



Savannah, Georgia

## **South University Physician Assistant Program Outcomes Savannah, Georgia**

**GOAL 1: The program will recruit a highly qualified, diverse student cohort that will foster success in the program.**

- a) **matriculate  $\geq 20\%$  non-female gender students**
- b) **matriculate  $\geq 20\%$  non-Caucasian students**
- c) **matriculate  $\geq 20\%$  students identified as socioeconomically disadvantaged**

The program defines diversity as characteristics that include, but are not limited to, national origin, language, race, ethnicity, gender, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, healthcare experience, and family structures. In recruiting a diverse student population, the programs are developing affiliations with local county school systems. The program faculty and New Student Enrollment Advisors participate throughout the year in educational programs to provide mentorship opportunities to guide students towards a successful educational path into the SU PA program.

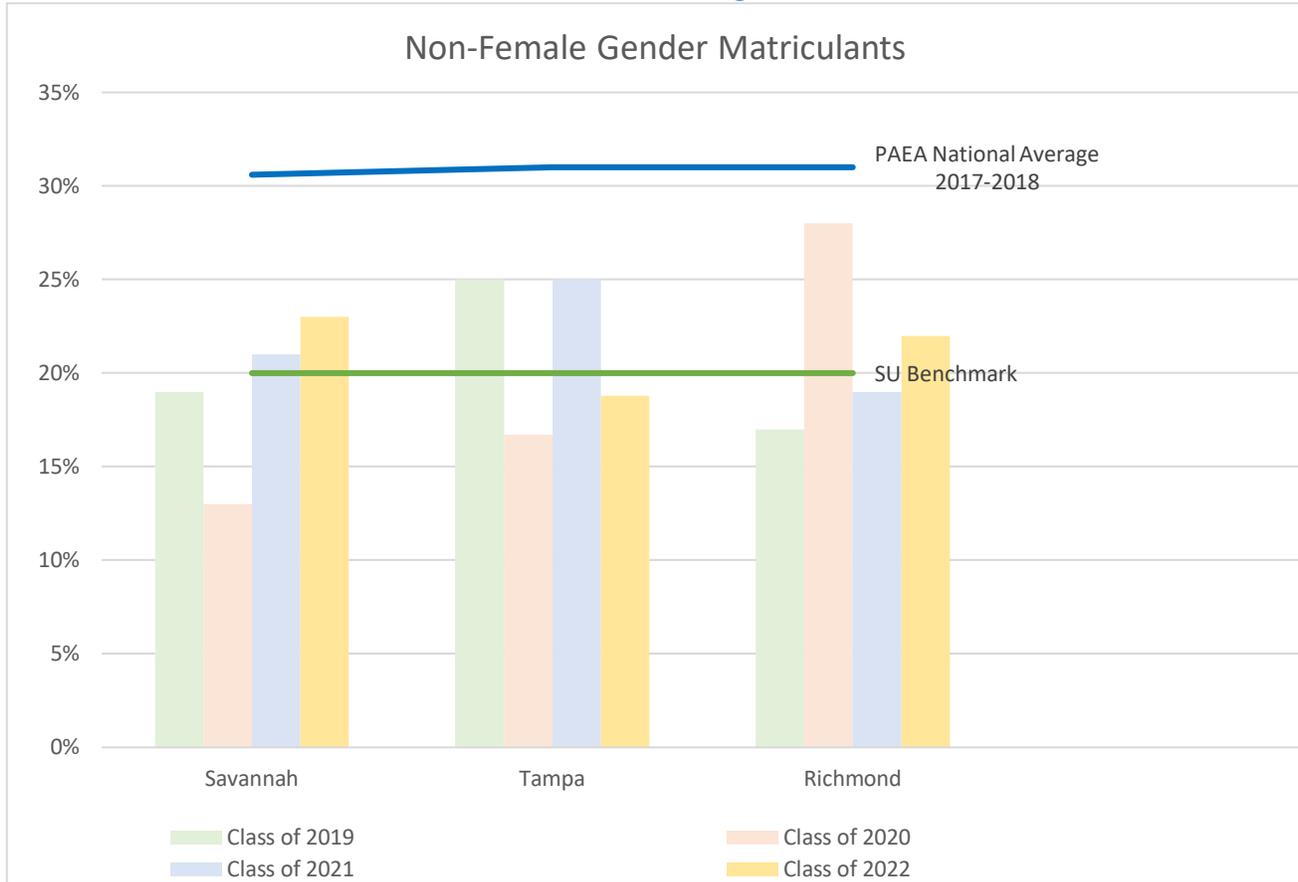
Selected benchmarks were established utilizing data from PAEA and from sister campuses across South University. Through the Admissions Committee working in tandem with the Curriculum Committee, the program will monitor annually successful achievement in meeting this goal to include recruitment methods through the school systems and tracking trends in remediation, attrition, deceleration, and graduation.

