



# ***Rural Expansion: Physician Assistant Education in Southwest Wisconsin***

October 30, 2023

2023 WCMEW Annual Summit

Joel Hill, MPAS, PA-C, UW-Madison Physician Assistant Program



# UW-Madison PA Program Mission

*"...educate primary health care professionals committed to the delivery of comprehensive, preventative and therapeutic health care in a culturally and ethnically sensitive manner, with an emphasis on primary health care for diverse populations and regions in need."*





# UW-Madison PA Program Vision

*"...the program will serve as an academic and professional leader in the physician assistant profession by contributing its strengths in education, scholarship, technology, outreach, and community-based training."*





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## Upholding the Wisconsin Idea...

*"to extend and expand  
the boundaries of the  
UW-Madison campus..."*





# UW-Madison Physician Assistant Program

- Established – 1975
- Distance education option – 2001
- Master’s degree – 2010
  - MPAS
- wisPACT@UW-Marathon County – 2014
- Dual Degree (MPAS/MPH) – 2015
- wisPACT@UW-Platteville – 2023





# Unique Options: 58 Total Students/Class

## Pre-2023 PA Program Cohorts

1

### Main Campus

25 students/cohort  
2-yr in-person  
Full-time  
All lectures/activities  
videocaptured

2

### Distance Education (DE)

16 students/cohort  
3-yr asynchronous  
Part-time  
Videocapture &  
videostreaming  
Traditional DE (tDE)  
Regional DE (rDE)

3

### *wis*PACT@UW- Stevens Point Wausau

12 students/cohort  
2-yr synchronous  
Full-time;  
Videoconferencing &  
videostreaming

4

### MPAS-MPH

5 students/cohort  
33 months, in-person  
Full-time  
All lectures/activities  
videocaptured



# Unique Options: 72 Total Students/Class

## 2023 PA Program Cohorts

1

### Main Campus

25 students/cohort  
2-yr in-person  
Full-time  
All lectures/activities  
videocaptured

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16 students/cohort  
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### MPAS-MPH

5 students/cohort  
33 months, in-person  
Full-time  
All lectures/activities  
videocaptured

5

### *wisPACT@UW-* Platteville

14 students/cohort  
2-yr synchronous  
Full-time  
Full-time;  
Videoconferencing



# Accreditation Review Commission on Education of PA's

- Initially accredited – 1977
- Continuous accreditation
- Expansion in # of students – 2012
- Last Accreditation – 2015
- Expansion in # of students - 2022
- Distant campus accreditation – 2023
- ARC-PA continuous site visit – 2025



**Physician Assistant Program**  
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN  
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH





## What Prompted the Expansion?

- Tri-State Health Care Summit – Fall 2017
  - Health care clinician shortages identified

## Wisconsin's Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas

Select: HPSA Discipline

Primary Care

HPSA Type

Geographic based HPSA

High Needs Geographic based HPSA

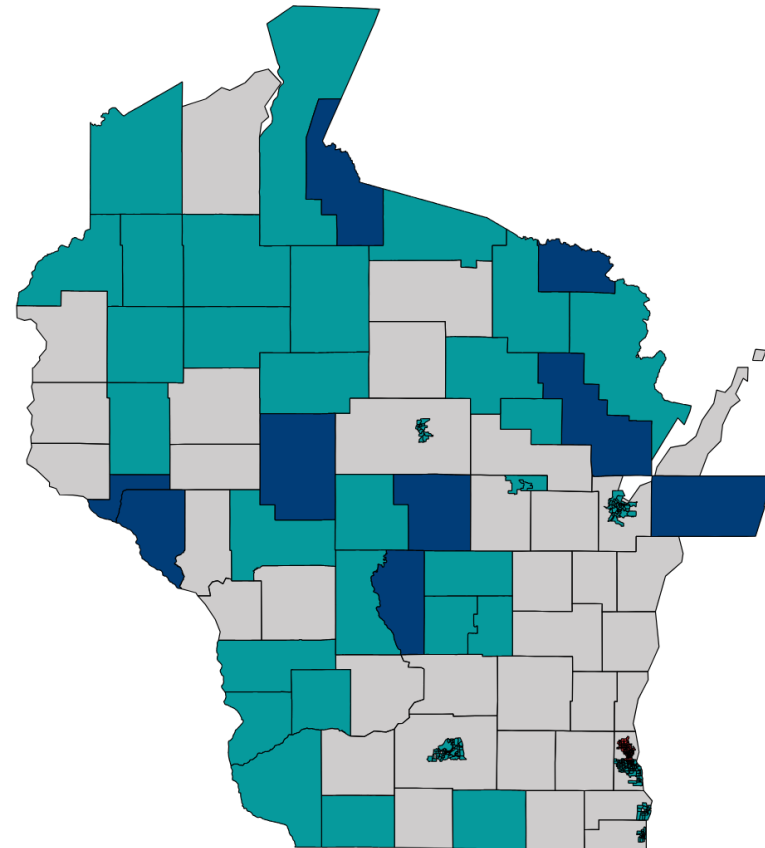
Population based HPSA



### Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs)

