

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:

Department Faculty and Chairs



What is PSMCAS?

PSMCAS is a centralized application service supported by the Professional Science Master's (PSM) National Office and Liaison. It simplifies both the application process to master's-level science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programs for students, and the review and admission processes for programs. Programs can review and evaluate applicants online, in real-time, and can manage communications with applicants through PSMCAS, informing them of interview status and requesting supplemental materials. PSMCAS allows generation of automated reports, based upon each program's unique review criteria (such as overall GPA, last two years' GPA, test scores, interview rankings, and so on).

What programs are eligible to participate in PSMCAS?

Programs participating in PSMCAS must offer master's degrees in STEM disciplines, housed within a regionally accredited institution and has been approved as a PSM program by the PSM National Office.

How does PSMCAS benefit students?

- Streamlines the application process and reduces duplicative efforts by providing a standardized, online interface that allows students to apply to multiple programs
- Requires students to request official transcripts only once for all programs participating in PSMCAS, offering them time savings and convenience
- Tracks program-specific admission requirements and information requests in one online location, offering students real-time status updates on all application materials
- Includes dedicated customer service for all PSMCAS inquiries about the application and the application process
- Tracks and records all communications sent by programs to applicants, reducing the likelihood of lost communications

How does PSMCAS benefit faculty and programs?

- Streamlines workflows to free up time for improving relationships with prospective students
- Gives programs the ability to configure a uniquely branded home page inside the PSMCAS application, which includes custom questions, prerequisites, and documents specific to each program
- Permits programs to maintain unique review processes with tools for coordinating the reviews and applicant interviews
- Enables targeted messaging to applicants through innovative customer relationship management (CRM) tools
- Includes an evaluator portal for uploading individualized recommendation letters or using the PSMCAS recommender form
- Provides secure, online access to real-time, rich applicant data—including GPAs, test scores, demographic information, and other academic criteria—with reports that can be provided to deans and provosts, as well as accrediting and regulatory bodies
- Offers exposure to a broader, national spectrum of applicants in order to attract and retain best-fit students

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How does PSMCAS benefit admissions committees and administration?

- Allows for efficient ranking and scoring of applicants based on customizable criteria
- Includes robust data analytics and customizable queries and reporting for better admissions decisions
- Offers integrated services to free faculty and staff from resource-intensive administrative tasks: verifying applicant-entered coursework against official transcripts, calculating GPAs, authenticating transcripts, opening mail, digitizing documents, and answering applicant questions
- Supports integration to most student information systems, including Banner, Datatel, PeopleSoft, and Jazz
- Enables identification of comparable programs and the ability to benchmark against them through aggregate reports compiled by PSM

How much does it cost?

Programs pay nothing to participate in PSMCAS. Students create an account and pay \$125 to receive one application designation. Each additional application designation costs \$65.

How is PSMCAS different from the process we have now?

Participating programs gain access to a suite of powerful analytics and communication tools through PSMCAS. Throughout the application process, you can use PSMCAS to identify specific groups of prospective students and to send tailored emails to invite selected applicants to interview, congratulate them for moving to the next step in the application process, and so on. In contrast to traditional workflows, PSMCAS contains all test scores, transcripts, recommendation letters, and supplemental materials securely within the online platform. Customized settings ensure that only those individuals involved in the review process have access to the relevant information at the appropriate phase in your workflow.

Can we keep our own review process?

Yes, the flexibility of PSMCAS allows individual programs or institutions to maintain their unique review process within the online, paperless platform. Common information from students is collected in a root application, and each participating program has a unique web page within PSMCAS where applicants can submit any additional information requested by that particular program. Programs will only see the root application and their own additional information when reviewing an applicant's materials.

Is it possible for our program to accept applications outside of PSMCAS?

A program may elect to use PSMCAS for as many of its graduate programs as it chooses, and all applications to those programs must be submitted through PSMCAS. As one of the benefits of participation, students who may not otherwise be aware of your program may find your program when searching for programs by degree type, state, and other criteria. Other programs that have been utilizing CAS products for other professions and disciplines (such as nursing, pharmacy, occupational therapy, and so on) have noted increases to applicant pools once they were enrolled in the program. Thus, it is to your advantage to direct all of your program's applications through PSMCAS in order to reach a broader spectrum of applicants.

Why is PSM advocating for a centralized graduate study application process?

PSMCAS is a service for students and programs with the added benefits of providing data to the discipline and public about the nascent workforce.

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Will the application cost be prohibitive to students?

PSM staff and members of an advisory panel of faculty, deans, and students are currently developing a mechanism to ensure affordability for prospective PSMCAS users.

Our institution does not have any PSM-accredited programs. Are we able to participate in PSMCAS?

No, your programs must meet the eligibility criteria described above. PSMCAS is designed for graduate programs in STEM disciplines that meet all Guidelines for Affiliation as a PSM. If a new PSM program is in development and is working with the PSM National Office to complete the Affiliation application materials, they are eligible to participate in PSMCAS.

Will I still be able to download complete applications from prospective students?

Yes. PSMCAS permits downloads of complete student applications in PDF format. This is an option for programs that wish to save documents for internal workflow needs or institutional requirements.

Does PSMCAS help faculty and students with submitting recommendation letters?

PSMCAS participating programs will have the option to accept a common recommendation form for faculty to evaluate a prospective student's potential for graduate study. Students need to request that their evaluators complete the common recommendation form only once and upload it to PSMCAS. Since the PSMCAS portal is shared across the other CAS platforms, a faculty member can utilize one set of login/password credentials to submit recommendations through the portal to any CAS. Because the common form is viewable to all of a student's applications, faculty members need to upload this form only one time. Programs also have the flexibility to request additional recommendations tailored to their specific requirements or expectations.

How do data from PSMCAS integrate with my school's current student information system?

PSMCAS provides simple-to-configure data exports that can be configured for efficient uploading to most student information systems (SIS). The most common systems used by CAS schools include Banner, Datatel, PeopleSoft, and Jenzabar, among others. Additionally, PSMCAS offers an Export Manager application program interface (API) that allows technically-savvy users of WebAdMIT (the back-end management portal) to automate the retrieval of data from WebAdMIT for integration into other on-campus systems.

CONTACT US

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