level of satisfaction of social support from friends and family during the past week, including today. "1" represents "not at all satisfied" and "10" represents "highly satisfied."**

	Year	Highly satisfied		Neutral		Not at all satisfied		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Level of social support	<b>2014</b>	3,961	76.3	1,153	22.3	74	1.4	<b>5,188</b>
	<b>2015</b>	3,789	75.1	1,169	23.1	87	1.7	<b>5,045</b>

*Note: Respondents were asked to rate the above statements on a scale of 1-10, with "10" representing the most positive end of the scale and "1" representing the most negative end of the scale. For dissemination purposes, scale points 8-10, 4-7, and 1-3 were collapsed and represent the positive, neutral, and negative parts of the scale, respectively.*

**TABLE 40. Please select the number that best describes your financial concerns during the past week, including today. "1" represents "constant concerns" and "10" represents "no concerns."**

	Year	No concerns		Neutral		Constant concerns		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Financial concerns	<b>2014</b>	1,482	28.5	2,499	48.2	1,209	23.3	<b>5,190</b>
	<b>2015</b>	1,466	29.0	2,378	47.1	1,203	23.8	<b>5,047</b>

*Note: Respondents were asked to rate the above statements on a scale of 1-10, with "10" representing the most positive end of the scale and "1" representing the most negative end of the scale. For dissemination purposes, scale points 8-10, 4-7, and 1-3 were collapsed and represent the positive, neutral, and negative parts of the scale, respectively.*

# FUTURE PRACTICE

**TABLE 41. Please rate the desirability of the following environments in which you would like to practice.**

	Year	Desirable		Neutral		Undesirable		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Suburban	2014	3,907	78.3	830	16.6	257	5.1	4,994
	2015	3,642	76.8	795	16.8	304	6.4	4,741
Medically underserved areas	2014	3,396	67.9	1,207	24.1	399	8.0	5,002
	2015	3,255	68.7	1,072	22.6	412	8.7	4,739
Urban	2014	3,360	67.9	1,142	23.1	448	9.0	4,950
	2015	3,163	67.3	1,048	22.3	484	10.3	4,695
Rural	2014	2,714	54.4	1,280	25.6	1,001	20.0	4,995
	2015	2,521	53.2	1,219	25.7	998	21.1	4,738
Inner city	2014	1,970	39.4	1,451	29.1	1,569	31.4	4,990
	2015	1,893	40.0	1,423	30.1	1,412	29.9	4,728
Outside the U.S.	2014	1,917	38.4	1,355	27.2	1,718	34.4	4,990
	2015	1,849	37.1	1,263	26.8	1,608	34.1	4,720
Military	2014	1,228	24.7	1,577	31.7	2,174	43.6	4,979
	2015	1,175	24.9	1,497	31.7	2,045	43.4	4,717
Federal/state prison system	2014	474	9.5	1,193	24.0	3,294	66.4	4,961
	2015	392	8.4	1,125	23.9	3,185	67.8	4,702

**TABLE 42. Upon graduation, how likely are you to choose to work in a medically underserved community?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Very likely	902	17.9	898	18.8
Likely	1,810	35.9	1,784	37.3
Neutral	1,479	29.3	1,403	29.3
Unlikely	548	10.9	442	9.2
Very unlikely	309	6.1	258	5.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,048</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,785</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 43. Please rate the desirability to practice in the following specialty areas after graduation on a scale of 1, representing “not at all desirable,” to 5, representing “very desirable.”**

	Desirable		Neutral		Undesirable		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Emergency medicine	3,307	69.8	810	17.1	625	13.2	4,742
Family/general practice	3,207	67.8	983	20.8	539	11.4	4,729
Surgical subspecialties	2,912	61.6	1,054	22.3	761	16.1	4,727
General surgery	2,727	57.9	1,162	24.6	826	17.5	4,715
Cardiology	2,660	56.5	1,444	30.7	607	12.9	4,711
General internal medicine	2,564	54.6	1,516	32.2	621	13.3	4,701
General pediatrics	2,327	49.3	1,227	26.0	1,161	24.6	4,715
Internal medicine subspecialties	2,098	44.7	1,796	38.3	799	17.1	4,693
Dermatology	2,057	43.5	1,256	26.6	1,417	30.0	4,730
Pediatrics subspecialties	1,962	41.7	1,379	29.3	1,360	28.9	4,701
Obstetrics/gynecology/women’s health	1,834	38.9	1,320	28.0	1,559	33.1	4,713
Hospitalist	1,712	36.4	1,684	35.8	1,303	27.7	4,699
Oncology	1,643	35.0	1,673	35.7	1,376	29.3	4,692
Mental health	1,038	22.1	1,356	28.8	2,309	49.1	4,703
Geriatrics	891	19.0	1,559	33.2	2,243	47.8	4,693
Other	183	13.3	1,080	78.2	118	8.6	1,381

*Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire, so data are not comparable to 2014 answer categories. For dissemination purposes, scale points “very desirable” and “desirable” were collapsed into the “desirable” category and “very undesirable” and “undesirable” into the “undesirable” category.*

**TABLE 44. Please estimate the salary you expect at graduation for a full-time position as a PA.**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Less than \$60,000	39	0.7	32	0.6
\$60,000 to \$69,999	204	4.0	172	3.6
\$70,000 to \$79,999	1,069	21.2	760	15.9
\$80,000 to \$89,999	2,237	44.4	2,064	42.3
\$90,000 to \$99,999	1,190	23.6	1,410	29.4
\$100,000 or greater	304	6.0	390	8.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,043</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,788</b>	<b>100.0</b>



**TABLE 45. When thinking about your career path after PA school, how important are the following considerations?**

	Year	Essential		Very important		Somewhat important		Not important		Total
		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Work-life balance	2014	3,268	65.0	1,595	31.7	152	3.0	11	0.2	<b>5,026</b>
	2015	3,114	65.6	1,487	31.3	133	2.8	12	0.3	<b>4,746</b>
Secure, stable future	2014	3,137	62.5	1,653	32.9	213	4.2	15	0.3	<b>5,018</b>
	2015	2,931	61.9	1,580	33.4	211	4.5	15	0.3	<b>4,737</b>
Availability of jobs	2014	3,152	62.7	1,719	34.2	135	2.7	21	0.4	<b>5,027</b>
	2015	2,910	61.4	1,677	35.1	138	2.9	18	0.4	<b>4,743</b>
Ability to pay off debt	2014	2,702	53.7	1,683	33.4	428	8.5	220	4.4	<b>5,033</b>
	2015	2,628	55.2	1,534	32.2	383	8.0	213	4.5	<b>4,758</b>
Supervising physician relationship	2014	2,579	51.4	1,952	38.9	432	8.6	56	1.1	<b>5,019</b>
	2015	2,480	52.4	1,809	38.2	400	8.4	45	1.0	<b>4,734</b>
High income potential	2014	1,206	24.0	2,496	49.8	1,206	24.0	109	2.2	<b>5,017</b>
	2015	1,370	28.9	2,211	46.6	1,061	22.4	103	2.2	<b>4,745</b>
Expression of personal values	2014	1,159	23.2	2,387	47.7	1,292	25.8	163	3.3	<b>5,001</b>
	2015	1,099	23.2	2,294	48.5	1,159	24.5	175	3.7	<b>4,727</b>
Flexible working schedule	2014	996	19.9	2,340	46.7	1,561	31.1	115	2.3	<b>5,012</b>
	2015	1,053	22.2	2,246	47.3	1,360	28.6	88	1.9	<b>4,747</b>
Working for social change	2014	973	19.5	1,961	39.3	1,732	34.7	328	6.6	<b>4,994</b>
	2015	1,019	21.6	1,884	40.0	1,521	32.3	291	6.2	<b>4,715</b>
High level of autonomy	2014	892	17.8	2,417	48.3	1,527	30.5	173	3.5	<b>5,009</b>
	2015	955	20.2	2,222	46.9	1,432	30.2	128	2.7	<b>4,737</b>
Leadership potential	2014	837	16.7	2,295	45.8	1,652	33.0	225	4.5	<b>5,009</b>
	2015	928	19.6	2,155	45.5	1,461	30.9	188	4.0	<b>4,732</b>
Creativity and initiative	2014	881	17.7	2,375	47.6	1,531	30.7	203	4.1	<b>4,990</b>
	2015	847	17.9	2,205	46.7	1,499	31.8	170	3.6	<b>4,721</b>
Opportunity for innovation	2014	707	14.1	2,155	43.0	1,861	37.2	284	5.7	<b>5,007</b>
	2015	761	16.1	2,014	42.7	1,698	36.0	247	5.2	<b>4,720</b>
Social recognition or status	2014	305	6.1	1,023	20.5	2,135	42.7	1,537	30.7	<b>5,000</b>
	2015	315	6.7	1,007	21.3	2,028	42.9	1,374	29.1	<b>4,724</b>

Note: This question is based on an item from the Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) College Senior Survey.