HPSA scores based on methodology that includes three disciplines: primary care, dental health, and mental health. Three scoring criteria are common across all HPSA disciplines:

- Population-to-provider ratio
- Percent of population below 100% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL)
- Travel time to the nearest source of care (NSC) outside the HPSA designation area



Data from April 2023



## What Prompted the Expansion?

- Tri-State Health Care Summit – Fall 2017
  - Physician assistant shortages identified
- Apply for accreditation approval for expansion
  - Feasibility study was accomplished



## Current PA Programs

- 2010 – 154 PA Programs
- Currently – 305 PA Programs
  - UW-Madison
  - Marquette
  - Medical College of Wisconsin
  - Concordia University
  - UW-La Crosse
  - University of Dubuque
  - St. Ambrose University
  - University of Iowa
  - Mayo Clinic School of Health Sciences
  - College of St. Scholastica
  - Bethel University
  - St. Catherine University
  - Augsburg University
  - Eight PA Programs in the Chicagoland area





## What Prompted the Expansion?

- Tri-State Health Care Summit – Fall 2017
  - Physician assistant shortages identified
- Apply for accreditation approval for expansion
  - Feasibility study was accomplished
- Partnership formalized between 2017 and 2020
  - UW Systems investment, using “All Agency Funds.”
  - 2.7 million dollar renovation of UWP’s Ullrich Hall







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  - UW Systems investment, using “All Agency Funds.”
  - 2.7 million dollar renovation of UWP’s Ullrich Hall
- We have experience with programmatic expansion...





## Distant Campus/Cohort Experience

### Distance Education Option

- 36-month program
  - 24-month didactic education
  - 12-month clinical education
  - Educate them in their home community, *asynchronously*.
- Started with 1<sup>st</sup> cohort in 2001
- 130 graduates as of May 2023
  - Started with 2 students in 2001
  - Currently admit 16/year

