

Welcome PA26

Take a deep breath. You made it into PA school. At OHSU. And we couldn't be prouder of each and every one of you. OHSU is a wonderful place to be and you will love it as your second home. PA school is hard, but with the support of the faculty and your classmates, you will be able to get through it. We know because we are in the middle of it! This document is long, we wanted to walk you through your transition to becoming a PA student in Portland, but don't feel as though you must get through all of this in one sitting! We wanted to include the things they may not include in your orientation, or things you may want to know before you get here.

All our love and support, PA25



The City

Portland is made up of four quadrants. The east and west are separated by the Willamette (“wuh - LAMM - it”) and the north and south are divided by Burnside Avenue. You will take the majority of your classes at The Robertson Life Sciences Building (aka RLSB) which is located on the South Waterfront.

Fun facts: you can’t make a U-turn unless there is a sign saying you can, it rains a lot but we still get sun, there is no sales tax, and we take our coffee, recycling, beer, and wine **very** seriously.

hospital & school: southwest

airport: northeast

Other side of the tilikum pedestrian bridge: southeast

Where to live:

How to find a place.

1. OHSU has a website with different living options (listed on the Office of International Affairs→ Learning and Resources Tab Getting Settled) <https://www.ohsu.edu/international-affairs/getting-settled>

One is called “**Chuckslist**” which is like Craigslist within the OHSU system. A lot of the buildings on the Waterfront post on these sites. Rent is high down on the South Waterfront but the location is convenient.

→ Additionally if you look on the O2 site for the whole university (o2.ohsu.edu), there is a list of things you can get discounted because of your association with the university, and some housing in Portland does offer deals on security deposits and such to OHSU students. Definitely check this out, especially if you are planning on living in the South Waterfront (described below). More on this below. You’ll get access to this when you get your log in.

2. **Facebook** has interest groups ranging from shared activities to religious preferences. Some are active and always have new postings. Most of the groups are either students or young professionals looking for roommates.

3. **Craigslist** - 1 student: "I put an ad on craigslist asking for people who might have a basement apartment, RV, extra bedroom, etc. I got about 12 replies. One was a bit weird but the rest were good offers. My husband and I came up to Portland one weekend and met with people and checked out their housing options. I ended up living in a basement apartment of a nurse and it has been a great situation." 2nd student: "I live in the SE in a house converted to a 2 apartment duplex! Found it on Craigslist and couldn't be happier, from where I am it's about 15 minutes bike to campus and it is all on bike streets "

4. **Marquam Hill Co-Op** <https://www.marquamhillcoop.org/> Is a cost efficient way to live with various other students within the academic community. You pay as little as 250.00 a month and get to connect with other people who are new/familiar with the Portland community! When applying, they ask that you provide unique and interesting answers to application questions to show that you can contribute to the community co-op. This is located on the hill, which is a convenient commute to the south waterfront where class is usually held. You would have to check about animals.

5. **College Housing Northwest** <https://chnw.org/> Non-profit college housing for students in Portland. There are apartments in Goose Hollow neighborhood and some downtown. Subsidized living and a brief (20~ min) commute to RLSB via streetcar. They allow cats, but only allow service dogs.

6. **Workforce Housing** <https://www.portlandmaine.gov/2367/Workforce-Housing-Units> There are several units for a low cost to those who have low income or simply do not have an income, students included. Call to find out more but know this exists!

7. **Zillow** - If you're moving with a family or need more space and interested in renting a home, it's a great place to find homes for rent. At least 1 student from PA25 found their housing here.

8. **Check in with us**, your buddies! In regard to housing, we are either giving up our places in Portland or looking to add some roommates to keep things cheap since we won't be around much next year. My major tip would be to consider transportation. In the winter things *get wet* around here. If you are a dedicated biker/walker that is great, but if you want to have options like the Max or bus then really research what lines are near you and how frequently they come.

* Recommended by many in our class, if you have the opportunity, plan a trip to Portland prior to the start of term to check out these places. It will help you feel out the area and really see the apartment size and surroundings which may look different online. The program has a *Come to Campus Day* to see the school, and may be a great time to as well check out some apartments.

SW

If you want to live close to school, yet still feel like you're in a neighborhood, this is the spot! Full of lovely old Victorian homes, many of which have been converted into apartments. It is a quiet and safe place to call home and many students/residents/medical professionals live in this area. It is an easy 15-minute walk across the pedestrian bridge to get to the Waterfront, where you have access to public transit and tram. Another very convenient neighborhood is Homestead, located on Marquam Hill near OHSU hospital. You can ride the tram down to school every day and as a bonus, you can access running trails from this area that are all around Marquam Hill! Grocery stores are about a 15-minute drive from this area. This is a great area to live if you don't want to be living in a high-rise along the Waterfront, yet want easy access to the RLSB and tram! Other neighborhoods in this part of the city that students live in are Hillsdale and John's Landing.

NW

Northwest Portland is a wonderful area to live and explore. It is a very lively and densely populated retail and residential neighborhood. The most well-known area is NW 23rd also known as "Trendy-third Avenue" Portland trendiest shopping and dining. 23rd is the place to go if you want to walk, people-watch and browse through shops. NW 21st is great too, just a bit edgier. Other attractions in NW district are Providence Park (home of the Portland Timbers major league soccer team), the Rose Gardens, Pittock Mansion, Japanese Gardens, and much more! You may also hear of this area referred to as Nob Hill, Alphabet District, or Goose Hollow. It is located right next to the Pearl District, another very fun and trendy area to explore. It also sits at the base of Forest Park and the West Hills of Portland (perfect for the hiking & trail running enthusiasts). NW Portland has easy access to ALL modes of public transportation (Street Car, Max, Bus, Nike Bike Rentals) all taking you directly to the South Waterfront and RLSB. A car is not necessary if you live in this area. Everything is walkable! Rent is a little on the pricey side over here, but sometimes you can get a smoking deal on a studio or one bedroom. This area is a great option for someone that wants to live in a lively and fun area. Coffee shops are numerous and perfect for studying because many stay open late.