**TABLE 46. Please rank the three most important reasons you chose a PA career, with "1" being the most important.**

	First reason		Second reason		Third reason		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
A "calling" to the health care profession	1,357	69.3	400	20.4	200	10.0	<b>1,957</b>
Cost of education/affordability	15	11.0	53	39.0	68	50.0	<b>136</b>
Desire to care for patients	1,942	63.2	849	27.6	282	9.2	<b>3,073</b>
Desire to influence the direction of health care	74	16.3	190	41.9	189	41.7	<b>453</b>
Excitement of health care	336	28.2	474	39.7	383	32.1	<b>1,193</b>
Financial stability	209	13.1	579	36.3	805	50.5	<b>1,593</b>
Length of education	33	4.7	253	36.1	415	59.2	<b>701</b>

	First reason		Second reason		Third reason		Total
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n
Level of responsibility	33	8.7	159	42.1	186	49.2	<b>378</b>
Mobility (geographically)	7	4.9	42	29.4	94	65.7	<b>143</b>
Mobility (medical specialties)	210	11.9	703	39.7	856	48.4	<b>1,769</b>
Other health professions were less appealing	7	10.4	16	23.9	44	65.7	<b>67</b>
Parental/peer pressure	2	8.7	7	30.4	14	60.9	<b>23</b>
Prestige	4	9.3	10	23.3	29	67.4	<b>43</b>
Relieving pain and suffering	90	24.2	152	40.9	130	34.9	<b>372</b>
Work-life balance	259	14.6	671	37.9	841	47.5	<b>1,771</b>

*Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire and data are not available for 2014.*

# INDEBTEDNESS

**TABLE 47. Do you have any outstanding educational loans or service indebtedness for your college/pre-PA education that you are legally required to pay or fulfill?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Outstanding educational loans	2,407	47.8	2,446	51.1
Outstanding service requirements	–	–	10	0.2
Outstanding educational loans and service requirements	–	–	19	0.4
No outstanding educational loans or service requirements	2,484	49.3	2,216	46.3
Prefer not to answer	144	2.9	94	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,035</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,785</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Edits were made to the 2015 questionnaire to collect more informative data about students' educational and service experiences; therefore, data are not available for 2014.

**TABLE 48. Please enter the total amount of outstanding educational loans you are legally obligated to pay.**

Year	n	M	SD	P10	P25	Mdn	P75	P90	%
	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	(\$)	Reporting
<b>2014</b>	2,233	35,717	32,573	6,500	13,500	26,000	45,500	80,000	92.8
<b>2015</b>	2,296	33,487	37,446	76	10,000	30,000	45,000	79,300	93.1

Note: Extreme values were coded as missing and excluded from analysis.

**TABLE 49. How were your college/pre-PA education costs paid? Please enter a percentage for each applicable category.**

	Year	n	M	SD	P10	P25	Mdn	P75	P90	%
										Reporting
Loans	<b>2014</b>	2,262	54.6	32.52	10.0	25.0	50.0	85.0	100.0	42.4
	<b>2015</b>	2,406	54.8	31.48	10.0	25.0	50.0	80.0	100.0	45.9
Other family support	<b>2014</b>	2,316	51.2	34.37	10.0	20.0	50.0	85.0	100.0	43.5
	<b>2015</b>	2,520	48.8	33.44	10.0	20.0	50.0	80.0	100.0	48.1
Scholarships or awards from university	<b>2014</b>	1,823	36.8	29.55	5.0	10.0	25.0	55.0	85.0	34.2
	<b>2015</b>	1,995	35.6	28.16	5.0	10.0	25.0	50.0	80.0	38.0
Money earned by spouse or partner	<b>2014</b>	283	31.4	28.82	5.0	10.0	20.0	50.0	80.0	5.3
	<b>2015</b>	270	36.6	32.46	5.0	10.0	22.5	50.0	100.0	5.2
Scholarships awarded from external sources	<b>2014</b>	1,349	29.6	30.47	5.0	5.0	15.0	50.0	80.0	25.3
	<b>2015</b>	1,393	26.9	28.81	5.0	5.0	10.0	40.0	80.0	26.6
Personal income and savings	<b>2014</b>	1,527	25.7	27.78	5.0	8.0	15.0	30.0	78.4	28.7
	<b>2015</b>	1,730	27.1	28.31	2.0	10.0	15.0	33.3	80.0	33.0