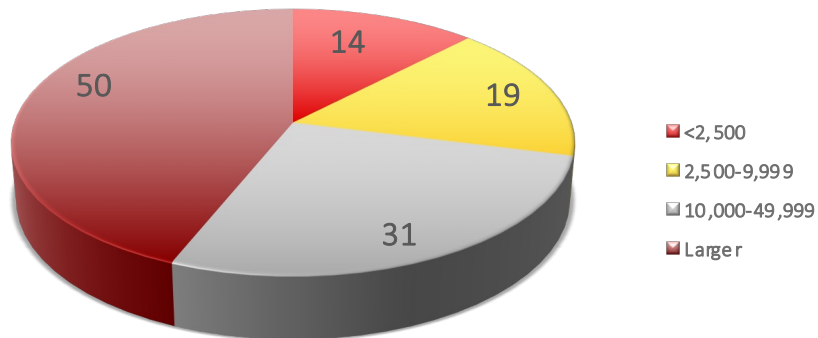




# What Did We Discover?

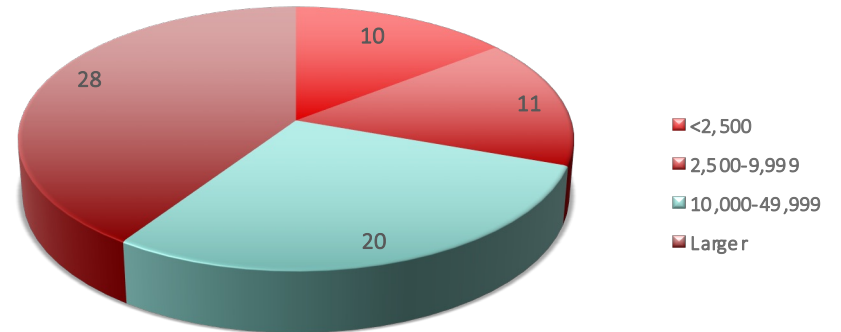
## Select Rural Student

Rural Selection



## Hired Rural Student

Location of 1st PA Job

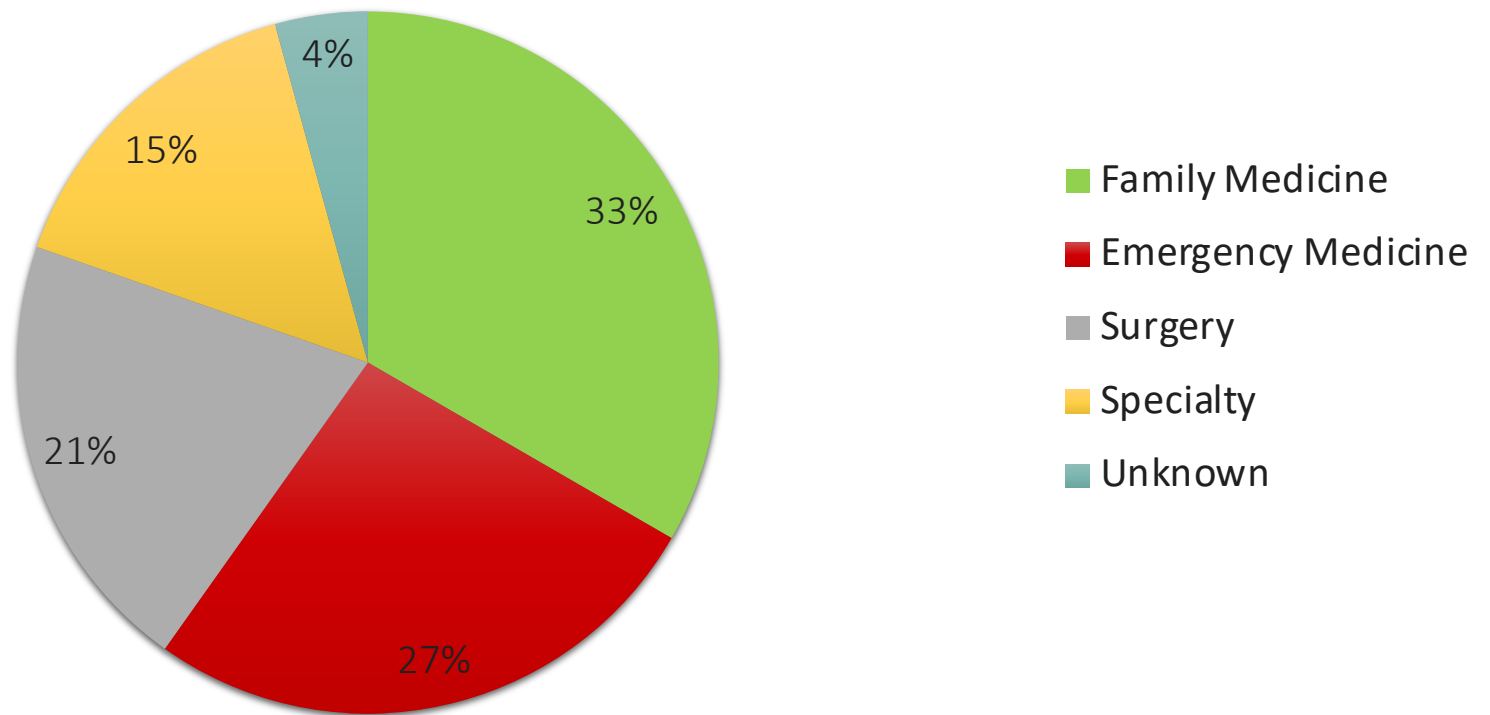




\* Of 130 DE graduates (2021), 94 students did not move from their original home where they were selected for the program, for 1<sup>st</sup> job.



# DE Graduate Placement <sup>as of</sup> 2021



N=117



## Strengths in Educating @ a Distance

- Placement continues to be rural and underserved
- Majority of students remain in home community after grad
  - 117 grads, with 94 remaining in same home for 1<sup>st</sup> job (80%)
- Two distance tracks with strong pull from WI
  - 2016-2021 all DE cohorts: 82 students (68.3% WI, 14.6% MN, 17.1% other states)
- Allows older students and those with families/jobs opportunity to complete their degree



## Distant Campus/Cohort Experience

### wisPACT@UWSP @ Wausau



- 24-month program
  - 12-month didactic education
  - 12-month clinical education
  - Have them complete rotations in Northern Wisconsin
- Started with 1<sup>st</sup> cohort in 2014
- 84 graduates as of May 2023
  - Start with 4 students in 2014
  - Currently admit 12/year



wispACT @UW-Platteville



# PACT @ UW-Platteville

*Wisconsin Physician Assistant Community-based Track*

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# wisPACT@UW-Platteville Planning Team



