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**300 PA
SCHOOL
INTERVIEW
QUESTIONS**

*Question and Answer
Workbook*

300 PA School Interview Questions

Question and Answer Workbook

Stephen Pasquini PA-C

The Physician Assistant Life

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300 PA School Interview Questions/ Stephen Pasquini PA-C. -- 1

PART ONE



87 Weird and Wacky PA School Interview Questions

1. "Who is your favorite super hero?"

2. "If you were a villain which would you be?"

3. "What type of cookie would you like to be?"

4. "What was your favorite Star Wars episode?"

5. "What is your spirit animal?"

6. "What would you do if a bear was chasing you?"

7. "As a PA school instructor. Should I recommend my students offer abortions."

8. "You're trapped in a car during a blizzard. Stranded. What do you do?"

9. "If you had a pencil, tell me three things you would do with the pencil beside write or erase."

10. "If you were to write an autobiography, what would it be titled?"

11. "What would you do if you were drafted tomorrow in the army?"

12. "Would you rather be a catcher or the pitcher?"

13. "Why do applicants frequently tend to say they want to work in rural areas, but we still have a lack of providers in these areas?"

14. "What three books would you bring to an island?"

15. "Do you laugh at naughty jokes?"

16. "If you are a physician assistant and you post a status on Facebook that offends one of your patients, how do you handle the situation?"

17. "When was the last time you cried?"

18. "What was the last movie you saw?"

19. "What would you do if you won the power ball?"

20. "How did you like the ending of Harry Potter?"

21. "Where would you go if you could travel anywhere in the world and why?"

22. "What would you do if one of your patients came up to you on the street before a long weekend and asked for their prescription? Their only other option they have is a \$300+ emergency visit."

23. "What was your favorite gift you've ever given?"

24. "Is the oil boom good for Alberta?"

25. "What do you believe will be your legacy?"

26. "If you could sound like any bass player who would it be?" (or whatever instrument you said you play)

27. "You have discovered your patient has non-treatable cancer, and his wife and son request you not tell the patient the truth about his diagnosis - what would you do?"

28. "If you can agree with me that a transaction takes place when you go to a physician assistant (your insurance or your cash pays the doc for his service), then what is the product that a physician assistant provides in one word?"

29. "How would you consult with a family who has a son that needs a leg amputated?"

30. "You have said you are in a relationship. Would your boyfriend move out to Bridgeport with you for PA school?"

31. "Who is your favorite musical artist?"

32. "If a patient was brain dead and on life support, how would you make the decision on whether to discontinue life support?"

33. "What attracted you most to your husband?"

34. "Was there a time that science tested your faith?"

35. "If you were an MLB player, what would be your up-to-bat song?"

36. "If you were an element, which would you be and why?"

37. "How would you solve the obesity epidemic we see in America?"

38. "Thirty-percent of PA students report symptoms of depression during PA school. How do you feel your experiences will aid you if you experience similar symptoms during school?"

39. "How do you feel about not being close to a mall? "

40. "Is your GPA an accurate representation of your knowledge base? It is very high. Did you actually retain all of that information?"

41. "How do you feel about abortion; follow-up: how do you feel about contraceptives? "

42. "My 90-year-old mother with dementia needs a hip replacement surgery. If you are her PA would you try to convince me to allow the surgery? Why or Why not?"

43. "I'm a father of four and you found out I have stage IV pancreatic cancer how are you going to tell me?"

44. "Explain what you would do if a classmate came to you feeling overwhelmed and is considering dropping out after their first year."

45. "If you could invite anyone alive or dead to supper, who would it be?"

46. "If I was a genie and you could grant you one of two wishes, which would you choose: Never make a mistake in your medical career or that every patient you have fully comprehended what problem they're having and how to take care of it?"

47. "My son is joining a fraternity! What are they like?"

48. "What was a time that you were a minority?"

49. "What percent of remission should there be to override a patient's parents on the treatment of cancer?"

50. "Who would you choose to interview if you had the chance?"

51. "What are the differences between Britain's health care delivery system and ours?"

