

Physical Therapy

Health Professions Advising Office (HPAO), Student Access to Science Center, FO5-109

Phone: (562) 985-5720 Website: www.sascenter.org/hpao

Nature of the Work, Earnings and Occupational Outlook

Physical Therapists are dynamic health professionals who provide clinical expertise in the restoration, maintenance and promotion of optimal physical function. Physical Therapists evaluate and treat people of all ages with movement disorders and other health problems resulting from diseases, disorders, conditions or injuries. The treatment goals of Physical Therapists include making patients stronger, relieving their pain, helping them to regain and maintain maximum human performance, and educating patients on proper health maintenance. Treatment may include therapeutic exercise, cardiovascular endurance training, and training in activities of daily living.

Physical Therapists are employed in hospitals, private physical therapy offices, community health centers, industrial health centers, sports facilities, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, schools, research institutions, or teach in colleges or universities. They work with other health care providers such as physicians, occupational therapists, nurses, mental health professionals, and speech pathologists and audiologists. In 2006, about 173,000 physical therapists practiced in the U.S. (Occupational Outlook Handbook 2008-2009.) According to the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), the median salary for a physical therapist in May of 2006 was \$66,200 depending on position, years of experience, degree of education, geographic location, and practice setting

To obtain licensure and practice in the US requires graduation from an accredited professional physical therapy graduate program and that graduates pass the national licensure exam. The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) accredits Physical therapy programs. All accredited entry-level physical therapy programs are at the master's level (MS or MPT) or doctorate level (DPT). Most programs require two to three years of education including didactic work and clinical training in various health care settings. Physical Therapy graduate course work investigates questions related to body movement, simple and complex motor skill development, and the effects of therapeutic activity. Research in the field focuses on understanding the impairments underlying disability, or applications for practical clinical problems.

Physical Therapy Education

As of July 2009, there are 212 accredited programs, 12 of which offer MS or MPT degrees and 200 offering DPT degrees. APTA's vision is that by the year 2020, the majority of Physical Therapists in practice will possess a DPT. "The rationale for awarding the DPT is based on the fact that 1) PT practice requires considerable breadth and depth in educational preparation, a breadth and depth not easily acquired within the time constraints of the typical MPT program; 2) societal expectations that the fully autonomous healthcare practitioner with a scope of practice consistent with the *Guide to Physical Therapist Practice* be a clinical doctor; 3) the realization of the profession's goals in the coming decades, including direct access, "physician status" for reimbursement purposes, and clinical competence consistent with the preferred outcomes of evidence-based practice, will require that practitioners possess the clinical doctorate (consistent with medicine, osteopathy, dentistry, veterinary medicine, optometry, and podiatry); and 4) many existing professional (entry-level) MPT programs already meet the requirements for the clinical doctorate; in such cases, the graduate of a professional (entry-level) MPT program is denied the degree most appropriate to the program of study." (www.apta.org Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Degree Frequently Asked Questions, 2008)

There are currently 14 Physical Therapy programs in California. Accredited DPT programs in CA include Azusa Pacific University, Chapman University, Loma Linda University, Mount St. Mary's College, Samuel Merritt College, University of California, San Francisco/ San Francisco State, University of Southern California, University of the Pacific, CSU Fresno (MPT/DPT) and Western University. Those offering the master's degree are California State Universities at Long Beach, Northridge and Sacramento.

Admissions requirements vary by program but most admissions committees are very selective and are looking for specific prerequisites courses, strong academic and prerequisite course records, the Graduate Record Exam (GRE),

quality letters of recommendation, and work or volunteer experience in the field as indicators of potential to succeed. Application deadlines vary from October of the year prior to matriculation to May. Most programs require a student to have at least a 3.0 cumulative and prerequisite GPA, although the average GPA for accepted students may be higher. Increasingly, programs are also requiring applicants to have paid or volunteer experience in one or more physical therapy settings and may ask that a student have adult CPR certification. Admission requirements can vary widely from program to program. Most programs require Anatomy, Physiology, the year-long sequences of General Chemistry and Physics, all with laboratory plus courses in psychology and mathematics. Many programs also have additional required and strongly suggested courses. HPAO has compiled a CA PT program chart that compares admission requirements, which is available in the office or online at www.sascenter.org/hpao. Before planning your academic courses, consult each physical therapy program directly to confirm your selection. Students can obtain more information by visiting the American Physical Therapy Association web site address at www.apta.org or by visiting the Health Professions Advising Office (HPAO) in FO5-109.

Students interested in applying to the Physical Therapy program at CSULB should plan to attend a PT information session, offered monthly and visit the Dept. of Physical Therapy website. Requirements, as listed on the Dept. of PT website, are:

- Have a Bachelor's Degree in any field (Biology preferred)
- Have completed, or have in progress, all lower division prerequisite courses with at least a "C" in each course, a "B" is preferred.
- Have approximately 100- 200 hours of work experience (paid or volunteer) in as many of the following areas of physical therapy as possible: rehabilitation, geriatric, pediatric, and acute or general hospital (A hospital setting and work in all 4 areas is strongly recommended)
- Complete a departmental application with PTCAS and send various documents to the department (See Dept. website for details) *and* file a university application.