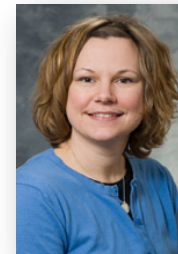
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Wayne Weber, PhD  
Interim Provost & Vice Chancellor for  
Academic Affairs



Rich Dhyanchand, MD  
Chair of Biology



Amanda Ttewin, PhD  
Biology Faculty



## Our Goals... Our Successes...

- 96% first attempt pass rate on the Physician Assistant National Certifying Examination, five-year average
- 98% of program graduates employed at six-months post-graduation
- 67% of students considered *Mission Match*
- 10-year continued accreditation with zero citations
- Program scholarship





## Admissions: Targeted Recruitment

### **Academic Performance**

- Bachelor degree
- Prerequisite courses
- 3.2 Cum and Sci GPA required

### **Health Care Experience**

- Minimum 1000 hrs direct patient experience

### **Letters of Recommendation**

- 3 minimum

### **Assessment of non-Cognitive Skills**

***Mission Match*** candidates are any or all of the following:

- Underrepresented in medicine
- From a Health Profession Shortage Area or medically underserved area/community (HPSA/MUA/C)
- Veterans, currently serving, National Guard, Reserves
- From an economically disadvantaged background
- First generation college students



## The #'s – From Reviewed Application to Admission

	Phase I – Scored n=524	Phase II - Interviewed n=123	Class entering 2023 n=63
Campus	347	38	22
MPH-MPAS	52	8	5
rDE	21	9	5
tDE	40	19	9
wisPACT@UWSP	25	14	12
wisPACT@UWP	39	18	10
2 <sup>nd</sup> Year DE Students			10 + 6 (16)
Total Didactic Year Students			<b>81</b>



## Profile – Classes entering 2022 & 2023

Class entering 2023					
State Residence	Gender	Age	Science GPA	Total GPA	Mission Match
71% WI 16% MN CO, ID, IL, MI, NJ, VT	78% Female 22% Male	26 Range: 21 – 50	3.70 Range: 2.95 – 4.0	3.73 Range: 2.95 – 4.0	UIM: 24% Ed/Econ Dis: 35% HPSA/MUA: 35% Military: 1 active duty <b>Total MM: 65%</b>
Class entering 2022					
State Residence	Gender	Age	Science GPA	Total GPA	Mission Match
73% WI 15% MN AK, FL, IL, MI, MT	73% Female 27% Male	25 Range: 20 – 45	3.58 Range: 2.71 – 3.99	3.63 Range: 2.95 – 3.98	UIM: 22% Ed/Econ Dis: 37% HPSA/MUA: 34% Military: 7% <b>Total MM: 71%</b>



## Unique Opportunity for *wisPACT@UW-Platteville*

- BS Biology w/ Health Science emphasis at UW-Platteville
- Establish early w/ pre-health advisor
- Complete 90 credits of undergraduate coursework in major and general education requirements by end of junior year
- Acceptance into 3+2 program
- Enrichment activities and health care experience (minimum of 500 hrs)
- Apply to UW-Madison PA program in year 3
- Succeed in all aspects of PA admissions process; receive an invitation
- Matriculation in PA program as 4<sup>th</sup> year UW-Platteville student
- New Student Orientation... ***and go!***