A1.11 The sponsoring institution must demonstrate its commitment to student, faculty and staff Diversity and inclusion by:

- a) supporting the program in defining its goal(s) for diversity and inclusion,
- b) supporting the program in implementing recruitment strategies,



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**Program Diversity Goal 1 a)** In order to **matriculate  $\geq 20\%$  non-female gender students**, the program will:

- Interface with and promote the PA profession among first responders, which are historically male-dominated, including firefighters (92% male, <https://www.nfpa.org/-/media/Files/News-and-Research/Fire-statistics-and-reports/Emergency-responders/osfdprofile.pdf>), paramedics and EMTs (77% and 65% male, <https://www.usnews.com/news/healthiest-communities/articles/2019-08-19/diversity-emergency-women-minorities-underrepresented-in-ems>) and law enforcement (87% male <https://www.statista.com/statistics/195324/gender-distribution-of-full-time-law-enforcement-employees-in-the-us/>).
- Interface with and promote the PA profession among military veterans, which are historically male-dominated (91% male, [https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Women\\_Veterans\\_2015\\_Final.pdf](https://www.va.gov/vetdata/docs/SpecialReports/Women_Veterans_2015_Final.pdf)), by creating partnerships with local colleges and universities in the Savannah area with a focus on the education facilities of local military installations ([https://home.army.mil/stewart/index.php/about/Garrison\\_DHR/education-center/colleges](https://home.army.mil/stewart/index.php/about/Garrison_DHR/education-center/colleges)). According to *military.com*, males comprise 80% of the population of the US Army (<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2019/03/11/historic-number-women-uniform-vet-community-about-change.html>).
- Interface with and promote the PA profession among LGBTQ-identifying individuals by establishing relationships with regional and national organizations that promote inclusivity such as the LGBT PA Caucus (<https://lbgtpa.org>). The program will recruit trainers, speakers, and lecturers from LGBTQ support



