



# Pre-Physical Therapy Advising Sheet

Physical therapists must receive a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree from an accredited physical therapist program before taking the national licensure examination that allows them to practice. Other requirements for physical therapy practice vary from state to state according to physical therapy practice acts or state regulations governing physical therapy.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree program are usually three years long. Generally speaking, the first two years are focused on academic and clinical course work including relevant clinical rotations. The third year consists predominately of challenging clinical experiences as well as advanced courses and seminars.

## Choosing an Undergraduate Major

“Pre-physical therapy” is **not** a major at universities. You should give careful consideration to your choice of major and select an area of study that interests you. Biology and Kinesiology are often popular majors selected. However, students should select an appropriate major that could lead to an alternative career, if necessary.

Students applying to physical therapist programs need to plan carefully and complete not only the physical therapist requirements, but also the requirements for their undergraduate major and the general education required by the undergraduate transfer institution.

### Suggested courses for most Physical Therapy School:

- One Year of General Biology with Lab—  
Requirements vary by campus. Some schools require no courses while other require either 1 semester or 2 semesters
- One Year of General Chemistry with Lab
- One Year of Physics with Lab
- One Semester of Anatomy
- One Semester of Physiology
- General Psychology
- One course in Statistics
- One Semester English Composition

### Suggested GCC courses:

- BIOL 122 or  
BIOL 101 and 102
- CHEM 101 and 102
- PHYS 105 and 106 or PHYS 101, 102, 103
- BIOL 120
- BIOL 121
- PSYCH 101
- MATH 136
- ENGL 101

### Lower Division subjects required or recommended by some U.S. Physical Therapy Schools

- Public Speaking/Speech  
SPCH 101
- One Year Organic Chemistry with Lab  
CHEM 105 and 106
- Upper division Psychology  
Abnormal, Developmental, Adolescent or Sports Psychology course that must be taken at the university in the upper division level

**Note:** All courses should be taken for a letter grade, not Credit/No Credit.  
Physical therapist requirements vary, check with the individual campus for their specific requirements.

## Physical Therapist Selection Criteria

- A bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited university.
- **GPA** in terms of overall college grades or pre-physical therapist coursework grades, depending on the school.
- Some schools may require **admissions tests** such the Graduate Record Exam (GRE). Check with the individual campus schools you plan to apply to for information.
- Physical Therapy schools expect applicants to have experience in documented **community service**.
- To determine oral and written communication skills, physical therapy applicants are required to participate in physical therapy **interviews**.

**Note:** Information is subject to change without notice. Check with the individual campus for the most up to date information.

**Salary Information**

The median wage in 2014 for Physical Therapists in California was \$88,586 ([www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov)). The median is the point at which half of the workers earn more and half earn less.

**Recommended Websites**

American Physical Therapy Association                      [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org)

**Select Physical Therapy School Websites**

Azusa Pacific University	<a href="http://www.apu.edu/bas/physicaltherapy">www.apu.edu/bas/physicaltherapy</a>
California State University, Fresno	<a href="http://www.csufresno.edu/chhs/depts_programs/physical_therapy">www.csufresno.edu/chhs/depts_programs/physical_therapy</a>
California State University, Long Beach	<a href="http://www.csulb.edu/colleges/chhs/departments/pt">www.csulb.edu/colleges/chhs/departments/pt</a>
California State University, Northridge	<a href="http://http://hhd.csun.edu/pt">http://hhd.csun.edu/pt</a>
California State University, Sacramento	<a href="http://www.hhs.csus.edu/PT">www.hhs.csus.edu/PT</a>
Chapman University	<a href="http://www.chapman.edu/crean/academic-programs/graduateprograms/physical-therapy/">www.chapman.edu/crean/academic-programs/graduateprograms/physical-therapy/</a>
Loma Linda University	<a href="http://www.llu.edu/allied-health/sahp/pt/programs.page?">www.llu.edu/allied-health/sahp/pt/programs.page?</a>
Mount St Mary's College	<a href="http://www.msmu.edu/graduate-programs/physical-therapy">www.msmu.edu/graduate-programs/physical-therapy</a>
Samuel Merritt College	<a href="http://www.samuelmerritt.edu/physical_therapy">www.samuelmerritt.edu/physical_therapy</a>
University of California, San Francisco	<a href="http://http://ptrehab.ucsf.edu/education/dpt">http://ptrehab.ucsf.edu/education/dpt</a>
San Francisco State University	
University of Southern California	<a href="http://http://pt.usc.edu">http://pt.usc.edu</a>
University of the Pacific	<a href="http://www.pacific.edu/Academics/Schools-and-Colleges/Thomas-J-Long-School-of-Pharmacy-and-Health-Sciences/Academics/Doctor-of-Physical-Therapy.html">www.pacific.edu/Academics/Schools-and-Colleges/Thomas-J-Long-School-of-Pharmacy-and-Health-Sciences/Academics/Doctor-of-Physical-Therapy.html</a>
Western University of Health Sciences	<a href="http://http://www.westernu.edu/">http://www.westernu.edu/</a>