# Competency-Based Curriculum












## Didactic Year

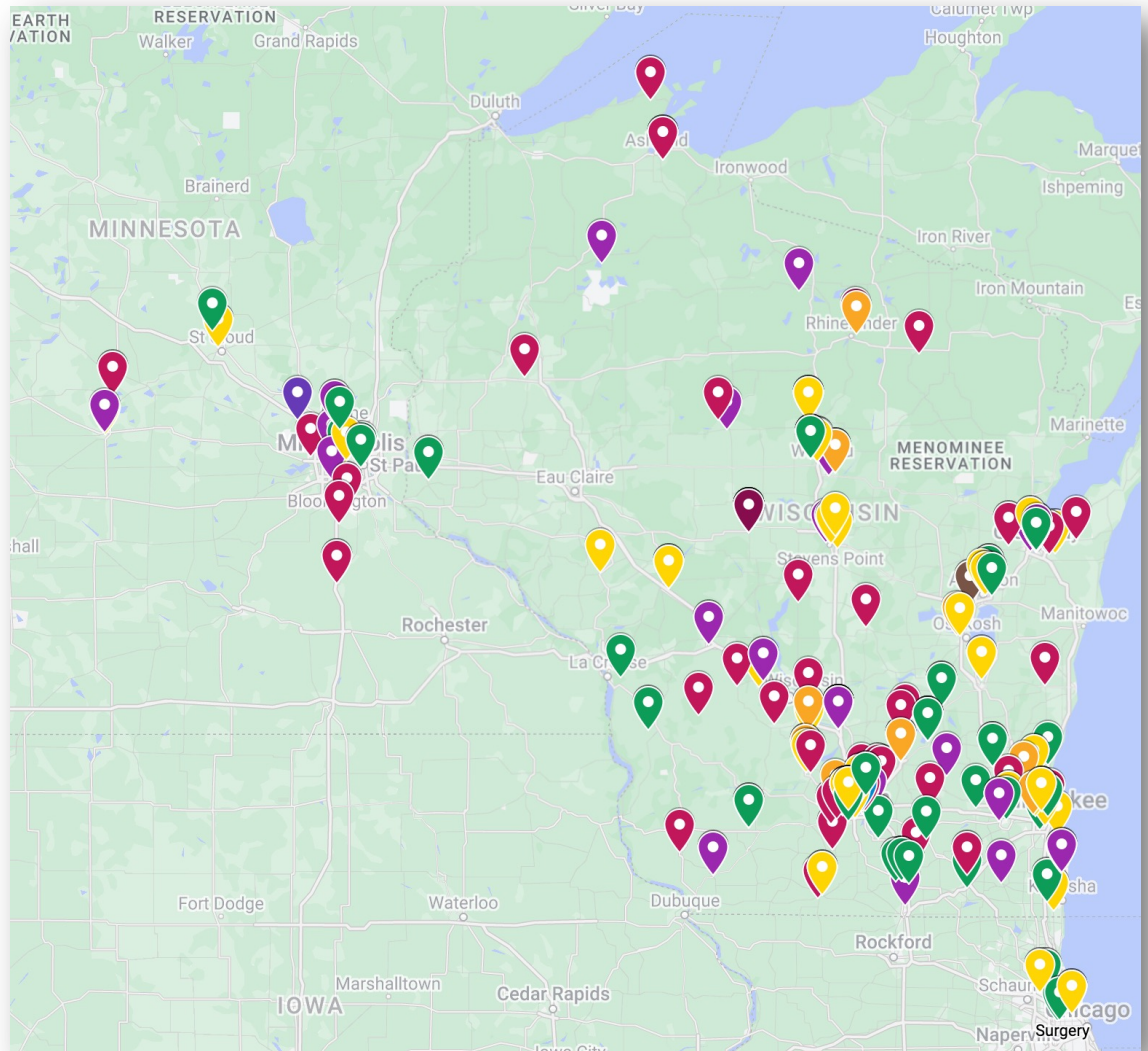
- Lectures, labs, discussions, workshops
- Medical knowledge and clinical skills
- Professionalism
- Evidence-based medicine
- Cultural competence/humility
- Interprofessional opportunities
- Elective opportunities
- International opportunities

## Clinical Year

- Four Core 2-month Rotations:
  - Emergency medicine,
  - Family medicine,
  - Internal medicine
  - Surgery
  - May be split into two 4-week rotations
- One 1-month Elective Rotation
  - Student choice
  - May be split into two 4-week rotations

## 22-23.xlsx

-  Family Medicine (FM)
-  IM
-  Surgery
-  Emergency Medicine
-  OBGYN/Womens Health
-  Behavioral Medicine
-  Dermatology
-  Addiction Medicine
-  Pediatrics
-  Interventional Radiology
-  IM - Transplant