SE

Vibe: Southeast is very funky. It is a hip, up-and coming place for young people. In the last 5 years the neighborhood has changed a lot and undergone major gentrification. Because of this, it has a really cool mix of old homes and new ones, funky artists hovels and sleek LEED certified houses. There is a nice mixture of industry, retail, food service and housing as well. The neighborhoods are safe, tree-lined, and in the Spring, quite floral. SE is huge and itself contains many neighborhoods like Richmond, Clinton, Foster-Powell, Montavilla, Reed, North & South Tabor, Buckman, Brooklyn, Laurelhurst, and many more. It extends from the inner SE bordering the Willamette River, which is more crowded, more bustling, closer to campus and has more restaurants / bars / shops, all the way out to 82nd Ave / I-205. The farther out you go, the quieter & more residential it gets.

Housing: Rent can be cheaper than on the West side. You'll have to keep your eye peeled for a place if you want to live here because there is increasing demand. Pricing is highly dependent on the specific neighborhood, with the areas closer toward the river tending to be more expensive than those farther out. There are many single family homes with backyards, so this could be a good option if you plan to move with a dog that needs some space to run. There are also lots of parks in SE to take advantage of the summer months.

Transportation: Because of the Tilikum Crossing Bridge, walking, biking and taking public transportation to school is a breeze. There is a MAX line that runs directly along the border of SE and will drop you off at the front door of school. Several bus lines also cross the river. Parking is easy to find, and there are many grocery stores in the area.

Fun: "One of the best parts about living on the East side is that I can leave school, and actually leave it. Nothing about my neighborhood reminds me of class. It is quiet, green, and feels homey." Division is a really fun street full of food, and shopping, and when the weather is nice, it's full of beautiful people. Hawthorne is yet another popular and trendy street with various food pods/restaurants, and bars. In SE are never more than a few blocks from coffee or beer. On weekends, the area is good for running.

Southeast is good for you if: you enjoy a little eccentricity, you like to walk/bike/take transit, you like home life and school life separate, you like to eat out.

Southeast is less fitting if: You prefer to drive to school, you're bothered by the occasional odd Portlander riding by on a

unicycle shouting.

South Waterfront

There are many benefits to living in the South Waterfront area. The biggest benefit is being so close to the RLSB! It is really nice to spend less time commuting and more time studying. It also works really well when you have a pet. I was able to come home at lunch and take my dog out, which was really helpful on long days when I knew I would be staying after class to study. Another benefit to living on the South Waterfront is being close to multiple streetcar stops! With your student ID, you can ride the streetcar for free into downtown and over to the East Side. Also, if you like to run or bike around town, you have easy access to the Waterfront bike/walk paths along each side of the river from here.

There are some downsides to living on the South Waterfront. First, the cost of living is high here. Like many places in Portland, you will pay way too much for a small apartment. You also have to pay for parking with most apartment complexes. The monthly parking charge can be anywhere from \$100-200/month, depending on where you live. Another disadvantage is that it is far from a grocery store; there's not a lot happening here besides OHSU campus. Need groceries? You'll have to leave the South Waterfront to get to a grocery store and that's not easy to do unless you drive or take the streetcar. Want to eat somewhere new? You'll need to walk, bike, drive or take the streetcar to try out a new restaurant. If you enjoy the convenience of having a grocery store within walking distance, this may not be the right place for you. Despite the disadvantages, it can be worthwhile living so close to the RLSB if your priority is a short commute. Living here you will enjoy having the convenience of walking to school ten minutes before class starts. If you have a pet this is a great location as you can come home during lunch to let them out and most of all you will spend the least amount of time commuting.

Also, keep in mind that while we have some classes up "on the hill", a large majority of didactic year is spent at the RLSB, so some of the housing up there will be less convenient.

PS: this area is a quickly growing neighborhood of professionals. There are frequently new restaurants and shops opening.

NE

NE is great! It's not as expensive as a lot of other areas, and you get to escape school a bit when you go home. Alberta Street & Mississippi Street is quirky and fun and has lots of excellent food and drinks (but you will find that almost anywhere in Portland). Most of our classmates that live in NE bike to school, it is very bike-friendly and there is a path along the river from the Moda Center all the way to school.

Overall, if you are looking to be just reasonably close to school but not right next door, and you want to still be in the city but pay a little less, NE is a great place to live

The Burbs/Other

Living in the burbs has the potential to save you a significant amount of money but it is also further away from school. If you are going to live in the Burbs (Multnomah Village, Beaverton, Hillsboro, etc) you will need to be able to get to a MAX or bus line. You can use the TriMet website/app to find out how long your commute would be and I would suggest doing this before signing a lease. Your commute on public transit can be an excellent use of scheduled study time and has worked really well for some of us. The great part is that you avoid traffic and can ensure that you get to class on time as the transit is very reliable. If you need to park for 2 hours, there is free street parking near campus or paid hourly street parking for up to 4 hours. Otherwise, it costs \$12/day to valet park in the Schnitzer lot right next to school. You may be able to get a parking pass for the area that would allow you to park all day for a cost if you know someone living in the South Waterfront Zone who is willing to get this for you.

Many of us that live in the burbs live in houses with our spouses/significant others/families, others that live in the burbs do so to save money or lived there prior to starting PA school. Please reach out to us if you have any questions about living in this area! Side note, a handful of us also live in Vancouver, WA. If you're interested in this area, reach out and we can connect you with someone to talk more about it!

PA25 Student: "I commute daily from Hillsboro. PRO: Cheaper rent, larger living space, commute via trimet (pass is \$50/year). CON: 1 hour commute time, delays on train, lower incentive to come to campus for optional events."