	Year	n	M	SD	P10	P25	Mdn	P75	P90	% Reporting
Work/study program	2014	337	10.9	15.43	2.0	5.0	5.0	10.0	20.0	6.3
	2015	375	9.5	13.00	2.0	5.0	5.0	10.0	20.0	7.2
Other source(s)	2014	239	57.8	35.76	10.0	25.0	60.0	100.0	100.0	4.5
	2015	210	55.4	35.39	10.0	20.0	51.5	91.3	100.0	4.0

Note: Zeros (0) were excluded from analysis.

**TABLE 50. How do you plan to finance your PA education? Please enter a percentage for each applicable category.**

	Year	n	M	SD	P10	P25	Mdn	P75	P90	% Reporting
Loans	2014	3,649	85.1	22.51	50.0	80.0	97.0	100.0	100.0	68.5
	2015	3,785	84.0	22.51	50.0	75.0	95.0	100.0	100.0	72.2
Other family support	2014	1,149	42.1	36.10	5.0	10.0	25.0	80.0	100.0	21.6
	2015	1,293	42.3	34.82	5.0	10.0	30.0	75.0	100.0	24.7
Scholarships awarded from external sources	2014	355	34.3	35.34	5.0	5.0	15.0	55.0	100.0	6.7
	2015	411	26.1	29.32	5.0	5.0	10.0	40.0	80.0	7.8
Money earned by spouse or partner	2014	516	27.0	26.09	5.0	10.0	20.0	40.0	70.0	9.7
	2015	502	23.1	22.25	5.0	10.0	15.0	30.0	50.0	9.6
Work study program	2014	47	26.1	37.18	1.8	5.0	10.0	20.0	100.0	0.9
	2015	41	26.3	36.22	1.2	5.0	10.0	27.5	100.0	0.9
Personal income and savings	2014	1,164	22.2	25.11	5.0	5.0	10.0	25.0	50.0	21.8
	2015	1,362	21.7	24.13	5.0	5.0	10.0	25.0	50.0	26.0
Scholarships or awards from the university	2014	434	24.5	25.41	5.0	5.0	15.0	30.8	60.0	8.1
	2015	440	21.8	22.40	5.0	5.0	21.8	30.0	50.0	8.4
Other source(s)	2014	156	69.1	35.01	10.0	40.0	90.0	100.0	100.0	2.9
	2015	141	67.1	35.18	10.0	30.0	80.0	100.0	100.0	2.7

Note: Zeros (0) were excluded from analysis.

**TABLE 51. Do you have any non-educational consumer debt that you are legally required to repay? This includes credit card debt, car loans, mortgages, or other consumer debt.**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
Yes	1,693	33.8	1,496	31.6
No	3,079	61.5	3,093	65.2
Prefer not to answer	234	4.7	152	3.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,006</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,741</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**TABLE 52. Please estimate the total amount of non-educational consumer debt you currently have.**