52. "Can you tell me about a book that changed your perspective on life?"

53. "What would you tell your patient who doesn't believe in vaccinations for their newborn?"

54. "What is your solution to terrorism?"

55. "What's the biggest misconception Americans have about your culture?"

56. "Complete the sentence: My friends love me so dearly that they put up with my _____."

57. "How would you handle a patient with strict eastern medicine beliefs?"

58. "What is a question you prepared to answer in this interview?"

59. "What was the size of the compound that you spent time researching in undergrad?"

60. "When did you go from being a boy (girl) to a man (woman)?"

61. "Do you recognize this picture from your undergrad." (they actually showed me the picture)

62. "If you could choose to have one superpower, what would it be and why?"

63. "If you caught a fellow student cheating on an exam, what would you do?"

64. "What are your feelings on illegal immigration?"

65. "If you could have lunch with anyone, dead or alive, who would it be and why?"

66. "Who do you believe is responsible for a patient's healthcare?"

67. "Discuss a time when you had to see something from someone else's perspective."

68. "How would you handle a mistake made by your supervising physician in a private practice? What would you say to the patient and to your supervisor?"

69. "How do you help a patient who has the means to be healthy but has no interest in doing so?"

70. Question specific to your major for example: "What is your favorite part of the brain?" (this was for a neuroscience major)

71. "What is cultural competency to you?"

72. "Student interviewer asks a probing philosophical question about your senior thesis on mechanistic determinism in the philosophy of science."

73. "Who is Chester Arthur?" (be ready to answer a question about someone you are not familiar with)

74. "Describe the differences between Medicare and Medicaid."

75. "What is a moral dilemma that you have had to overcome?"

76. "Name one bad thing about XYZ university (you may draw a blank on this one but be creative and entertaining smile and laugh through it and so will your interviewer)"

77. "If you wanted to plan a vacation with your friends, how would you plan it?"

78. "How would you respond to a patient who was coming on to you?"

79. "Do you think a democracy can coexist with a theocracy?"

80. "What activities and honor societies were you involved in during high school?" (Yes, interviewers have asked me about high school experience- including class rank and GPA)

81. "What do you think will happen to the Affordable Care Act now?"

82. "What is your favorite fairy tale? And why?"

83. "You will be given examples of types of reimbursements doctors get from insurance companies. You will then be asked to give the pros and cons of each situation."

84. "What will you do if you get into PA school and you find yourself failing the first year."

85. "What is your favorite movie and if you could be any character from the movie, who would it be and why?"

86. "Do you like it in New Orleans?" (insert the school where your interview is located)

87. "At the end of the day, how would you like us to remember you?"

PART TWO

215 Traditional PA School Interview Questions

88. "What was the hardest class you had and how did you overcome it?"

89. "What was a mistake you made and what did you learn from it?"

90. "If we had one seat left, why should we give it to you?"

91. "Why X University?"

92. "What do you think makes a good leader?"

93. "What is your opinion on the US and Canadian health care systems? Which is better and why?"

94. "Do you like to read?"

95. "What is the worst book you have read?"

96. "What is the biggest problem in health care right now?"

97. "Your undergraduate degree work was in psychology. What made you decide to pursue medicine?"

98. "Why do you think you were a good fit for our program?"

99. "What have you learned in your current job?"

100. "How did you like your undergraduate institution?"

101. "Did your parent's death affect your decision to go into medicine?"

102. "Who is someone that embodies professionalism in your eyes, and why?"

103. "What non-medical related books have you read in the past three years?"

104. "What do you like to do in your free time not related to academics, medicine, research?"

105. "Is there a time where you witnessed a physician assistant interacting with a patient in a manner you believed to be unprofessional?"

106. "Why did you choose to write about XYZ in your personal statement, and why did you say XYZ?"

107. "What is a time you experienced failure and what did you do?"

108. "Where else have you applied? Interviewed? Accepted? If you are accepted into both X and Y schools and here, where would you go?"

109. "How do you think physician assistants learn to be compassionate?"

110. "What else have you done in college that is not on your application?"