Places previous students have lived:

South Waterfront
<p>The Emery- 5min walk The Matisse- 10 min walk or 5 min streetcar The Douglas- 7 min walk or 5 min streetcar The Olivia - 10 min walk or 5 min streetcar Griffis South Waterfront - 10 min walk or 5 min streetcar ELLA - 10 min walk or 5 min streetcar Osprey - 10 min walk or 5 min streetcar</p>
SW
<p>The Linc- 5min MAX or bus Oxbow49 - 15min bus University Pointe - 7min MAX Shadow Hills- 25min bus</p>
SE
<p>Pine Tree Apartments - 10min bike Goat Blocks - 8min walk + 15min street car</p>
NW
<p>Block 17 - 25min streetcar The Parker - 25min streetcar Envy - 25min streetcar Waterline - 15min walk + 3tram ride</p>

Orientation/ General

What to expect the first two days.

“The first two days of school will be orientation. You will get your badge and your locker on the first day. Everything is well organized and the program will tell you everything you need to do/bring, but it is still thoroughly overwhelming. Just jot down the important stuff like your locker combination and the door code in your phone, and soak in the rest. Take this time to have fun meeting your classmates!” – This was the case for PA21, PA23, PA24 and us (PA22 was virtual). In addition, throughout the week there will be many resources presented. It may feel overwhelming at first, but take flyers, bookmark their website, and come back to it later. You may want to reach out to them early or may need them down the road.

What is Sakai?

Sakai will be your academic hub for all of your courses. It is where all of your readings, assignments, and directions will be for each class, so it is a good website to bookmark. Once you log in with your OHSU ID and password, you will see your different courses on the top. You can adjust the courses included on the top of your screen and how they are named by clicking “Sites” and “Preferences.” Each course director organizes their Sakai page differently, but you will get the hang of it. Just know it is where everything is posted about your courses.

What is OHSU SIS?

OHSU SIS (Student Information Services) is the OHSU ban web aka the place you look at your billing account, your official grades and your emergency contact information. In undergrad, it was probably the website you used to register for classes, but thankfully the days of fighting over the best courses are over – it’s a seamless process and they’ll provide you with everything that you need to get registered. If you need to pay a bill/get a summary of charges or want to know your final grades, they are listed here.

What is O2?

O2 is OHSU's employee and education human resources hub. It is where inclement weather statuses are posted, Compass trainings, and where you can look at current student discounts. Besides where "Compass trainings" can be found (these are the online orientation trainings you do at the start of school for harassment, certain OHSU-wide policy, etc.), you don't really use this except to look at discounts. To see student discounts, go to the O2 home page and scroll down to the very bottom and click "discounts." The discounts get range but we often get access to the Adidas employee store (50% off retail prices) and the Columbia Employee Store (same deal), so keep an eye out for those. You'll get access to O2 when you get your school log in.

What is Outlook?

Outlook is your OHSU email (ohsu.edu/mail). This will be your primary source of correspondence with the program and each other, so bookmark it on your phone (see IT Questions below). Emails will automatically be archived after 60 days. You will still have access to them, but if you notice emails disappearing, go to archive.ohsu.edu and you can access all of your old emails.

Outlook is also where your personal school calendar and the class calendar/schedule is listed. On the bottom left of the Outlook page, click "Calendar." This will take you to your personal OHSU calendar, which you can sync with your phone. To access your class schedule, you will need to add the "PA Master" calendar to your "People's Calendar's" section.

IT Questions?

You will have a lot of these questions, especially in the first couple weeks. Almost every answer is on the "IT Resources for Current Students" page - simply Google OHSU IT Resources for Current Students, and it will take you there! This will guide you on how to set up your email on your phone/tablet, how to set up the wifi, etc. Bookmark this page - it's a good one.

Student Loans?

Student loans are unfortunately a reality most of us have to face during PA school. Everyone's are different, and it is difficult to give advice without knowing your individual situation. However, there are some important things to know. You need to file a FAFSA just like you (or your parents) probably did for undergrad student loans. It's pretty much the same, but you do not need to worry about finishing it on January 1st - just get it done in the first few months of the year. You will see the terms "unsubsidized loans" (AKA Grad Plus, and direct unsubsidized) and "subsidized loans" just remember that unsubsidized gain interest while you are in school and the subsidized do not. Once your loans are dispersed from your student loan servicer (FedLoan, Great Lakes, CornerStone, Navient, etc) it will go to OHSU. They will take anything they need for tuition and send you the rest (the money you get for cost of living, etc. is called your "return"). If you have direct deposit set up, you should get this money the Thursday before the term starts. If not, you will probably get the check the following week (set up direct deposit! see below). If you do not want all of your return money, you can email Financial Aid and request part of your loans to be "canceled" after it is dispersed. However, after they cancel it and send it back to your servicer, you cannot access it again so think through your budget carefully! Each loan disbursement will need to last you through the term (12 weeks), however, do not forget this includes breaks so the winter "term" is three weeks longer because of winter break. Any other specific questions should be directed to Financial Aid. You can call or email them "finaid@ohsu.edu". They are SUPER helpful and respond relatively quickly to any questions you may have. It can be really confusing, so just be patient. Contact [Janna McKay](#) for individual help on creating a personal financial plan or visit the [OHSU Student Debt Counseling website](#) for financial management resources/information.

Direct Deposit?

Set this up! It will make receiving your return much, much easier, and faster. Simply Google "OHSU Financial Aid Direct Deposit Form" and it will pop up. Do this before school starts so you don't have to worry about it again. Again, If you have direct deposit set up, you should get this money the Thursday before the term starts. If not, you will probably get the check the following week (set up direct deposit! see below)

Health Insurance?

Unless anything changes you have three options for health insurance.

1. If you are under 26 or married and your parents or spouse's plan is approved by OHSU, you can stay on that plan and waive the OHSU medical and dental insurance.
2. You can use the OHSU medical and dental insurance and it will be included in the money OHSU takes out of your loans.
3. You can use the Oregon Health Plan (Oregon's Medicaid) if your income is less than about \$16,000 a year (most single students qualify).

