

## Certified Anesthesiologist Assistant (CAA)

<p><b>What do CAAs do?</b></p>	<p>Certified Anesthesiologist Assistants (CAAs) are highly skilled health professionals who work under the direction of licensed anesthesiologists to implement anesthesia care plans. CAAs work exclusively within the anesthesia care team environment. CAAs are trained extensively in the delivery and maintenance of quality anesthesia care, as well as advanced patient monitoring techniques.</p> <p>CAAs cannot practice in all states. The American Society of Anesthesiologists provides a list of states where CAAs have practice rights on <a href="#">this webpage</a>.</p> <p>Note: Both CAAs and CRNAs (certified registered nurse anesthetists) are defined as "non-physician anesthetists." Although they have nearly identical responsibilities in the workplace, their education and training pathways are quite different.</p> <p><i>Definition courtesy of the American Academy of Anesthesiologist Assistants</i></p>
<p><b>Length of Professional Training</b></p>	<p>To become a CAA, you must complete a master’s level training program, which typically takes 24-28 months to complete.</p>
<p><b>List of Schools</b></p>	<p>The Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs maintains a list of accredited CAA programs on <a href="#">this webpage</a>. Use the “Profession” option to select for Anesthesiologist Assistant programs.</p>
<p><b>GPA</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mean Cumulative Undergraduate GPA of accepted students nationwide: 3.5</li> <li>• Mean <a href="#">CASAA Science GPA</a> of accepted students nationwide: 3.5</li> </ul> <p>If your cumulative and/or science GPAs are currently below the means for accepted students, you can still become a competitive applicant if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your cumulative undergraduate GPA and CASAA science GPA calculations are both above 3.0, and</li> <li>• Each of your term GPAs <i>for the three consecutive terms leading up to the time of application</i> are at or above 3.5.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Clinical Experience</b></p>	<p><b>Shadowing</b></p> <p>It is common for CAA programs to require a minimum of hours spent shadowing an anesthesia provider (either a CAA or an anesthesiologist) throughout the day in an operating room setting. We recommend spending one day each with three anesthesia providers.</p> <p><b>Direct Patient Interaction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most successful applicants have spent at least six months working or volunteering in a direct patient interaction role for 4+ hours per week by the time they submit their CASAA application. Look for a role that will allow you to provide hands-on care to conscious patients in either a medical clinic or hospital. Your objectives are to become comfortable around sick and injured patients, to gain greater understanding of the health care system, and to develop your communication skills in a clinical setting.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Admissions Tests</b></p>	<p><b>Subject-Based Tests</b>  Most CAA programs require either the GRE or MCAT. Each school sets its own “expiration date” on test scores, typically either 3 years or 5 years after the test date.</p> <p><b>GRE Topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Verbal Reasoning</li> <li>• Quantitative Reasoning</li> <li>• Analytical Writing</li> </ul> <p>Generally, a score at or above the 55<sup>th</sup> percentile is considered competitive. Successful GRE test-takers typically devote a total of about 150 hours to GRE prep.</p> <p><b>MCAT Topics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Chemistry 1 and 2</li> <li>• Organic Chemistry 1</li> <li>• Biochemistry</li> <li>• Biology 1 (MCDB 1150 or EBIO 1210)</li> <li>• Genetics (MCDB 2150 or EBIO 2070)</li> <li>• Human Physiology</li> <li>• Physics 1 and 2</li> <li>• Statistics</li> </ul> <p>Generally, a score at or above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile on each section is considered competitive. On average, successful MCAT test-takers devote a total of 300+ hours to MCAT prep after completing all of the relevant coursework.</p> <p><b>Situational Judgment Test</b>  Several CAA programs require the Casper Situational Judgment Test. We provide guidance on how to prepare for Casper on <a href="#">this page of our website</a>. Plan to spend 6-8 hours preparing for Casper.</p>
<p><b>Common Application</b></p>	<p>The Central Application Service for Anesthesiologist Assistants (CASAA)</p>
<p><b>Application Fee Assistance</b></p>	<p>CASAA offers a Fee Assistance Program that is granted to applicants on a first-come, first-served basis. Details are posted on the <a href="#">CASAA website</a>.</p> <p>If you will be taking the MCAT, you also may apply for <a href="#">AAMC’s Fee Assistance Program</a>, which offers the following benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduced MCAT registration fee</li> <li>• Complimentary set of MCAT preparation books and practice exams</li> <li>• Up to \$1,000 toward an updated psycho-educational or medical evaluation if you are applying for MCAT accommodations and an updated evaluation is required</li> </ul> <p>The AAMC Fee Assistance Program opens in mid-January each year. Awards are limited, so we recommend applying early if you think you may qualify.</p> <p>The GRE also offers a <a href="#">Fee Reduction program</a>, which also provides free access to GRE prep materials.</p>

<p><b>Timing of Application</b></p>	<p>Application season varies significantly from school to school. For this reason, it is strategic to identify your schools of interest early on so that you can create a spreadsheet listing the opening date, closing date, and start of interviews at each of your schools. Since many CAA programs conduct their admissions processes on a rolling basis, early applicants gain an advantage in the application process.</p> <p>Aim to have your entire application file complete (CASAA application with supplement materials, MCAT score report, and letters of recommendation) by the time your top-choice schools begin their interview process.</p> <p>If you are interested in the CAA program at CU’s Anschutz campus, we recommend the following application timeline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• By mid-April: take the MCAT or GRE</li> <li>• By the end of April: take Casper</li> <li>• By the end of May: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Ensure all letters of recommendation have been submitted to CASAA</li> <li>○ Submit CASAA</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Letters of Recommendation</b></p>	<p>Each CAA program sets its own guidelines regarding letters of evaluation, but the following assortment meets the requirements at many schools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent/current faculty member who can comment upon your intellectual engagement as a student. In most cases, it is advised to select an instructor from a biology, chemistry, or physics course.</li> <li>• Clinician who has observed your work with patients in a clinical setting.</li> <li>• Supervisor from a long-term job or volunteer position. (If you have been working full-time, this should be from your employer.)</li> </ul>