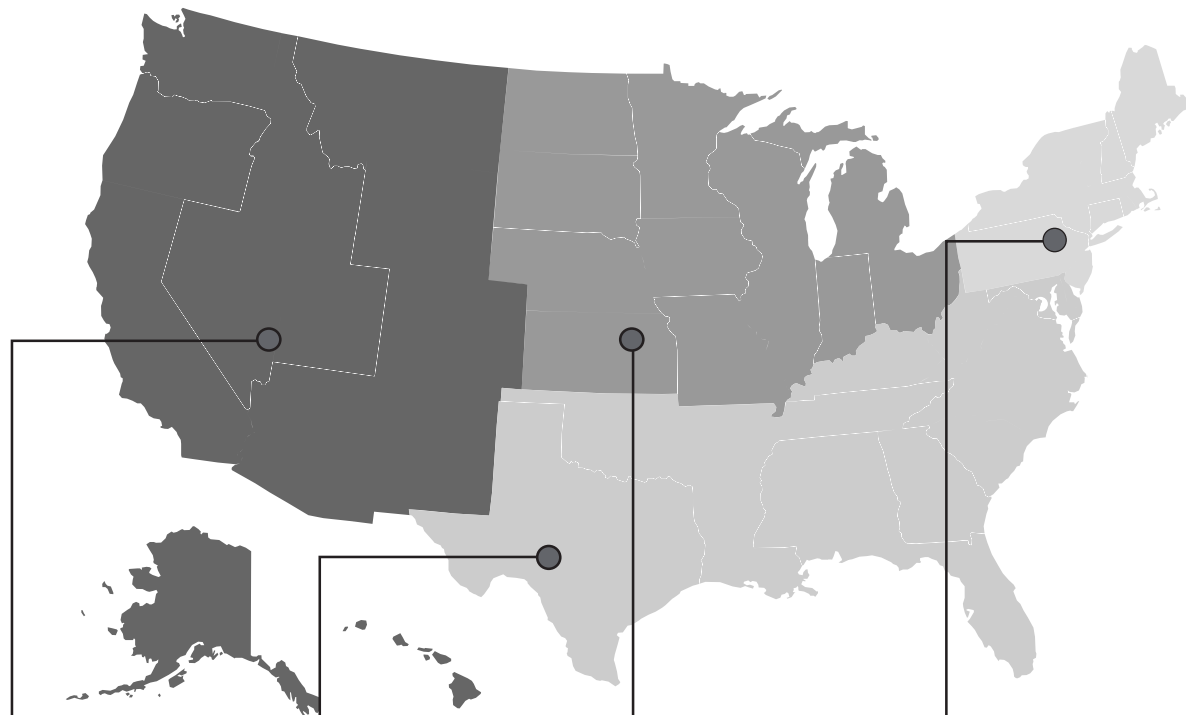
	Year	n	M (\$)	SD (\$)	P10 (\$)	P25 (\$)	Mdn (\$)	P75 (\$)	P90 (\$)	% Reporting
Credit cards	2014	1,047	5,118	11,385	500	1,200	3,000	6,000	10,000	61.8
	2015	944	4,897	6,348	300	1,000	2,900	6,000	12,000	63.1
Car loans	2014	857	12,911	9,412	3,500	6,000	10,000	17,000	25,000	50.6
	2015	779	12,278	10,078	1,200	5,000	10,000	16,000	25,000	52.1
Other consumer debt	2014	88	10,855	25,359	1,000	2,000	4,000	10,000	20,000	5.2
	2015	77	20,312	53,978	740	2,000	5,000	15,500	50,000	5.1
<b>Total consumer debt</b>	2014	<b>1,430</b>	<b>12,153</b>	<b>15,638</b>	<b>1,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>26,000</b>	<b>84.5</b>
	2015	<b>1,307</b>	<b>12,051</b>	<b>19,604</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>8,000</b>	<b>16,000</b>	<b>27,000</b>	<b>87.3</b>

Note: Zeros (0) were excluded from analysis. Mortgage information was collected but is not presented or included in "total consumer debt."

**TABLE 53. What do you anticipate your total debt (excluding personal debt) will be from attending PA school?**

	2014		2015	
	n	%	n	%
\$0	456	9.1	422	8.9
Less than \$25,000	334	6.7	262	5.5
\$25,000 to \$49,999	495	9.9	434	9.2
\$50,000 to \$74,999	757	15.1	689	14.5
\$75,000 to \$99,999	1,009	20.2	988	20.8
\$100,000 to \$124,999	970	19.4	1,038	21.9
\$125,000 to \$149,999	512	10.2	479	10.1
\$150,000 to \$174,999	288	5.8	255	5.4
\$175,000 to \$199,999	86	1.7	101	2.1
\$200,000 or greater	92	1.8	74	1.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,999</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>4,742</b>	<b>100.0</b>

# APPENDIX A



## Region 4 WEST

Arizona  
Colorado  
Idaho  
New Mexico  
Montana  
Utah  
Nevada  
Wyoming  
Alaska  
California  
Hawaii  
Oregon  
Washington

## Region 3 SOUTH

Delaware  
District of Columbia  
Florida  
Georgia  
Maryland  
North Carolina  
South Carolina  
Virginia  
West Virginia  
Alabama  
Kentucky  
Mississippi  
Tennessee  
Arkansas  
Louisiana  
Oklahoma  
Texas

## Region 2 MIDWEST

Indiana  
Illinois  
Michigan  
Ohio  
Wisconsin  
Iowa  
Kansas  
Minnesota  
Missouri  
Nebraska  
North Dakota  
South Dakota

## Region 1 NORTHEAST

Connecticut  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
New Hampshire  
Rhode Island  
Vermont  
New Jersey  
New York  
Pennsylvania