If you choose the first or third option, make sure you fill out the waiver forms online to cancel the OHSU insurance so you are not charged. You can call your health insurance if you have specific questions about the questions in the waiver. If aid has already been dispersed but your waiver is still pending, the money will be refunded to your account once the waiver is accepted. You will need to complete a separate waiver for medical and dental proof of insurance. Check the [school's website](#) to stay up to date on due dates for waivers.

The OHSU insurance is not cheap, so put some thought into the different options and do not be afraid to ask Student Health and Wellness (SHW) any questions you have about coverage and definitely consider OHP. They will also talk about this during orientation, SHW is a really cool resource!

Also, definitely consider applying for SNAP benefits (i.e. food stamps) since many students will qualify. At least a few members of our class take advantage of this to save some moolah on groceries to spend somewhere else. *More information about this below!*

Lillian (Director of Academic Education) will also be telling you about the GREAT **Food Resource Center**, which is a food pantry available for all students regardless of need up on the hill. It has awesome options like organic seasonal vegetables, frozen meals, alternative milks, soy sauce etc. Seriously, check it out, it's not just canned green beans.

Apple or PC?

Either! PA 25 has a mix of both. Keep in mind your ipad is apple; some find it more convenient to have a compatible laptop. Try to familiarize yourself with whatever device you pick before the program starts. Any device that passes all of the requirements sent to you by the program (you will hear from them with these details) will work just fine.

iPads

Provided iPads are new to our program and so far PA25 has been loving them! You will get more information on the most commonly used applications for your iPads once you get them. In general, common note taking apps we use are Notability, GoodNotes, and OneNote. Majority take notes on their iPads or use it as a second screen during lectures.

Information Sharing?

During orientation, you will learn about OneDrive as part of the Microsoft365 package. It is a secure version of Google Drive that OHSU requires you to use.

What supplies should I buy?

They will send you a specific list of medical equipment and books you will need. Your medical equipment includes a stethoscope, a blood pressure cuff (sphygmomanometer), an ophthalmoscope/otoscope, and a variety of other smaller things. The program will communicate the steps for purchasing equipment so wait to hear from them. When it comes to books, all of your books are available either on AccessMedicine through the online OHSU library or copies our “friends” gave us. **Unless you love having real books, you do not NEED to buy any**, unless specifically pointed out by the course instructor that there is not a digital copy provided by the library. The OHSU library is an incredible resource that has many platforms for information. We have access to UpToDate, BMJ Best Practice, Dynamed, Micromedex, Lexicomp, and Access Medicine mentioned above. Common books that we have found helpful to have a text copy so far, Pathophysiology, and CMDT. However, we would recommend waiting to purchase any text until verified by the course syllabus.

Student Recommended Must Haves:

School	House	Misc
Noise canceling headphones	Air fryer	Rain gear!! Jackets, boots, umbrella, backpack covers if walking/biking to class, etc
Case for chargers	Crockpot	Bag for medical equipment
iPad case or stand	SunRise Lamp	Backpack
Big ol water bottle	Happy Lamp	Fidget items (if you have trouble sitting all day)
Watch (nonsmart)	Desk & comfy chair	A good lunchbox!

How should I prepare for PA school?

You have done a ton of preparing already, so use the time before PA school to **take a break and relax**. Take this time to spend quality time with your loved ones, because once PA school starts this time will unfortunately drop a significant amount. There is still time to do it! But, it is broken into little bits. So prepare for PA school by going on a vacation, traveling, seeking sun, going on a road trip, seeing your cousin who lives two hours away - take some time off to do the stuff you won't have time for once school starts. Seriously, since you'd probably end up having to relearn it according to how faculty is teaching and testing you on material anyways.

If you want to study something to feel better, brush up on your anatomy and review medical terminology. Netter's makes a coloring book that is kind of fun for an anatomy review. Prior cohorts had to take an exam on Osteology/Anatomy and medical terminology the first week of school. They stated to brush up on some information if desired but to not worry, if you did not pass, you had an opportunity to retake it. PA25 had something different, a month or so prior to starting PA school we had a Pre-matriculation course of medical terminology/anatomy that consisted of some videos and lessons and had to take an online quiz. If we completed and passed the quiz, we did not have to take the quiz during the first week of

school. Our entire cohort completed the pre-matriculation mini-course and no one had to take the quiz; which was awesome! Highly suggest to complete it if optional, but they may change it to part of the program requirements.

Tips From PA25

- Food is expensive on the South Waterfront, so meal planning is really important. Every Sunday, plan your week ahead as best as you can. It takes some time to get used to this, but your wallet and your waistline will thank you!
- Apply for **SNAP** benefits as early as you can! This saves you so much money as you are offered a monthly allowance for food.

Information on SNAPs from our Food Resource Center:

During the COVID19 pandemic, SNAP benefits were expanded to graduate students and therefore qualified ALL OHSU students. However, in 2023 those expanded eligibility requirements were rolled back and now graduate students must have a work-study position (which are not provided by OHSU) or fit at least one of the following criteria (in addition to meeting the income requirements – also below – including loans).

- *Paid employee working at least 20 hours a week*
- *Self-employed at least 20 hours each week and have countable monthly income of at least \$1,247 after business costs*
- *Responsible for the care of a child under the age of 6*
- *Receiving TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) cash assistance*
- *In a Workforce Investment Act (WIA) training program*
- *Receiving Unemployment Compensation*
- *Participating in at least one of the Employment Department training programs*
- *Unable to work due to physical or physiological difficulties*
- *Already declared a major intended to complete in 4 years and have plans for a career/employment*

Income requirements:

Income Guidelines:

(2023 Oregon Household Income Guidelines - 200% Federal Poverty Level)

<i>Persons in family</i>	<i>Monthly</i>
1	\$2,430
2	\$3,287
3	\$4,144
4	\$5,000
5	\$5,857
6	\$6,714