111. "Out of all the items listed on your application, which would you say is your greatest accomplishment?"

112. "Talk about some of the characteristics you'd hope to see in a successful physician assistant? Talk about some of the negative characteristics of a bad PA."

113. "What is one issue in health care you care about and why?"

114. "Where do you see yourself in 10 years (career wise)?"

115. "What do you like to do for fun?"

116. "How do you approach academic challenges?"

117. "Describe a stressful situation and what was the outcome and what did you learn from it."

118. "What person has most influenced your decision to go PA school?"

119. "What personal accomplishment is memorable/valuable?"

120. "Tell me about the role of a physician assistant."

121. "What interests you about XYZ school?"

122. "Have you shadowed a PA?"

123. "Would you like to work in a private practice or a hospital?"

124. "What specialty are you interested in pursuing and why?"

125. "What makes you want to become a physician assistant?"

126. "How would you work in a group environment?"

127. "Tell me about XYZ activities on your application."

128. "Sometimes PAs have to make tough choices for their patients. Can you think of a moral problem that might come up?"

129. "Are you really ready for PA school?"

130. "Explain an extracurricular activity."

131. "Describe where you grew up."

132. "What do you think of the Affordable Care Act?"

133. "Did anyone discourage you from pursuing PA school?"

134. "Tell me about a time you were challenged."

135. "Tell me something interesting about yourself that can't be found in your essays."

136. "What pushes your buttons - what kinds of things make you angry?"

137. "Any interesting classes outside of your major?"

138. "Tell me what led you to become a physician assistant." (variation on why do you want to be a PA)

139. "How would you cope with having to give bad news to kids/parents/anyone?"

140. "Tell me about a time where you didn't reach a goal you wanted to achieve."

141. "Would you be interested in practicing rural medicine here in Georgia, or would you want to go back home?"

142. "Who are you?"

143. "What drives you?"

144. "Tell me about X experience." (could be a global health you trip, an experience you mentioned in your personal statement, or anything else)

145. "Tell me about your university and why you decided to pick that school."

146. "What sort of relationship, long-term or short-term, would you like with your patients?"

147. "What do you think will be the worst part about going through PA school and becoming a physician assistant?"

148. "Which discovery do you think has had the greatest impact on medicine?"

149. "What would you like me to tell the admissions committee?"

150. "What is an aspect of the world or culture you would like to change?"

151. "What are the pros and cons of EMRs and integrating more technology into healthcare."

152. "What would you do if a patient refused a blood transfusion due to their beliefs?"

153. "What was the hardest class you've taken?"

"What change would you like to see in medicine and how are you going to contribute to that change?"

154. _____

155. "What would your family think if you didn't enter medicine?"

156. "How have your previous experiences prepared you for PA school?"

157. "Tell me about a time that you cared for someone else."

158. "What if you discovered a fellow student had a drug problem? What would you do?"

159. "What's the most difficult decision you have ever made?"

160. "Name a time you have shown resiliency in your life."

161. "What was your most meaningful volunteer or community service experience and why?"

162. "If not medicine, what would you do?"

163. "Tell me about your family."

164. "Define "resilience" and rate yourself on a scale of 1-10."

165. "How have you explored cultural diversity?"

166. "What do you think about diversity?"

167. "What in your file are you most proud of?"

168. "Why aren't there more opportunities to mentor underserved youth in XYZ? Obviously, the need is there."

169. "What offends you?"

170. "What do you think will be a personal challenge for you as a physician assistant in the future?"

171. "Tell me about yourself - why PA?"

172. "Name a quality you saw in one of the physician assistants/doctors/etc. you shadowed that you DO NOT want to embody as a physician assistant."

173. "In your experience working with doctors, nurses, etc., what characteristics did you see that you liked the most and liked the least?"

174. "Should you always follow the law?"

175. "How do you handle stress?"

176. "How do you define perseverance?"

177. "What do you know about the current events going on in healthcare?"

178. "Who are your three biggest heroes/role models? What was the most impactful experience in your life? And how do those two answers contribute to your career choice?"

179. "What are your hobbies?"

