



## PREPHYSICAL THERAPY INFORMATION SUMMARY

### Academic Preparation

Academic preparation for a Physical Therapy program requires a bachelor's degree and completion of a set of prerequisite classes, usually science, which vary from school to school. Common classes are listed on the last page of this summary. For your degree, any major is appropriate. There is no preference in this regard, so study something you love! Competitive applicants have high grades so pace yourself in order to succeed and remember that all grades will count when you apply even if you repeat classes.

### Leadership Experience

Leadership is important skill. PTs lead a health care team as well as guide and teach their patients. Examples of leadership include offices held in organizations; committee work; leadership in church activities; coordinating a project; managing, training, supervising at work or in other activities; teaching experience of any kind; coaching, peer counseling or mentoring, etc.

### **Why Physical Therapy?**

### Service to the Community

Since you are preparing for a humanitarian profession, it is important to demonstrate compassion, and interact with people from different backgrounds from your own. This will strengthen your interpersonal and communication skills. This does not have to be only in the medical field.

### Observing and Clinical Experience with Physical Therapists

This should be one of your first experiences as a PrePT student. Observing Licensed Physical Therapists working in different environments will help you understand the profession. Shadowing also help you get to know PTs. This is important as many PT programs require at least one recommendation letter from a PT. Interacting well with sick people is one of the key indicators of a successful healthcare provider. In order to gain experience providing direct "hands-on" with patients, most students obtain a job as a PT Aide in hospitals, nursing homes or hospice care after volunteering several months at these facilities.

### Things to Remember

- Make sure you have contact information for supervisors and health professionals you shadow or work with in case you need a recommendation letter. Try to keep an open relationship with them after you discontinue the activity.
- Writing your reflections in a journal will be helpful when you write a personal statement

## ❖ APPLICATION TIMELINE

	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	July	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	
GRE	Take exam. Deadline for the last GRE score accepted depend on program. It is usually the same as the application deadline.																	
Recom. Letters	Request letters & get contact info. from letter writers at least 3 months before your application submission.																	
Application	<b>Prep</b> - Write draft of Personal Statement - Research Programs					<b>PTCAS is available Online on July 1</b> through early May of the following year. However, many programs' deadlines are from August – January.												
						<b>Supplemental Requirements.</b> Some schools require supplemental applications or materials.												
											Interviews							
Program Starts											Acceptance Notifications							

## ❖ GRE

Most PT programs require the **GRE** (Graduate Record Exam). **The GRE is administered throughout the year.** Take the exam by spring the year you apply in order to apply earlier. August is the last GRE accepted by most programs for the following Fall entering class. The GRE is divided into three multiple choice sections which are scored on a scale of 130-170: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing. The exam may be repeated, but the best strategy is to prepare thoroughly and take the GRE once. For more information about content and structure, visit [http://www.ets.org/gre/revised\\_general/about/content/](http://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/about/content/).

## ❖ APPLICATION PROCESS

You'll take the GRE (Graduate Record Exam) and submit an application at least 10 months in advance of the year for which you are applying. Which means your application process can begin as early as spring or summer at the end of your Junior year, as long as you have completed the necessary requirements. PT programs admit students once a year, usually for Summer semester matriculation.

## ❖ PTCAS

Most PT programs are part of **PTCAS** (Physical Therapy Central Application Service) which is available at <http://www.ptcas.org/home.aspx>.

- Application requirements include transcripts, personal background information, extracurricular experiences, personal statements, and fees.
- Because many programs use a “rolling” admission process (they begin reviewing applications and admitting before deadlines), it will enhance your chances if you **submit your application early** regardless of when you take the GRE.
- Completing the application will take at least 1 week; most students take several weeks. Make sure you will have plenty of time to fill out the application, and to have somebody **review** your entire application before you submit

To help us advise other students, we would appreciate it if you would release your information to the Health Professions Advisor. This information will always be kept confidential.

## ❖ Letters of Recommendation

Students are required to submit **Letters of Recommendation** through the PTCAS. Generally, you will need one letter from each of the following people. (The number and types of letters vary depending on each PT program). PTCAS limits applicants to 4 letters, but most programs just require 3 letters:

1. **Physical Therapists you shadowed**
2. **Professor (Usually Science)**
3. **Any Supervisor (Usually employment)**
4. **Other professor** (Possibly a professor in your major. Some schools may accept a letter from an athletic coach.)

## ❖ Pre-PT CURRICULUM

### Policies

<b>CLEP Credit &amp; Correspondence Study</b>	You are required to report all of the courses and credit hours that you earned through CLEP exams or Correspondence/Independent Study courses. However, <b>those credits MAY NOT be accepted as completed prerequisite coursework.</b> Check each program's requirements online.
<b>AP Credits &amp; IB courses</b>	You are required to report all of the courses and credit hours that you earned through AP credits and IB courses. However, <b>those awarded hours MAY NOT be accepted as completed prerequisite coursework.</b> Check each program's requirements online.
<b>Online Courses</b>	Depends on program. Ask programs you are considering applying to directly.
<b>Repeats</b>	PTCAS will include all of the grades if you repeat, but how each PT program views repeated courses varies.
<b>Withdrawals</b>	EX's should be used only for emergencies, though EX's will not affect GPA.
<b>Minimum Grade Requirement</b>	Most programs set a minimum grade requirement for prerequisite courses of C or better.
<b>Grade Expiration</b>	Many programs require certain prerequisite courses to be completed within 5 to 7 years of entering a PT program. Check each program's requirements for more information.
<b>Community College Courses</b>	While many programs will accept prerequisite courses taken at a 2 year community college, students are encouraged to take some courses at a 4 year institution.

### ❖ GPA

Most PT programs require minimum overall AND prerequisite GPA of 3.0. Competitive applicants for most programs have 3.3 or higher in both the overall and prerequisite GPA.

### ❖ Bachelor's Degree

Most PT programs require a Bachelor's degree before students matriculate to a PT program. There is no specific major you need to pursue in order to increase your chances of admission to a PT program.

### ❖ USEFUL WEBSITES

- American Physical Therapy Association <http://www.apta.org/> --- Find PT programs in the nation.
- Missouri State University PT <https://www.missouristate.edu/PhysicalTherapy/default.htm>
- University of Missouri <https://healthprofessions.missouri.edu/physical-therapy/>
- Washington University <https://pt.wustl.edu/>

## Prerequisite Course Guide

Course requirements for Physical Therapy Programs vary, but usually require some combination of Biology, Chemistry, and Physics courses. You can find a directory of PT programs [here \(Links to an external site.\)](#). A breakdown of degree requirements can be found [here \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

**Missouri Physical Therapy Programs:** you can use this document as a checklist to track progress.

Maryville University typically only accepts students directly from high school into a 6-year program.

### Missouri State University

- Biol 1821
- Biol 1831
- Biol 1131
- Biol 1141
- Chem 1111
- Chem 1121
- Physics 1011 & 1011 Lab
- Physics 1012 & 1012 Lab
- Psych 1003: General Psychology and an additional Psych course
- Math 1030: College Algebra
- Math 1320: Basic Probability & Statistics or similar stats class:

### University of Missouri

- Biol 1831
- Biol 1131 & 1141
- Chem 1111
- Physics 1011&L / 1012&L
- Medical Terminology (course can be taken at Community Colleges)
- Math 1320 or similar stats class

### Washington University in St. Louis

- Biol 1821 & 1831
- Biol 1131 & 1141
- Chem 1111 & 1121
- Physics 1011&L / 1012&L
- Psych 1003, Psych 2245 is recommended
- Math 1320 or similar stats class