- There is one Starbucks location in the building, download the app early on so you can get rewards! Elephant's also has an app and gives rewards!
- There are fridges for the graduate students in the grad lounge where you can store your food – there are also microwaves in the grad lounge. The grad lounge is located on the fourth floor, as well as a new lounge located on the second floor (Room 2S008).
- HAPPY HOUR: Elephant's morning pastries are 50% off at 3pm and their hot food is 50% off at 6pm! The **cookies** are pretty damn good! And they've got cheap mug refills for afternoon yawns
- You can get a HUGE serving of Thai food for under \$6-8 at the Thai food cart called "Let's Eat Thai Food!" across the street from the Ella apartments.
- You cannot get hard liquor in grocery stores in Oregon, you have to go to a liquor store and they sometimes have weird hours - if you want to make Bloody Mary's, plan ahead!
- **OHSU Food Resource Center** is a service available to all OHSU students providing free food from canned to frozen goods, and fresh produce. They are located on the hill: OHSU Student Center, at 722 S.W. Campus Drive, Portland, OR 97239. And hours of operation are: Mondays 3 - 7 p.m, Wednesdays 3 - 7 p.m, Fridays 3 - 7 p.m.
<https://www.ohsu.edu/education/food-resource-center>

Balancing Friends/Family

We have all worked so hard and understand what it took to make it to PA school. We may have a general idea of what to expect or what we signed up for. However, balancing friends, family, and/or significant others is something everyone is still trying to figure out and can be challenging at times. Share as much as you can about the next 26 months of your life with your support circle so they may also have a better understanding of what is taking a majority of your time nowadays. Be kind to them and thank them when you can.

Many students with a family or partner have all said that they are the true heroes behind the scenes. They are the ones who understand you the best, listen openly, and often end up as your practice patients. PA school takes so much of your time, there can be weeks where you see your classmates more than them and that can be challenging not only for you but for them as well.

Some tips from students:

- “Something important I think for significant others is to carve out time weekly or monthly (depending how busy we are) to do some sort of bonding activity. Not just sitting on the couch but going out to do something together. We spend so much time inside studying with our families and partners around us, it’s nice to set aside time to go out and do things together.”
- “Communicate as much as you can, let them know what is going on at school and what your schedule looks like. It’ll help the both of you know what the week or even day will be. Plus it will help with carving out that one-on-one time with your partner that is very important. For example, my partner and I agreed to having at least one meal a day together, may it be breakfast or dinner.”
- “For families, as someone who is FAR away from their family, it’s super important to my parents and I that we always have something on the calendar. We have a time that they can fly to come and see me, that I can go home, or that we can do a virtual game night or group call. Having something to look forward to has really helped me from getting too homesick!”
- “One thing I told my family and friends was “Please, reach out to me.” Send that text, call me, leave me a voicemail. You are NOT bothering me. I may not be able to answer, and it will definitely take me some time to get back to you but knowing that you are thinking about me is so supportive and that's what I need right now. Know that I love you and I want so badly to do everything I can to support you in return, but right now, I physically, mentally, and emotionally don't have much to give and I'm sorry for that, but I need you to be the strong one in the meantime. This is temporary, and I will be there on the other side with all the health advice and crazy stories when I make it through.”

- “Letting my partner know where I am mentally that day or that week or even that month has been key during PA school. I am constantly checking in with him, that way he knows how much I can give and how much I may need in return. It's obvious, but communication is the biggest tool and especially crucial during this rigorous program.”
- “We must also make time to play! Once a week at least, set aside the books and devices. Have a date night, go for a hike, play a board game or even just chat on the couch with some cozy drinks.”
- “Our partners, while they are the real MVPs, they are not our therapists. They have people up on the hill (Behavioral Medicine/Health) available to hear about this life we chose which can be challenging at times. While seeking support is okay with your partner, try to keep most of it for the professionals.”
- “I found that voice/video messages, video chat have been the best way for me to pick-up or continue conversations without the worry of lining up schedules perfectly. I would let everyone know that there will be a delay in your responses to ease the pressure of responding same day or even within the week! WhatsApp, Marco Polo are great at group chats for family and friends. I know that for some social media channels are preferable, but I just found them too distracting and anxiety producing tbh.”

Some tips from partners of students:

- “Be involved, attend social events together on/off campus as much as possible. As you pick up the slack especially during finals, remember that this is an investment for all of you!”
- “Try to be their peace at home. Support, patience, and understanding are huge to make their experience as great as possible.”

Studying

The competition has ended. You are all a team working to get through this together. They do not rank you, you cannot win this, it is a team sport and you have the best teammates, your classmates, on your side. Most of us have study groups but do a combination of independent and group study. Figure out what works best for you! OHSU has a learning resource center that has staff equipt to help you figure out how you best study. They are available to meet 1:1 virtually!

Study Guides/ Learning Objectives

For most courses you will be provided with a study guide of learning objectives or topics that will be covered over the course. The test is always written by the course director, and they follow the objectives very closely. That way, if you have a guest lecturer who dives into the complexity of a specific system and you are asking yourself do I really need to know

this?? You can reference the objectives and if it isn't there, **you will not be tested on it.**

Summer vs. Fall

For prior cohorts there has been a **big change** between the Summer and Fall term. During the summer, the schedule and the classes are pretty variable. Summer is heavy with 21 units and Anatomy the second half of summer. As you start a new term, you may find yourself having to adjust and be flexible with your study habits. The terms are heavy in material but doable. It may take some time to find what works best, but everyone goes through it. Don't be shy to ask your buddy for tips and lean on your classmates. For PA25, Summer term was busy and exams/quizzes were frequent, 1-1.5 weeks in between. For Fall, Winter, and Spring; we have two larger exams in the format of a midterm and final for each course. Starting Fall term you begin your Clinical Practicum Early Clinical Experience AKA Mentoring. You will be paired with a PA within Portland and/or neighboring cities and have 4 sessions where you get the opportunity to practice the skills you have been learning (supervised) on actual, and very real patients!! Summer may be different for PA26 or stay the same as it was for PA25. The program is very open to feedback from students and they try to implement those quickly or for the following cohort. They will communicate with you more later on on what to expect for summer term.