180. "Tell me about a time when you made a mistake and what you did to fix it."

181. "What questions do you have for me?"

182. "I see your stats are kind of low, what's your biggest weakness going to be going into PA school?"

183. "How have you changed since freshman year of college?"

184. "To what extent do you understand the life of a physician assistant?"

185. "Do you see any potential ethical problems with medical mission's trips?"

186. "How do you approach and talk to a transgender patient?"

187. "What are you doing to better yourself?" (especially important for reapplicants)

188. "Would you consider yourself mature?"

189. "What makes you so special?" (a variation on the "why you" question)

190. "A patient in your clinical trial feels like they are being used as a guinea pig. What do you do?"

191. "How would you deal with an ungrateful patient?"

192. "How would you describe parenting to a new mother?"

193. "Are any of your friends applying to PA school? If not, what do they do for a living?"

194. "What motivates you to get up in the morning?"

195. "Tell me about a leadership experience."

196. "I see you play guitar, what style do you like?"

197. "How would your friends describe you?"

198. "Who is your best friend?"

199. "How do you define integrity?"

200. "What is altruism? give an example of a time you were altruistic."

201. "What is one trait you wish you could change about yourself?"

202. "Two-part question: What do you think makes a good PA, and in what ways are you unique?"

203. "If I were to look at your transcript, what would be the lowest grade on it? And why?"

204. "Tell me about an ethical issue you've thought about, and argue both sides of the issue."

205. "How should I sell you at the Admissions Committee meeting?"

206. "What do you think is wrong with healthcare today?"

207. "What is one thing happening in the medical field today that you want to discuss about?"

208. "Why is there so much inequality in health care delivery, even in X?"

209. "Healthcare costs are rising rapidly. What are your thoughts? What possible solutions are there? "

210. "What do you think is the number one problem facing PAs today?"

211. "What do you think will be most rewarding about being a physician assistant? Most challenging?"

212. "How would you adjust to life in X?"

213. "If you have been successful in your career so far, why not stay in that field instead of going to PA school?"

214. "Why didn't you stay in the military?"

215. "Tell me about the timeline and motivations behind the activities that you have taken part in." (basically, asking you to give context to the choices that you made in terms of which experiences you have sought)

216. "As I haven't really looked at your file yet, please take about five minutes to tell me about yourself and why you are applying here?"

217. "What did you gain the most from your undergrad institution?"

218. "What do you do when you are stressed out?"

219. "What do you think of evidence based medicine?"

220. "How do you handle conflict?"

221. "How would you balance school and social life?"

222. "What made you the person you are today?"

223. "Define professionalism?"

224. "Define success."

225. "Do you have any fears about going into medicine?"

226. "What is one thing you would change about yourself? Why?"

227. "What do you think about socialized medicine?"

228. "What do people who don't care about you think of you?"

229. "What is the meaning you attribute to life?"

230. "What makes a good team member?"

231.

232. "As a reapplicant, how have you improved your application?"

233. "Have you ever harmed anyone?"

234. "Do you have any regrets?"

235. "What is the bravest decision you've had to make?"

236. "If you could sum yourself and application up in a short pitch what would you say?"

237.

238. "Tell me about a time when you disagreed with someone or something. How did you work that out?"

239. "How are your time management skills?"

240. "How did you go about learning your second language?"

241. "What would your high school friends think of you today?"

242. "What one experience have you had that made you say that's how I want to treat my patients?"

243. "If you could have your ideal practice, where would you practice medicine?"

244. "What is the most negative aspect of your current job in healthcare?"

245. "Do you enjoy teaching others? Why?"

246. "Tell us about the physician assistants role in patient care."

247. "Is there one thing in your life you're especially proud of?"

248. "With so much available knowledge on how to live healthily and lose weight, why do you think so many people still don't take care of themselves or are still obese?"

249.

250. "What makes you laugh, and what makes you angry?"

251. "What was the pivotal event that made you decide to become a physician assistant?"

252. "Who is your role model and why?"

253. "If you could change one aspect of your personality with a snap of your fingers, what would you change?"

