

School of Arts and Sciences

PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY

www.shrs.pitt.edu

The Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the University of Pittsburgh is ranked among the top physical therapy schools in the country. In addition to teaching and research, most faculty members are engaged in active clinical practice within the world-renowned University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC). This close relationship with the academic medical center affords both faculty and students access to numerous clinical facilities, laboratories, and patients for both teaching and research purposes. The program in physical therapy is located in the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS), one of the University's six schools of the health sciences. Programs offered through the Department of Physical Therapy include both entry-level and post-professional physical therapy degrees.

Preparation for the Doctor of Physical Therapy Graduate Program at the University of Pittsburgh

Entry-level professional physical therapy education is offered at the graduate level through SHRS. To be eligible for admission, a student must first complete an undergraduate degree, including the prerequisite courses required for admission. Students typically apply to the program in their senior year of college.

Students preparing for the graduate program in physical therapy usually complete their bachelor's degree in the School of Arts and Sciences. Recently, SHRS introduced a new undergraduate program in rehabilitation science that is designed for students preparing for graduate education in occupational therapy or physical therapy, as well as the areas of health and rehabilitation. Students may opt to continue their undergraduate study in the School of Arts and Sciences, making certain, no matter what the major area of study is, to take all courses designated as prerequisites for the physical therapy program.

With proper planning and academic advising, a student may complete these requirements without adding to the length of the undergraduate degree program. Academic advising for this plan of study is provided by the University, initially through the Arts and Sciences Advising Center and, during the student's upper class level, through the Health Careers Advising Office.

GRADUATE PROGRAMS

The School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences offers graduate programs in physical therapy at the entry level, as well as the post-professional level.

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY (DPT)

Entry-level

Physical therapy is the examination, treatment, and instruction of human beings to detect, assess, prevent, correct, alleviate, and limit physical disability, movement dysfunction, bodily malfunction, and pain from injury, disease, and other bodily and mental conditions. A physical therapist evaluates and treats (with physical measures) patients with movement dysfunctions. Other professional activities include consultation, education, research, management, and referral.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy is an entry-level educational program. Upon successful completion of the curriculum, a student is eligible for the licensure examination that is required to be a practicing physical therapist. The curriculum will prepare physical therapists to be self-directed, self-accountable generalists possessing problem-solving skills and practice in a variety of settings. The graduates will be prepared to enhance human movement and function and to assess and treat individuals with movement dysfunction and disability. Graduates with these capabilities will have a foundation on which to develop specialty theory and skills to contribute to the development of the art and science of physical therapy.



ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS FOR DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM

The curriculum of study for the postbaccalaureate entry-level physical therapy student is based upon a strong general undergraduate education that provides a sound foundation in knowledge, methods, and attitudes. Specific requirements for admission are:

1. A baccalaureate degree. (No specific major is mandated; however, prerequisite study for postbaccalaureate professional education should include a well-rounded general education that includes a distribution of studies in the natural sciences, social sciences, and the humanities.)
2. Prerequisite course work includes:
 - General Biological Science with labs (8 cr.)
Students must possess foundation knowledge of the concepts and terminology in biological science on which to build in the physical therapy curriculum and experience in appropriate laboratory procedures.
 - General Chemistry with labs (8 cr.)
Students must possess foundation knowledge of the concepts and terminology in chemical science on which to build in the physical therapy curriculum and experience in appropriate laboratory procedures.
 - Physics with labs (8 cr.)
Students must possess foundation knowledge of the concepts and terminology in physical science on which to build in the physical therapy curriculum and experience in appropriate laboratory procedures.
 - Psychology (6 cr.)
General Introductory Psychology and either Abnormal Psychology, Child Psychology, or Developmental Psychology. Students must have an understanding of human growth and development, human behavior (cognitive and affective), and interpersonal relationships.
 - Anatomy (3 cr.)
Students must understand body organ systems and have a knowledge of terminology used to describe these systems. It is also assumed that the student has an overview understanding of how the human body, cells, organs, and body systems function.
 - Physiology or any two-term sequence of combined anatomy and physiology, labs recommended (3 cr.)
Students must understand body organ systems and have a knowledge of terminology used to describe these systems. It is also assumed that the student has an overview understanding of how the human body, cells, organs, and body systems function.
 - Statistics (3–4 cr.)
Students must have an understanding of descriptive and inferential statistics used to report information and data.
 - English Composition (3 cr.)
The student must have the ability to communicate in a clear, organized, logical fashion with appropriate grammatical format, both verbally and in writing.
3. The applicant should have a minimum overall QPA of 3.00 and 3.00 in the prerequisite courses.
4. GRE (Graduate Record Examination). The GRE is required for admission to this program. It is designed to measure verbal, quantitative, and analytical abilities. A minimum score of 1000 verbal and quantitative, and 3.5 analytical are recommended.
5. The applicant will demonstrate knowledge of physical therapy through volunteer or work experience in the physical therapy field. Volunteer work experience is very important for physical therapy. It is recommended that this experience be in two different practice settings.

Specialized Advising for Pre-Medical Careers Students

During the freshman and sophomore years, the School of Arts and Sciences Advising Center provides assistance in planning your curriculum. After that, the Pre-professional Health and Law Advising Office offers important services to students pursuing careers in medical and health fields, such as exploring career options, planning course work, and making applications to physical therapy programs. It is also advised that prospective students meet with an SHRS admissions staff person by their senior year.

Other Opportunities the University Provides for Doctor of Physical Therapy Students

The benefits for pre-physical therapy students attending Pitt are not limited to academics. UPMC offers students the opportunity to take advantage of research, volunteer work, internships, and job possibilities at a number of local hospitals and institutes.

The Pitt Freshman Guarantee

A limited number of qualified freshman applicants to the University of Pittsburgh will be offered guaranteed admission to the graduate program in physical therapy. For more detailed information about requirements, look for the "Freshman Guarantees" link at www.oafa.pitt.edu

For information about the physical therapy program:

University of Pittsburgh
School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
Office of Admissions and Recruitment
4020 Forbes Tower
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-383-6558
E-mail: admissions@shrs.pitt.edu
www.shrs.pitt.edu

For information about undergraduate admissions and financial aid:

University of Pittsburgh
Office of Admissions and Financial Aid
Alumni Hall, 4227 Fifth Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15260
412-624-7488
E-mail: oafa@pitt.edu
www.oafa.pitt.edu