Transportation

Luum/MyCommute OHSU

Get paid for commuting! Download the Luum App from O2 OHSU website. It'll ask you where you live and how you get to school. Record each day you commute and get paid starting \$1.50/day for walking, biking, taking the bus, streetcar, or MAX.

TriMet

Getting around Portland with public transport (TriMet) is usually pretty easy and is very safe. There is the Streetcar, Max (light rail train) and bus system, all of which have lines that go right in front of the RLSB. In August, you can get an unlimited year pass for only \$50 through OHSU which is a HUGE steal. If you are going to ride the bus even occasionally, I

would recommend the pass. If you need one before August, you can go to OHSU Transportation and Parking (3310 SW US Veterans Hospital Rd #232) and pick up a pass for a prorated amount. To navigate the buses, download the TriMet app, the PDX Bus, or the HOP Fastpass app for trip planning. If you don't live close to a TriMet stop, you can always drive to a Park & Ride where there is free parking!

Parking

Parking at school is expensive, simple as that. The cheapest way to park is \$13 per day, so if you can avoid driving every day, you should. But, the reality is we all need to drive sometimes, so knowing how and where to park is important! Parking in the RLSB garage is very expensive (\$18 per day), but parking in the Schnitzer Lot which is just north of the RLSB is much more reasonable. It is \$13 per day- which you can pay on the spot, but I think slightly cheaper online if you google "OHSU Schnitzer: click "Log In" under Online Parking to get your pass online! If you drive, keep in mind traffic can be pretty gnarly in Portland - so plan accordingly.

Biking

If you can do it, DO IT!

Pros:

- Exercise and fresh air every single day.
- Great way to wake up in the morning.
- No dealing with that pesky Portland traffic.
- Good for the environment!
- Save money on gas.
- Get PAID REAL MONEY to bike! Sign up for the OHSU Bike Program and log your commute each day to get paid \$1.50/trip. If your situation is like ours, this will be your only income for the next 26 months, and that \$20 check each month

feels pretty good (is that too sad?).

- You can drink beer with your classmates after class on Friday and not have to worry about driving home.

Cons:

- Sometimes you really don't feel like biking when you're at school until 11 at night and it's raining outside. *Note: ALSO A PRO because you have no choice but to get in some more exercise/fresh air.
- Snow/ice days are difficult unless you're hardcore and have a mountain bike, as well. HAVE A BACKUP PLAN.
- It does take quite a bit of planning and figuring out how to get everything you need into your backpack, but you get a routine down.
- Your quads will get awesome and your pants might not fit anymore.

What you will need:

- Bike...if you don't have one there is rentable Nike bikes and E-scooters available by app.
- Helmet
- Front and rear lights- ones you can recharge are super nice. Just plug them in during the day.
- Front and rear fenders
- GOOD RAINCOAT (if you're from somewhere sunny, you'll need to snag one of these guys whether you're biking or not)
- Rain pants. Seriously, take your Columbia student discount and go buy some at the employee store.
- Big, waterproof backpack.
- Make sure you can change a flat.

- U-lock. Yes, has to be a U-lock because bike theft is high in the metro area. That being said, remove your accessories if parking your bike outside.

Things you don't HAVE to have but may want:

- Shoe covers (these are a little spendy, but SO WORTH IT)
- Good gloves- dry hands are great.
- I highly suggest paying for a bike locker in the basement of RLSB. It has been free during COVID but that may change, and during normal times it's \$15/term or just get the full year for \$60 (it more than pays for itself if you log your commutes- see above). Once you pay, you have access through your badge, and only people who have access can get in. There is a locker room with showers (the showers are hardly ever in use), you get to keep your bike indoors/out of the elements, and the bike room opens up right next to the classroom. Thus, you get to be cool and use the bathrooms down there between lectures.
- If you opt not to use the bike locker, you can use the "Go By Bike" bike valet for free which is right under the tram. It's only open from (6 am-7:30 pm), but the people are nice and your bike won't get stolen, which is pretty neat.

Lyft-Off

OHSU is offering credit for lyft ride home up to \$15.00 between 7:00 pm-5:30 am. Sign up via O2. This is a great student incentive and a safe way to get home when you are on campus late studying, or doing a late rotation at the waterfront or the hill.

NIKE BIKETOWN for all

BIKETOWN for all offers an affordable and accessible way to ride e-bikes around Portland. It provides a \$0/ month membership and free 60-min a day bike rides (\$0.05/min after 60 min). To be eligible you need to qualify for either SNAP, FAFSA, or receive other social services. This is a great and free way to ride an e-bike around Portland. To apply use this link:

<https://biketownpdx.com/pricing/biketown-for-all>

Lime Access

Lime access is an affordable way to use Lime (scooters) in Portland. It offers free or discounted rides to lime users who qualify. To qualify you need proof of enrollment in public benefits such as SNAP or Medicaid. I have used Lime access to ride to class plenty of times and it has been great using this service as it has been free most times or about \$0.07/minute. To apply use this link:

<https://www.li.me/why/community/lime-access>

Tips for hybrid/remote class:

- A second screen has been VERY helpful- you can have webex on one screen and a window open on another or you can have a textbook open on one screen and objectives on another (love the efficiency)
- Consider looking into resources such as AMBOSS and osmosis and split the cost with the classmates • Having compatible devices that all have the ability to sync up has been a helpful tool

Words of Wisdom from PA25:

- “Bernstein Bagels is the best bagel in Portland. They have a new smear flavor every Tuesday.”
- “Get the \$50 bus pass through OHSU! The buses here are amazing and it will save you a lot of gas/parking costs. Use the OHSU discounts!”
- “Pre-School: Hang out with your people and do all the fun things you won't have as much time for! Don't spend time prepping for school, you will learn what you need to know. Post-School: be flexible with yourself and the program. If you like group/study trials, a couple group/study styles but be open to change! My study tools and habits changed with every class and term! Don't be too hard on yourself and don't doubt that you should be here!”
- “Enjoy your breaks! It is tempting to just lie facedown or sleep the break away but it's worth it to use that time to do things you love or get outside of Portland and get some perspective. Spend the money, book the flight, see the old friend,

you won't regret taking the time to feel like yourself again."

