



## Undergraduate Academic Affairs Academic Advising

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## Pre-Health Information - Physical Therapy (PT) School

## Explore

## Motivation for medicine/personal characteristics

A qualified applicant to PT school must have not only a general understanding of the profession, but also a demonstrated interest in and awareness of medical and social issues. Prospective applicants should be prepared to answer the question, “Why do you want to be a physical therapist?” with a response beyond “I want to help people.”

## Experience

Desirable qualifications are a well rounded academic background, a knowledge of and exposure to the needs of individuals and society, and an awareness of current health care delivery systems. Diversity and cross-cultural competency are critical. Further, motivation for physical therapy careers can be measured in part by the candidate's exposure to health-care environments.

## Choosing a Major

While a bachelor's degree is necessary to be a competitive applicant to PT school, **PT schools do not give preference to any particular major.** You should be considering majors that align your interests, passions, and abilities. Your departmental adviser, in partnership with your pre-health adviser, can help ensure you take the appropriate pre-requisite courses for PT school as part of your coursework.

# Prepare

An excellent PT school applicant will have a strong grade point average, both overall and in the pre-requisite coursework. Additionally, a strong applicant will have a competitive GRE score. Beyond grades and test scores, PT schools will look for ample time spent shadowing a licensed physical therapist, experience volunteering in a clinical setting, and both research and leadership experiences.

Prerequisite courses for most PT schools are listed below; you should review the admissions information for each of your desired schools to be sure you are meeting all coursework and other requirements.

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## **Other Important Activities**

### **Freshman Year**

- Meet with your general adviser
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health 101"
- Consider joining a pre-health RSO
- Begin establishing relationships with faculty for future letters of recommendation
- Identify summer volunteer, research, and/or leadership opportunities related to medical field
- Review pre-health website

### **Sophomore Year**

- Meet with your general adviser
- Check in with a pre-health adviser
- Continue involvement with pre-health or other RSO
- Pursue meaningful clinical experiences (paid, volunteer, and/or research)
- Begin researching PT schools on APTA.org and other sites

### **Junior Year**

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to strategize coursework, GRE, and application(s) timing
- Consider taking GEN ST 297, "Pre-Health Application Class" in winter or spring quarter
- Seek leadership position(s) in RSO or other activity
- Continue meaningful clinical experiences
- Finalize list of 10-15 PT schools
- Familiarize yourself with application to PT schools (PTCAS)
- Request recommendation letters

#### **Spring quarter:**

- Take GRE by mid-April or earlier
- Apply to PT schools beginning June 1

### **Senior Year**

- Meet with your departmental adviser
- Meet with a pre-health adviser to prepare secondary application materials if necessary
- Prepare for campus visits and interviews
- Receive acceptances!
- Notify schools you will not be attending
- Complete UG coursework and graduate!
- Apply for financial aid as early as possible