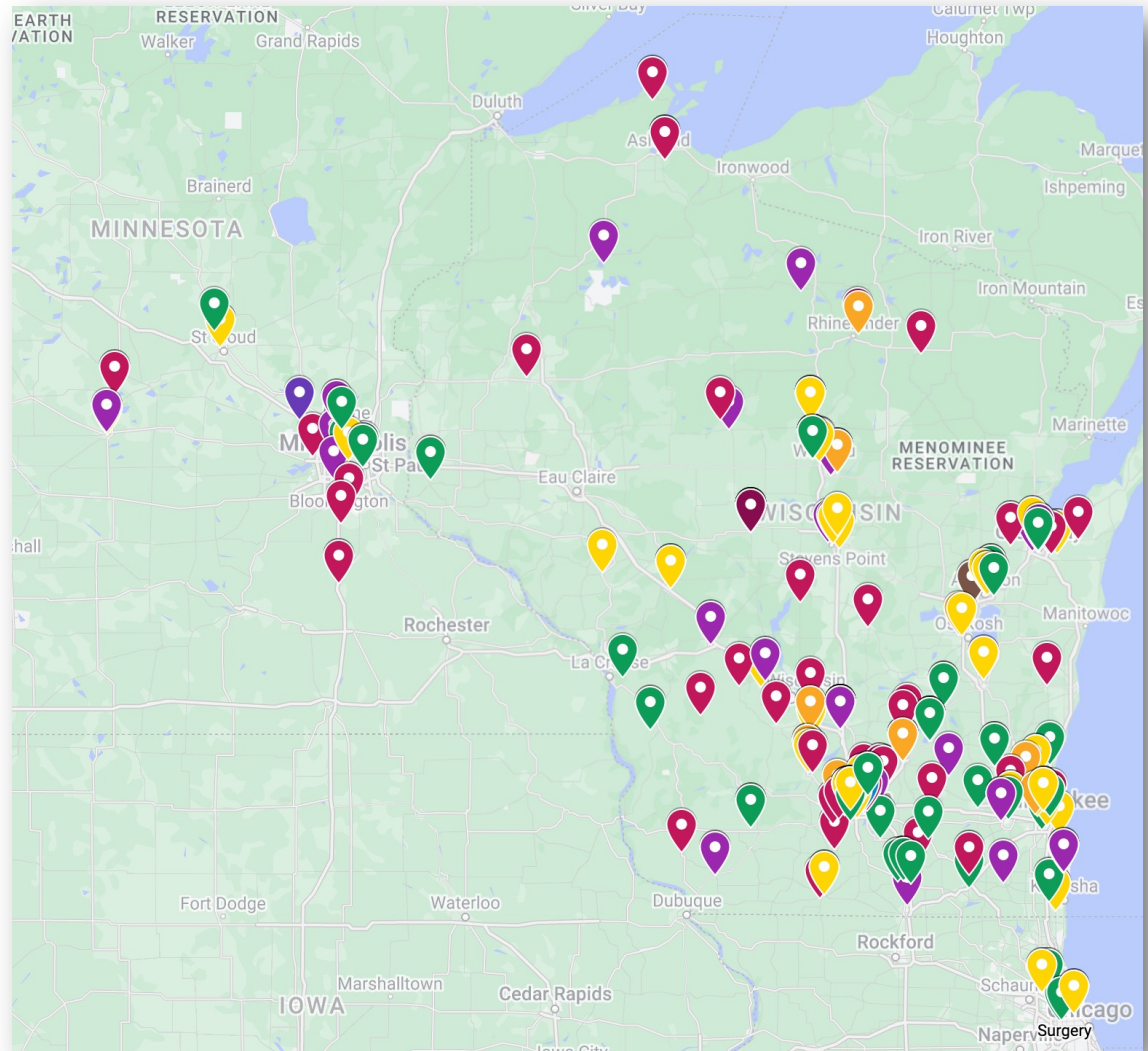


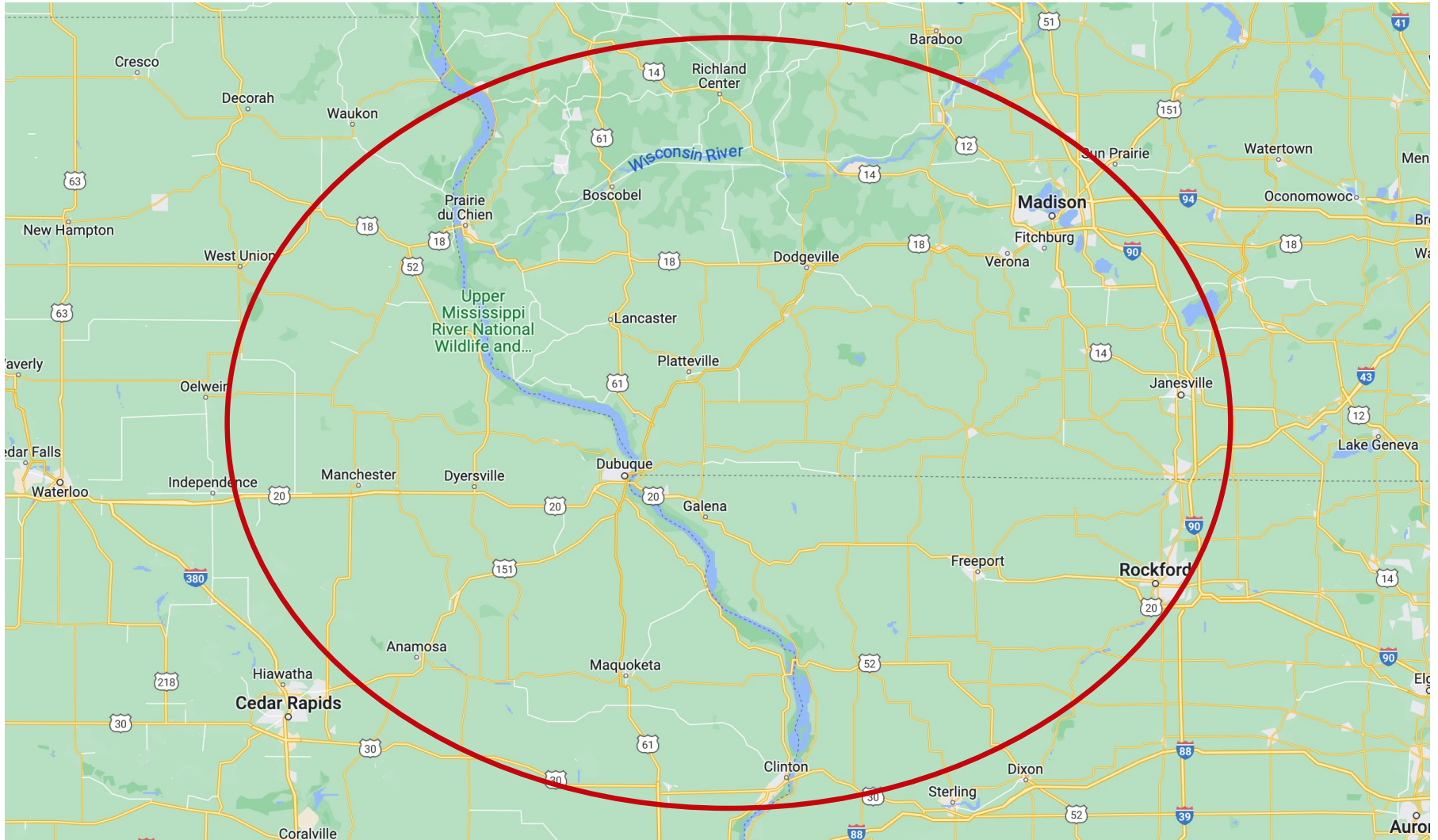




## Community-based Rotations

- In and around WI and beyond
- Based on student cohort
- *wisPACT@UW-PLT* students
  - Within ~100 miles of UW-Platteville
  - Tri-state region







# Accreditation Requirements

## Equivalency/Comparability

- Academic support
- Student services
- Resources
- Faculty/staff support
- Policies & Procedures
- Educational equivalency - course content, student experience, and access to didactic and laboratory materials
- Student evaluation methods

## Outcomes

- Document equivalency of outcomes
- Comparison across campuses/cohorts, explaining any variations
- Benchmarks
- Compare to national data
- Trends
- QI Improvement plans



# PAEA End-of-Rotation Exams

Class of 2023 PAEA End of Rotation Exam Scores

Cohort	Emergency Medicine	Family Medicine	Internal Medicine	Peds	Psych	Surgery	Women's Health	Grand Total
Campus	87	87	86	85	85	87	78	85
Dual	97	94	93	92	85	95	86	92
rDE	87	95	85	77	88	89	82	86
tDE	89	90	87	88	87	87	81	87
wisPACT	86	84	84	84	82	88	81	84
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>86</b>





# PA National Certification Exam (PANCE)

<b>PANCE Pass Rate by Cohort</b>						
	Class of 2022 (54)	Class of 2021 (52)	Class of 2020 (51)	Class of 2019 (54)	Class of 2018 (46)	Class of 2017 (45)
<b>wisPACT</b>	91%	92%	92%	100%	100%	100%
<b>Distance Educatio</b>	100%	85%	100%	100%	86%	100%
<b>Campus</b>	93%	100%	100%	94%	100%	100%
<b>MPH</b>	75%	80%	100%	100%	-	-
<b>All</b>	<b>93%</b>	<b>92%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>96%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>100%</b>