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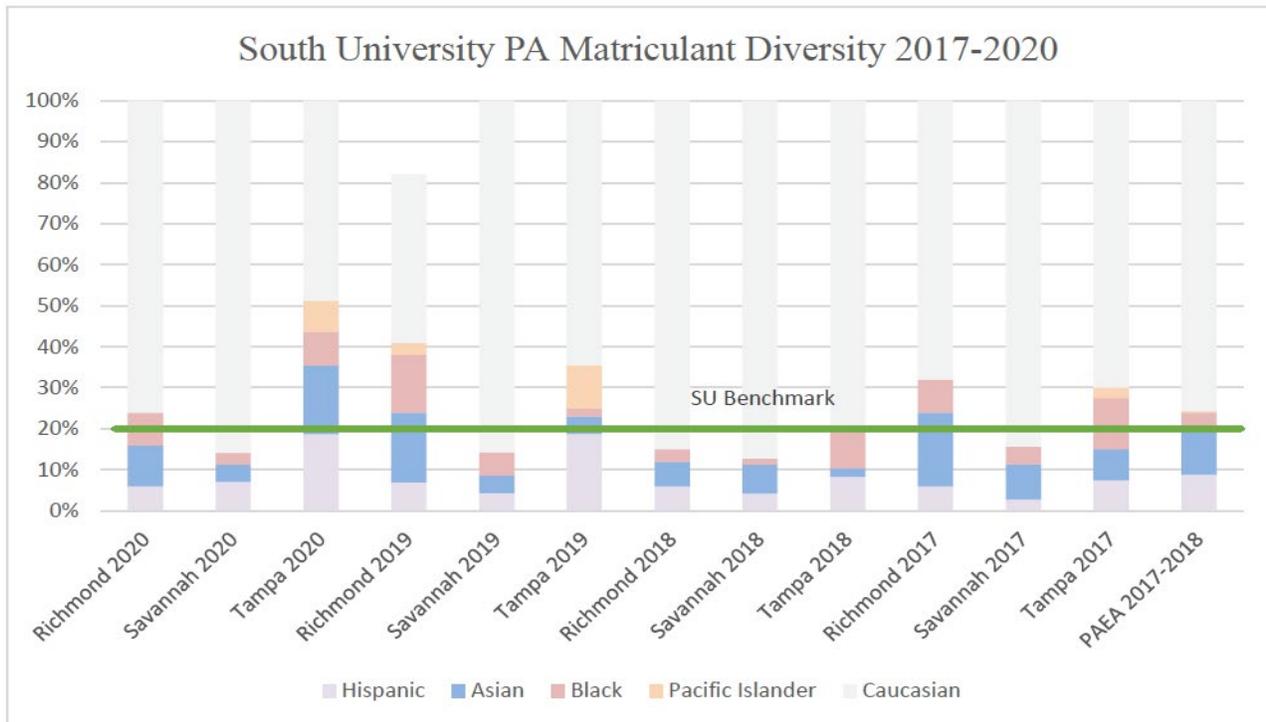
organizations such as “Peaceworkmedical” to provide information and training to both faculty and students relative to issues specific to the LGBTQ community (<https://www.peaceworkmedical.com>). The program will also increase faculty awareness of gender identity and LGBTQ health and wellness topics as they relate to healthcare and preventative care utilizing resources such as the “HealthyPeople2020” program (<https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/lesbian-gay-bisexual-and-transgender-health>).

- Gender Diversity data (specifically regarding education) from Chatham County, GA collected in 2017 (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/chatham-county-ga/#demographics>): Degrees awarded: In 2017, 3,278 men were awarded degrees from institutions in Chatham County, GA, which is 0.433 times less than the 7,565 female students who received degrees in the same year. Gender Student Population: The student population of Chatham County, GA, identifies 11,912 male students and 26,217 female students.
- **Success:** Across SU PA programs (Richmond, Tampa, and Savannah PA Programs), matriculant data shows a mean of 21% non-female gender enrolled PA students in 2020 (2020 SU Admissions data). The SUSAV-PA program matriculated 23% of students identified as non-female gender in 2020 and was successfully above the stated benchmark. For SUSAV-PA program cohorts matriculated in January of 2017 – 2020, the composite mean of male-identifying applicants was 19%. Annually, during this same timeframe, non-female matriculants represented 19%, 13%, 21% and 23% of each cohort, respectively (SUSAV-PA Admissions Data, as per CASPA, 2017-2020).

Matriculation Year	2017 (Class of 2019)	2018 (Class of 2020)	2019 (Class of 2021)	2020 (Class of 2022)
Number of Students	69	70	70	69
Mean GPA	3.56	3.54	3.64	3.59
Gender	Female 81%	Female 87%	Female 79%	Female 77%
	Male 19%	Male 13%	Male 21%	Male 23%
Race/Ethnicity	Non-Caucasian 13%	Non-Caucasian 16%	Non-Caucasian 10%	Non-Caucasian 10%
	White/Caucasian 87%	White/Caucasian 84%	White/Caucasian 90%	White/Caucasian 90%



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**Program Diversity Goal 1 b)** In order to **matriculate  $\geq 20\%$  non-Caucasian students**, the program will:

- Increase the visibility of the South University PA program within the local African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American/Pacific Islander communities. The PA program is seeking to increase awareness of the PA Profession and the South University program to matriculate a diverse student body that reflects the local population's cultural mix, including African American, Hispanic, Asian, and Native American/Pacific Islander students.
- Establish relationships with pre-health professions clubs at each of the historically black colleges and universities in Georgia, including Savannah State University (SSU), the oldest historically black university in Georgia. SSU hosts the annual Savannah Black Heritage Festival and numerous other cultural events of significance in the community (<http://savannahblackheritagefestival.org>).
- Work to increase the diversity of the program's Program Advisory Committee (PAC), to include a cultural background similar to the Savannah area. The program's identified representatives from the communities of interest will aid the program in expanding its reach in settings such as Program Open Houses and Admissions Interviews sessions. These PAC members will also serve as ambassadors to local students and applicants from under-represented minorities to serve as mentors for their personal PA academic journey and their career.
- Work with the marketing team and the student Diversity Chair (member of Student Leadership Society), to implement mentorship opportunities with current and future alumni of Savannah State University and the SUSAV-PA program to establish ongoing relationships between the program and SSU leadership.



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Additionally, the SUSAV-PA program is working to develop partnerships with organizations such as 100 Black Men and the Bethesda Home for Boys. (<https://100blackmen.org> and <http://www.bethesdaacademy.org/>).

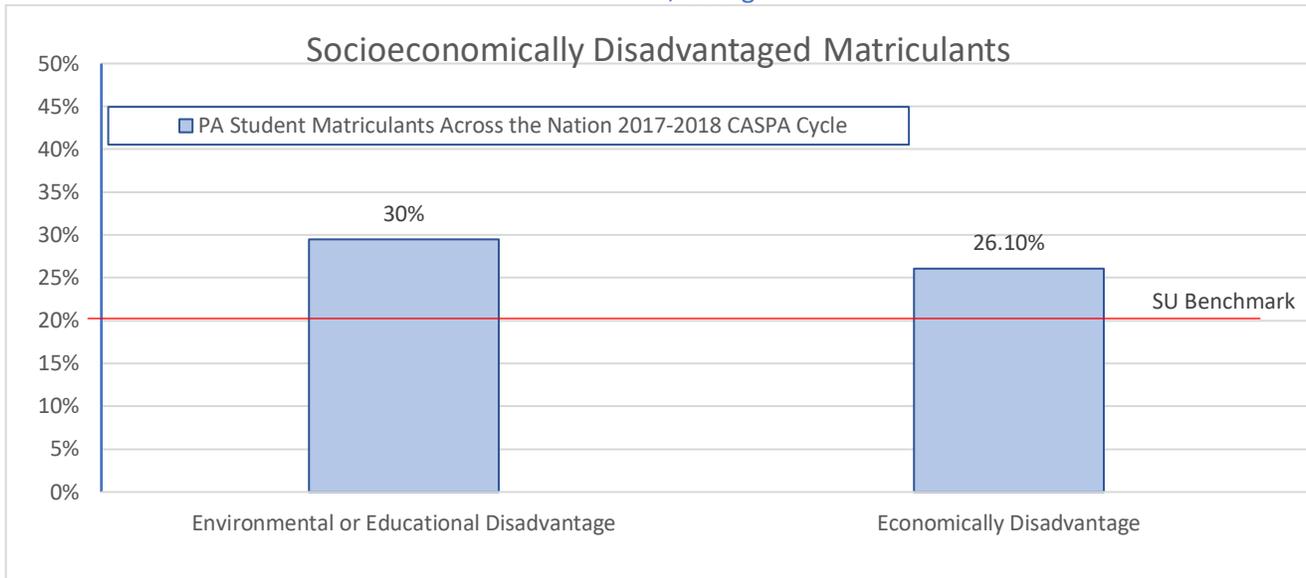
- Diversity data from Chatham County, GA, which supported the program's development of the benchmark, was collected from 2018 – 2019 (<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/chathamcountygeorgia> and <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/chatham-county-ga/#demographics>) and indicated the following overall information regarding Chatham County: Chatham County, GA, is home to a population of 289,000 people, from which 96% are US citizens. As of 2018, the most common birthplace for foreign-born residents of Georgia was Mexico with nearly 240,000, followed by India with nearly 95,000, and finally Jamaica with almost 45,000 residents (<https://datausa.io/profile/geo/chatham-county-ga/#demographics>).