254. "Describe your personality."

255. "Who would you say has been the most influential person in the last one-hundred years?"

256. "Do you think a physician should tell a patient he/she has eight months to live?"

257. "How do you make a patient feel cared for?"

258. “What will you do if you don’t get into PA school?”

259. "Tell me about two of your favorite memories from studying abroad."

260. “Describe any travels that you have undertaken and exposure to other cultures than your own, if any.”

261. “How do you plan to finance your PA school education?”

262. “Would you practice in the inner city? What do you think happens to people who practice medicine there (attitude changes, etc.)?”

263. "Why do you think so many people want to become a physician assistant?"

264. "Tell me about a time when you were criticized unfairly."

265. "What do you think about the ongoing conflict in Iraq/Syria/Korea (etc.)."

266. "What is the difference between HMOs and PPOs?"

267. "Based on your teaching of young children tell us how you would gauge a child/adolescent's maturity level in a clinical setting."

268. "What type of health care system do you think is the best?"

269. "Do you see yourself working in a community or academic setting?"

270. "What have been some of your life experiences with diversity?"

271. "What did you think of the students who gave the presentation, they were dressed so informally while you weren't? What does empathy mean to you?"

272. "What is one reason you think that causes qualified candidates like yourself to drop out of PA school?"

273. “If you have the choice of giving a transplant to a successful elderly member of the community or a 20-year old drug addict, how do you choose?”

274. “How do you go about making important decisions?”

275. “What newspapers, journals, etc., do you read on a regular basis?”

276. “Where do we stand in your list of PA school preferences?”

277. “If you could start your college career all over again, what would you do differently?”

278. "Give me a situation where a patient's rights interfere with their well-being."

279. "What did you learn from your struggles your first year in college?"

280. "What are your feelings about euthanasia?"

281. "If you want to help people, why not social work?"

282. "What is your relationship with your family?"

283. “Describe your childhood and present living conditions.”

284. “Have you an alternative career plan?”

285. “When you need counseling for personal problems, who do you talk with?”

286. “How do you think your personal background will affect your practice of medicine?”

287. “What experiences have you had in community involvement that demonstrate your commitment to medicine?”

288. "If you see a patient fall and cut an artery and you remember that this is an AIDS patient would you have any reservations in your actions?"

289. "What was the worst day of your life?"

290. "Describe a situation in which you were dependable or demonstrated initiative. One in which you were not as dependable as you would have liked."

291. "So you tell me you write songs ... tell me about any politic themes you've touched upon in your music?"

292. "Choose a close friend or family relative that you will want him to be sitting here now. What good things and bad things will that person say about you."

293. "If you had to create a project that involved the entire class, and everyone had to participate in the project, how would you get your fellow students to participate?"

294. "What excites you about medicine in general?"

295. "As a woman how has your gender impacted your decision to pursue a medical career?"

296. "If you have the choice of giving a transplant to a successful elderly member of the community and a 20-year-old drug addict – how do you choose?"

297. "A member of your family decides to depend solely on alternative medicine for treatment of his or her significant illness. What would you do?"

298. "An eighteen-year-old female arrives in the emergency room with a profound nosebleed. You are the physician assistant, and you have stopped the bleeding. She is now in a coma from blood loss and will die without a transfusion. A nurse finds a recently signed card from Jehovah's Witnesses Church in the patient's purse refusing blood transfusions under any circumstance. What would you do?"

299. "A 14-year-old patient requests birth control pills from you and asks that you not tell her parents. What would you do?"

300. "A patient with Down's Syndrome became pregnant. The patient does not want an abortion. Her mother and husband want the patient to have an abortion. What should a physician assistant do in this situation?"

301. "There is a push currently to change the title from physician assistant to physician associate. Do you agree with this?"

302. "If we contacted your references now, what do you think they would say about you?"

303. "What is your opinion about stem cell research using fetal tissue?"

304. "Have you ever seen somebody die?"

305. "What is the difference between a PA and a nurse practitioner?"

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I will send you the details and we will set up an interview time.

Warmly, Stephen Pasquini PA-C

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