# How are the Platteville Students Doing?

## 550 Cohort Grade Breakdowns



Cohort	Campus+MPH (n=26)	WP@W (n=11)	Distance Education (n=16)	WP@Platt (n=10)
A	22	9	11	6
AB	4	1	3	2
B	0	1	2	2
BC	0	0	0	0
C	0	0	0	0
F	0	0	0	0
Average	94.3%	93.1%	93.1%	91.4%
Remediations	0	0	0	1



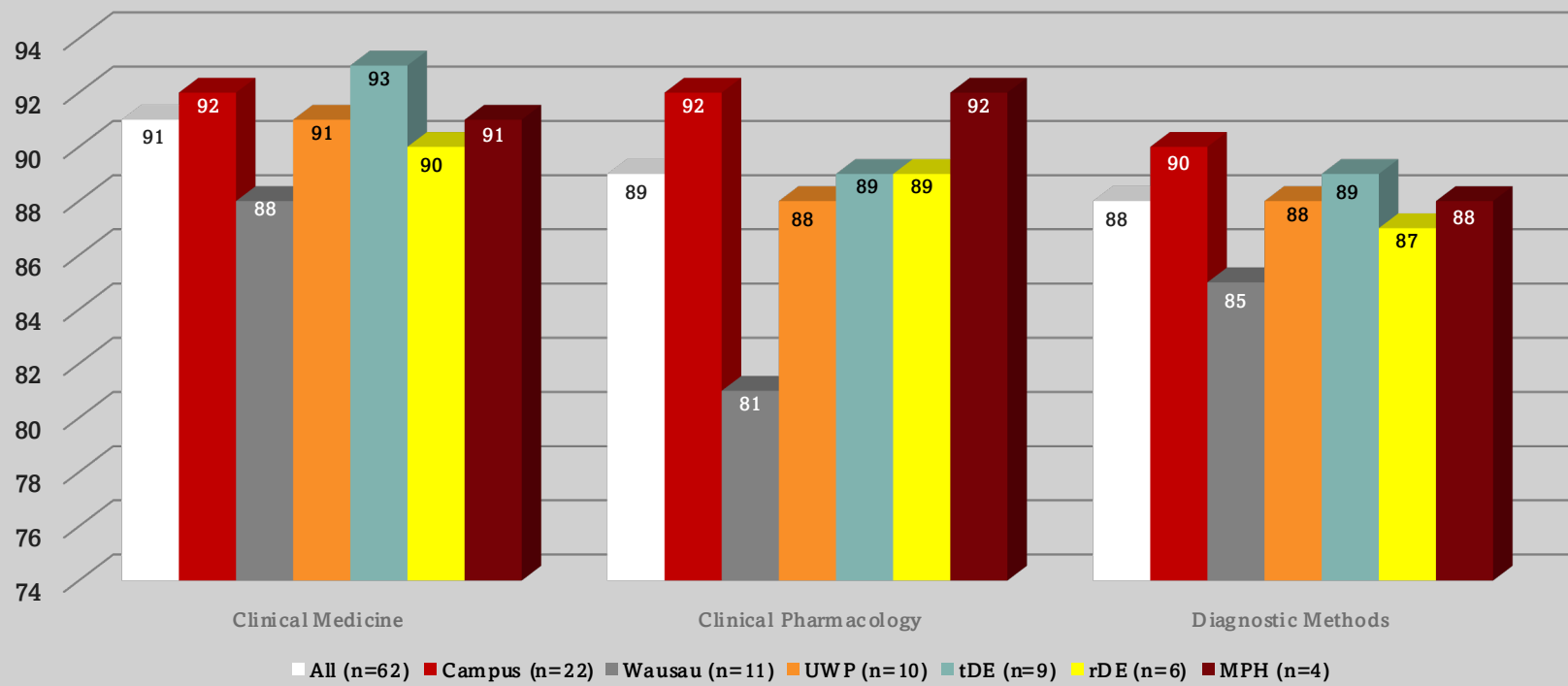
## How are the Platteville Students Doing?

<input type="checkbox"/> Anatomy	Madison Campus	90
	MPH	85
	Platteville Campus	89
	rDE (Class of 2026)	88
	tDE (Class of 2026)	89
	Wausau Campus	87
<b>Anatomy Total</b>		<b>89</b>



# How are the Platteville Students Doing this Fall?

Early Fall Semester 2023 Cohort Comparison







# Please Share Info About *Wis*pact@UW-Platteville





- For more information:
- <https://www.med.wisc.edu/education/physician-assistant-pa-program/>
- <https://www.uwplatt.edu/uw-madison-physician-assistant-program-uw-platteville>



*Thank  
you!*