#### Ethnic Diversity

- White/Caucasian Alone residents (50%)
  - Black or African-American Alone residents (41%)
  - Hispanic or Latino residents (6%)
  - Asian Alone residents (2.5%)
  - Native American/Pacific Islander residents (0.5%)
- **Success:** The SUSAV-PA program is currently in the admissions cycle for the January 2021 matriculating cohort and anticipate at least 24% non-Caucasian students to matriculate among the cohort (CASPA WebAdmit Data 2020-2021). Success in achieving this benchmark will be published in 2021 as this was a revised goal in 2020.



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**Program Diversity Goal 1 c)** The PA program is seeking to recruit and **matriculate  $\geq 20\%$  socioeconomically disadvantaged students** by:

- Increasing the visibility of the South University PA program within the local middle/high schools identified with large populations of socioeconomically disadvantaged students.
- Building on the current relationship with the Georgia Area Health and Education Centers (AHEC) to become an integral part of the pipeline toward providing care to the underserved communities throughout the state. This can be encouraged by having AHEC representatives advise applicants of opportunities during open houses and information sessions as well as by having institutional outreach to the area AHEC offices to establish ongoing relationships between all major medical programs and AHEC to identify needs and establish clinical training capabilities, and loan repayment opportunities as recruitment incentives for individuals from these areas.
- Working to establish feeder programs with scholarship and financial aid opportunities for “pre-medical” track students of socioeconomically disadvantaged individuals. Examples are the South University Coastal Empire High School Grant and the South University Institutional Grants (<https://www.southuniversity.edu/paying-for-college/institutional-grants>).
- Data from PAEA collected from 2017-2018, which supported the program’s development of the benchmark, identified 29.5% of matriculants nationally, who reported at least one educational/environmental disadvantage (CASPA Matriculant data, published 1-2020: <https://paeaonline.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/paea-presentation-caspa-20200106.pdf>). Additionally, the PAEA data noted 26.1% of matriculants nationally reported an economic disadvantage. In Chatham County, GA, census data shows that approximately 13.4% of the population lives below the poverty line (<https://censusreporter.org/profiles/05000US13051-chatham-county-ga/>).



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- **Success:** The program developed this goal in 2020 and will measure matriculation data from the CASPA 2020-2021 cycle. Success in achieving this benchmark will be published in 2021.

**GOAL 2: The program will strive to adequately prepare graduating students to achieve a first-time pass rate that exceeds the national average upon completion of the Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE).**

- **Benchmark:** A first-time pass rate that exceeds the national average as published according to NCCPA. The faculty have developed curriculum mapped to the NCCPA blueprint and aligned to the ARC-PA standards. In addition, the program has prepared several resources to provide preparation for the PANCE exam including KAPLAN Review, EHRGo, PANCE preparation course prior to graduation, and PACKRAT examinations at the end of the didactic and clinical years. The PA program has also developed a stringent remediation plan to identify students at risk early to provide them academic tutoring and support to successfully meet this goal upon graduation.

To assess this achievement, the program analyzes data from the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination (PANCE) Program Performance Report by Class, available on the NCCPA Website. Requirements for NCCPA Certification are determined by the NCCPA and are subject to change without notification to South University. Graduation from the South University Savannah PA Program does not guarantee certification or employment.