- "I would advise to fully take time off before school – no need to study anything as they will cover it all."
- "Living: many choose to live on the westside since it seems closer to school but the east side is much cheaper and has fun, affordable activities nearby! The bus is so accessible and you get a cheap trimet pass!"
- "SELF-CARE is a must to survive this program! You'll do better if you take care of yourself first."
- "You made it to PA school and you should be so proud of yourself. Don't forget that feeling, the program is rigorous and imposter syndrome is very real. But you made it! You deserve to be here, be kind to yourself. Plug into Behavioral Health early if you can, you will learn a lot about yourself in PA school and this may be helpful along the way."
- "Best ways to save \$\$\$:
 - Get SNAP (if eligible)
 - Get Affordable Connectivity Program (free internet)
 - Sign up for PGE 25% off electrical
 - Use Arts for All Program for cheap fun
 - Use OHSU Food Bank"
- "Make friends in your cohort by spending time together outside of class. You will lean on each other during the hard times!"
- "Would **not** recommend the Acqua apartments!!!"
- "Travel and relax as much as you can before school. Pick up hobbies before and during school. Spend time with family and friends before school. Live in Portland for as long as you can before school starts."
- "Time is super short, pick what is most important to you beyond just school and set aside the time to do it!"
- "Make lifelong friends while you're here!"
- "Your mental/physical well being is more important than anything else. This is YOUR time. P.S. You got this!!!"
- "Lean on each other, check in with one another, ask deep questions, get to know everyone. No one understands exactly what you're going through besides your cohort."

- “Do not worry about anatomy! You will be given guidance on exactly what you need to know and how in depth to know each topic. It’s helpful to brush up on basic anatomical structures but do not stress about the details!”
- “LEAN on your classmates!! Long gone are the days of gatekeeping and moving in silence. Your classmates are often the best resources and companions in this rigorous program!!”
- “If you are moving from out of state and have the financial resources to visit Portland, I would highly recommend touring apartments/living spaces in person! The virtual tours are nice but it is important to see the surrounding areas too to ensure you have a safe and stable place to live for the next 26 months!”
- “Favorite places to eat in Beaverton: Pho Oregon, Boriken Restaurant (Puerto rican food), Hapa Pizza (Asian Fusion Neapolitan style), Pip’s Doughnuts and Chai.”
- “Pick three things that are your non-negotiables. Whether it be food-prepping, or spending time with family, going to church, exercising; whatever it is for you. Plan it into your schedule. The program is crazy busy so plan these things in. These things can still be priorities if you want them to be. Organization is key”
- “Before the program starts: get a doctor's appointment, see your dentist, do something fun with friends and if you have a partner talk about a daily schedule and DON'T try to study before the program! Relax and have some fun with those around you. If you're dying to brush up on some material, refresh some medical terminology.”
- “Be prepared to change how you study. Then once you get comfortable, be prepared to change it again. The program will throw many things at you and you'll need multiple strategies for absorbing material.”
- “Bring blankets and comfy things to keep at RLSB, and lots of snacks to study on weekends”
- Use the "Arts for All" program for fun outside class. Learn how to use Anki early on. Get a good lunch box and figure out some easy meal prep ideas to put on repeat.

Words of wisdom from PA 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24 –

- “Put yourself in a stable living situation. You will need a non-stressful home environment so you can rest and relax.”
- “Living near school is very convenient, but not the most exciting. If I had to do it over again, I would live in SE Portland.”
- “Make sure you can either walk/bike or on a bus line, Max line, or streetcar line. It's best if you don't have to transfer but possible if you do. Just try to make sure your commute is 30 minutes or less. Time is precious and the last thing you need to be doing is spending a bunch of time each day commuting.”
- “Save yourself the money, and pack a big lunch!”
- “Since driving to campus is essentially not an option, I would look up routes to school on public transit from potential housing options to make it as easy as possible. Inner SE Portland has been ideal!”
- “There are no grocery stores on SW waterfront and food there is expensive”
- “Find something close. You are on campus every day. The extra money spent on rent is probably worth it, if you can swing it.”, “It is worth every dollar to be closer to campus”
- “Live as close to school as you can afford.”
- “Really consider public transportation and biking accessibility.”
- “Consider the commute time, a 20 min drive will quickly start to feel like a huge chunk of your day when you are so pressed for study time.”
- “How do you plan to commute - factor that into where you want to live. We all have different perspectives but I love being able to leave the South Waterfront, while still being biking distance.”
- “Strike a balance between saving money and setting yourself up for success with your location and # of roommates. Last thing you want is to have to move first quarter because you were trying to save \$\$ by living with 5 other people.”
- “Find somewhere that makes commuting easy; you'll likely just be in it for one year.”
- “Consider housing beyond the South Waterfront. It's often cheaper and still a manageable commute.”
- “If you are coming from a sunny or more southernly place, pay attention to your mood and energy level once the dark

winter months set in. It's easy to not notice mild signs of seasonal depression but they can make school seem even harder, and there are things you can do to mitigate. OHSU has light boxes to loan if you need one!"

