

PHYSICAL THERAPY RESOURCES

This handout is designed to provide students a general guide to applying to physical therapy schools. For further assistance, please schedule an appointment with a Career Advisor.



CAREER CENTER

GEORGIA COLLEGE & STATE UNIVERSITY

110 Lanier Hall | 478-445-5384 | career.center@gcsu.edu
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QUICK FACTS

Physical therapy is a healthcare field dedicated to improving movement, relieving pain, and restoring physical function for individuals of all ages. To become a physical therapist (PT), you must pursue a **Doctor of Physical Therapy or Doctor of Physiotherapy (DPT)**. You must thoroughly read the requirements that each school has for admission.

Here are some things for physical therapy applicants to consider:

- The **American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)**: www.apta.org/, covers the general admission process for physical therapy programs, www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/pt-admissions-process.
- You can review programs through the APTA website: ptcasdirectory.apta.org/.
- Applications usually require some combination of these materials:
 - **Minimum GPA, GRE scores, letters of recommendation, a personal statement, a cover letter, observation hours, and an interview.**
 - Some, but not all, programs require **interviews**, and the process varies from school to school.
 - Thoroughly read through the requirements each school/program has for admission.
- The number of **physical therapy shadowing hours** required varies from school to school, but most programs want experience from at least **2 physical therapy settings (inpatient and outpatient), often supervised by a licensed practitioner.**
- **Personal Statements** used to apply to physical therapy programs being submitted through PTCAS should be a general overview as to why you chose this profession and answer the prompt: **"What unique traits will you bring to the physical therapy profession that will help you to be successful?"**
- When requesting **letters of recommendation**, most programs are seeking **1-4 letters** from licensed physical therapists, science faculty, advisors, or other professionals that can adequately speak on your behalf.
 - However, certain schools may only accept a certain number or have specifications on letter writers, so it is vital to check the website of each program you are applying to.

COMMON APPLICATION SERVICES (PTCAS)

- Most schools require applications to be submitted through the **Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS)**: ptcas.liaisoncas.com/
 - However, **not all programs use PTCAS**. Check the admission procedures for each school to ensure you apply in the correct location.
 - APTA offers information to help prepare you for applying through PTCAS (www.apta.org/cas/ptcas/application-prep).

GRADUATE RECORD EXAM (GRE)

Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

- Applicants are required to take the GRE only by some programs, but **required minimum scores vary**.
- You can register for the GRE through the Educational Testing Service (ETS: www.ets.org/gre.html).
- The exam is made up of 3 sections including: **Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning, and Analytical Writing.**
- Be sure to take the test in enough time to make the application deadline.

Prepare in advance!

- Spend time prior to your test date familiarizing yourself with the types of questions in each section.
- You can study through taking a course with a company like Kaplan or Princeton Review, or you can purchase study books online that contain practice tests and examples.

COMMON PREREQUISITES

Common:

Human Anatomy and Physiology I & II
Principles of Biology I & II
Principles of Chemistry I & I
Introductory Physics I & II
Intro to General Psychology
Probability & Statistics

***This is not an exhaustive list. Please research each program's requirement, and please consult with your academic advisor prior to registering for classes.**

Highly Suggested:

Genetics
Cellular and Molecular Physiology
Histology
Allied Health Microbiology
Microbiology
Exercise Physiology
Abnormal Psychology
Intro to Human Development
Sport & Exercise Psychology

KEY NUMBERS

- Average GPA: cumulative **3.0**
- Average GRE: Verbal Reasoning – **155**; Quantitative Reasoning – **154**; Analytical Writing – **4.5**

***Check with each individual school for their GPA and score requirements.**

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INTERVIEW PREPARATION

Physical Therapy programs may require competitive applicants to visit the campus for an interview or conduct a virtual interview.

- Interview format varies by institution and may require applicants to speak with a single faculty member, a student, a physical therapist, or a panel of interviewers, or participate in an orientation program.
- Applicants should be prepared to discuss why they have chosen to pursue a career in physical therapy and how they perceive the role of physical therapists in health care.
- The applicants' written communication skills may also be measured with an on-site essay.

When preparing for professional school interviews, a lot of the same rules apply as with most job interviews.

- Visit **Handshake** to view the Career Center's interview resources and handouts.
- **Practice to answer common questions:** "Why physical therapy?" or "Why our program?"
- Ensure you have **in-depth responses** to interview questions that are specific to you and how you fit into the program you're applying for.
- **Not all programs require interviews**, and the process varies from school to school, so read the program's webpage thoroughly.

PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY AT GCSU

Georgia College offers a **B.S. in Exercise Science with a Pre-Professional concentration** designed for students planning to continue their education in professional schools such as physical therapy, occupational therapy, physician assistant programs, and more. This concentration provides a strong foundation in human movement and health sciences, combined with the prerequisite coursework needed for graduate study. [Visit our School of Health and Human Performances to learn more about the B.S. in Exercise Science.](http://www.gcsu.edu/health)

Students preparing for physical therapy can also get involved through the **Exercise Science Club**, which offers peer connection, career exploration, and service opportunities related to rehabilitation and healthcare.

RESOURCES

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) – Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) Admissions Process:

<https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/pt-admissions-process>

APTA – PTCAS: The Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service:

<https://www.apta.org/cas/ptcas>

Becoming a Physical Therapist:

<https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/becoming-a-pt>

Educational Testing Service (ETS) - GRE:

<https://www.ets.org/gre.html>

Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) Directory:

<https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/>

PTCAS Essay:

https://help.liaisonedu.com/PTCAS_Applicant_Help_Center/Filling_Out_Your_PTCAS_Application/Supporting_Information/06_Essay

PTCAS – GRE Requirements and Codes by Programs:

<https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/5254/GRE-Requirements-and-Codes-by-Program>

PTCAS Applicant Help Center:

https://help.liaisonedu.com/PTCAS_Applicant_Help_Center?navID=10737427434

PTCAS Application Preparation:

<https://www.apta.org/cas/ptcas/application-prep>