- **Success:** The program has successfully exceeded the PANCE National First Time Taker Pass Rate for calendar years 2016-2019. The National First Time Exam Pass Rate for calendar year 2020 will be available in 2021 (<https://www.nccpa.net/Program/ReportRenderPage.ashx?reportType=10&reportFormat=PDF>)

Physician Assistant National Certification Examination (PANCE) Performance Data						
Class Graduation Year	Number of Candidates in Class	% of Candidates Who Took PANCE	% of Program First Time Taker Pass Rate PANCE	% of National First Time Taker Pass Rate by Calendar Year	% of Total Class Who Ultimately Passed PANCE	National Exam Pass Rate for the Class Graduation Year
2016	69	100%	97%	96%	100%	96%
2017	70	100%	99%	97%	100%	98%
2018	70	100%	99%	98%	100%	99%
2019	69	100%	97%	93%	100%	97%
2020	69	100%	91%	*Available in 2021	**Pending	*Available in 2021



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South University Savannah Physician Assistant Program:

\*PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT NATIONAL CERTIFYING EXAMINATION FIVE YEAR FIRST TIME TAKER SUMMARY REPORT

\*NCCPA conducts practice analysis and standard setting studies approximately every three to five years and, based on the most recent analyses, implemented a new PANCE blueprint and passing standard effective January 1, 2019. The pass rate, based on first-time taker performance for the 2020 calendar year, will be available in early 2021.

\*\*As of date of publication, two candidates are registered to repeat PANCE.

**GOAL 3: The program will provide students service-learning opportunities that allow them to use their skills and education to demonstrate compassion and commitment to the community.**

- 69% of college students volunteered over 15 hours in a year and the state of Georgia ranked number 46 in the nation with 24.6% of Georgia college students volunteering per the Corporation for National and Community Service ([https://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/06\\_1016\\_RPD\\_college\\_full.pdf](https://www.nationalservice.gov/pdf/06_1016_RPD_college_full.pdf); <https://www.nationalservice.gov/vcla/college-students-volunteer-rate-states>).

Therefore, the program has chosen a benchmark of providing  $\geq 15$  hours of community-based service opportunities during their graduate education. By providing two or more service-learning opportunities to students during the course of their education in the program, the program strives to enhance the student's understanding of service learning and the importance of community involvement as a clinician with the long-term goal of fostering improvement of student perception related to service activities in the medical field.

- Through courses such as Applied Learning Experience I-IV, and leadership programs such as the Student Society, Student Ambassadorship, and South University Physician Assistant Aid (SUPAID), the SUSAV PA program faculty and students will participate in service-learning opportunities to positively influence the health and education of the underprivileged, uninsured, and underserved individuals within the Savannah area and surrounding communities. Students will explore the integral components of community health, including the effects of health disparities, access to health care, and the impact of social environments on health and behavior. They will have the opportunity to outline the various patient assistance programs and possibilities for free access to screening and preventative health care. Finally, the PA students will identify environmental factors suggested to influence public health and target their reduction.
- The program participates in the Chatham County School Board Health Fair to provide health education to the community and health promotion information to children and parents. Students provide education on blood pressure, vision screenings, hand washing, diabetes and other areas as needed. During the Ready Set Go Annual Fair, students create posters and provide health education for the fair attendees. Annually, students serve on the first aid team for Komen Savannah Race for the Cure Run and the Annual Savannah Rock and Roll Marathon, screening and initiating therapy as needed. One to two times per quarter, students cook meals, eat, and interact with the families who are utilizing Ronald McDonald House accommodations while facing a child's medical crisis. Through AMBUCS-Savannah, students participate in



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weekly bowling opportunities to assist and interact with adults and children with disabilities and attend and assist with the Annual Prom.

- Through these curricular and non-curricular elements, the Physician Assistant program will provide an environment that fosters quality academic and clinical education with a balanced path towards life-long service. The program's Curriculum Committee is responsible for the ongoing review of the curriculum. The Program Director, Medical Director, and Principal Faculty ensure that the curriculum is consistent with the vision and mission of the program.
- **Success:** As this is a new goal developed in 2020, the program will measure the achievement of success through program exit surveys to identify progression of student self-reflection prior to and after exposure to service-learning opportunities in the program including hours dedicated to service. Success in achieving this benchmark will be published in 2021.