- "Try to take care of little personal administrative things before school starts if possible. Although we do have a little bit of weekday free time once the fall term gets underway, it isn't a lot, and it can be really tedious to get bogged down by those tasks in your precious non-class hours."
- "If you are not planning on being close to school, at least be close to the maxline!"
- "Don't worry about housing for your second year. Be flexible! We are finishing our first year and still don't know where we'll be living."
- "Be gentle with yourself. Take time for yourself. Make time to do something for yourself at least once a week – if not every day. Take advantage of all of the student resources early on: student health center, counseling, mindfulness meditation, learning specialists. They're all on your team."
 - "Get an ipad or surface for taking notes! Trust me you will not regret it."
 - "Take care of yourself! Keeping your body and mind functioning best will let you learn and perform to the best of your abilities. Don't sacrifice your physical or mental health and get help when you need it!"
 - "Your cohort will become your family. No one else can truly understand what PA school is like if they are not currently or have previously gone through it. You are all in this together and will be awesome!"
 - "It's grad school, it'll be hard, it'll push your limits, and you signed up for it. "
 - "Out of state students! The Oregon DMV is veerrrrryyy slow (especially during COVID), plan months (like 2-4 months) in advance for ID and car registration. Cars within the Portland metropolitan area may need to pass an emissions test. (<https://www.oregon.gov/odot/DMV/Pages/New2or/moving.aspx>, <https://www.oregon.gov/deq/VehicleInspection/Pages/Testing-Boundaries.aspx>)"

What's with the penguins?

Aw, our beloved penguins. They are our class mascot with a very cute explanation. We like to think of all the information we learn in PA school as penguins, and the information you need to know currently are the penguins on an iceberg. In PA school, you will learn A LOT and just like penguins on an iceberg, if you

put too many on there, some are bound to get pushed off. However, just because they fall off, they are not gone forever - just swimming! You will see some penguins a lot, and others you will just see a couple times. You will try to put different costumes on your similar penguins to tell them apart, and you will have a really hard time with certain penguins. However, in the end, there are no killer whales in PA school and the penguins are all there, you just need to learn how to keep the right penguins on your iceberg at the right time.

Everything else

Ask us! Reach out to your PA25 buddy. If we don't know the answer, we will know who to ask.

Special thanks to PA 24, 23, 22, 21, PA20 & PA19, whom this document is adapted from.

Welcome to Portland, Oregon - OHSU PA25!

Portland, founded in 1851, is the City of Roses – but what it's really known for is its food, nightlife, and scenic views. The city of Portland is made up of four

quadrants. The east and west are separated by the Willamette and the north and south are divided by Burnside Avenue. School (the Robertson Life Sciences Building, aka RLSB) is located in the South Waterfront.

Fun facts: it's illegal to pump your own gas (therefore they pump it for you and no, you do not have to tip), you can't make a U-turn unless there is a sign saying you can, it rains a lot but we still get sun, there is no sales tax, and we take our coffee, recycling, beer and wine very seriously.

If you have a couple days to tour around your new city, here are some popular places that I recommend:

Disclaimer: As a native Oregonian, living in Portland for the past 5+ years, these are just the places that I recommend; there are so many hole-in-the-wall places that I wish I could add to this list – but this list would be longer than didactic year!

Coffee:

- Coava Coffee Roasters
- Heart Coffee
- Stumptown Coffee Roasters
- Never Coffee shop

Doughnuts:

- Pips (mini) Original Donuts
- NOLA Donuts
- Blue Star Donuts
- Voodoo Doughnuts

Brunch:

- Screen Door
- Pine State Biscuits
- Genie's Café
- Brix Tavern

Downtown Portland:

- Powell's City of Books - Bookstore • Keep Portland Weird sign (Burnside) • Portland White Stag sign
- Pioneer Square
- McMenamins Crystal Ballroom
- Oregon Zoo – especially during Zoo Lights
- Mill Ends Park – smallest park in the WORLD

Thrifting:

- Buffalo Exchange
- House of Vintage
- Red Light Exchange
- 2nd Street Hawthorne

- Portland art museum

- Rooftop bars: X-Port, Departure, Revolution Hall

NW Portland:

- Pittock Mansion (best city views)
- Forest Park (great hiking/walking trails)
- International Rose Test Garden
- Portland Japanese Gardens
- Lan Su Chinese Gardens
- Shanghai Tunnels/Portland Underground tours
- St. John's Bridge & Cathedral Park
- NW 23rd: Grassa, Matador, Slice of Pie, Killer Burger
 - Ice Cream: Salt and Straw

NE/SE Portland:

- OMSI – Oregon Museum of Science & Industry – great for kids • Oaks Amusement Park – go-carts, skating rink – great for kids • The Grotto (great city views from the upper gardens) • Portland Night Market & Flea Markets
- Great for Asian foods/markets: Hong Phat, Fubon Market • Crystal Springs Rhododendron Garden
- Washington Park
- SE – Alberta Arts district – lots of shops, cafes, & good eats!

- Artifact Recycle
- Plato's Closet

Breweries:

- 10 Barrel Brewing

- Deschutes Brewing
- Breakside Brewing
- Steeplejack Brewing

Malls near Portland-Metro area:

- Washington Square (Tigard)
- Clackamas Town Center (Happy Valley)
- Cascade Station (NE Portland)
- Bridgeport Village (Beaverton)

On the Waterfront Food Options:

- OHSU Daily Café at the Tram
- Cha Cha Cha – Mexican cuisine

- Elephant’s deli inside OHSU RLSB
- Starbucks inside OHSU RLSB

- Bambuza Vietnamese Kitchen
- Al Hawar – Lebanese restaurant
- Little Big Burger
- Subway
- Growler Guys
- The Old Spaghetti Factory

Living in Portland: A Brief Breakdown

South Waterfront / Southwest (SW):

- The Emery
- The Dylan
- The Ella

- The Matisse
- Osprey Apartments
- Griffis South Waterfront
- The LINC
- Oxbow49
- University Pointe
- Shadow Hills Apartments

Northwest (NW):

- Block 17 Apartments
- The Parker Apartments
- The Envy
- Waterline Apartments
- Goose Hollow Apartments
- Sawbuck Apartments
- Salmon Street Apartments

Southeast (SE):

- Pine Tree Apartments
- Goat Blocks

NE & Suburbs (Beaverton, Tigard, etc.)

- Most people found houses and apartments to rent – they share with other classmates in the cohort & carpool to class on the waterfront together – about a 15-minute drive!

Disclaimer: This is not an exhaustive list; the above-mentioned apartments have been apartment that previous (& current) PA students lived in. Reach out for more insider information!