Prerequisites for the CSULB Physical Therapy Program

Each course must be a semester in length or equivalent quarter units. Grades of a **C** or better are required.

<u>Course Number</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Units</u>
Biology 208	Human Morphology	4
Biology 111 w/111L	Evolution and Diversity	4
Biology 212 w/ 212L	Cell and molecular bio	4
Biology 207 or 213 w/ 213L	Physiology	4
Biology 260	Biostatistics	3
Chemistry 111A & B	General Chemistry	5, 5
Physics 100 A & B	General Physics	4, 4
Psychology 100	General Psychology	3

Upon acceptance into the program, graduate students are considered conditionally classified students and must complete the following CSULB * coursework with grades of C or better in each course and an overall average of 3.0 or better to automatically advance to the professional program as unconditionally classified students.

<u>*Course Number</u>	<u>Course Title</u>	<u>Units</u>
Biology 341 & 441	Physiology for Therapists I & II	4, 3
HHS 374	Psychosocial Aspects Disability	3
HHS 401 & 402	Applied Anatomy I & II	3, 3
HHS 403	Tissue Mechanics and Aging	3
HHS 460	Neuroanatomy	4
HHS 471	Pathology	3

Physical Therapy Programs in CA

***Students maintain responsibility for verifying course selection with individual programs.**

PT Program	CSULB	CSU Fresno	CSU Northridge	CSU Sacramento	Azusa Pacific	Chapman
Website	www.csulb.edu	www.csufresno.edu	http://hhd.csun.edu/pt/	http://www.hhs.csus.edu/PT	www.apu.edu	www.chapman.edu
App. Deadline	Jan. 15 (Dept)	Nov. 30 (CSU) and Dec. 1 (PTCAS)	Jan 1(PTCAS) and Feb. 16(Dept)	Nov. 30 (CSU) and Jan 15. (PTCAS+Sup)	Oct. 1	Nov. 16
Degree Offered	MPT	MPT/DPT	MPT	MPT	DPT (Feb. start)	DPT
Class Size	32-36	20	40	32	40	48
Minimum GPA	C or better in prereqs., 3.0 prerequisites desired	3.0 minimum in prereqs./ 3.0 in last 60 units	3.0 min. in prereqs.	3.0 in prereqs., 2.5 in last 60 units	C or better in prereqs., 3.0 min.	3.0 prereq., 3.0 last 30 units
PT Experience Required	100-200 hours in as many areas as possible recommended	100 hours- 50 hrs inpatient, + additional 50 hrs	100 hours- 2/3 must be supervised by a PT	100 hours- in at least 2 settings	100 hours	40 hours
GRE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (w/in 5 years)	Yes
Letters of Recommendation	3 required- 1 PT, 1 faculty, 1 employer	3 required- 1 PT, 1 faculty	3 required- 1 PT, 2PT preferred	3 required- 2PT, 1 faculty	3 required- 1 PT	not required
Pre- Requisite Courses	Human Anatomy w/ lab	Human Physiology w/ lab	Human Anatomy and Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy and Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Biology -4 courses w/ lab (Anatomy, cell bio, gen. bio, physiology)	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab
	2 sem. General Chem. w/ lab	General and Organic Chem. or Biochemistry w/ labs	2 sem. General Chem. w/ lab	2 sem. General Chem. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	2 sem.Chem. w/ lab
	Biostatistics	Gen. Psych.	Gen. & Abnormal Psych.	Public Speaking	Physics 1 yr. w/ lab	1 sem. Bio. w/ lab
	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	Statistics	2 sem. Physics w/ lab
	3 sem. Gen Bio. w/ lab or 2 sem Gen Bio and Physio. w/ labs	Statistics	Statistics	Psychology (2 sem.)	Psychology (2 sem.)	Psychology (2 sem.)
	1 sem Psych. + *additional courses to be completed at CSULB		Gen. Bio w/ lab	Stats, Kinesiology w/ lab, Physio., Pathophysio., Pharmacology	3 courses in Humanities, one must be English comp.	Statistics

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PT Program	Loma Linda	Mount St. Mary's	Samuel Merritt	UOP	UCSF/ SFSU	USC	Western U.
Website	www.llu.edu	www.msmc.la.edu	www.samuelmerritt.edu	www.pacific.edu	http://ptrehab.medschool.ucsf.edu/	www.usc.edu/pt	www.westernu.edu
App. Deadline	Nov. 1	Dec. 1	Oct. 15	Nov. 2	Oct. 1	Dec. 1	Nov. 16
Degree Offered	DPT	DPT	DPT	DPT	DPT	DPT	DPT
Class Size	80	30	32	36	34	95	40-44
Minimum GPA	3	3.0 prerequisites, 3.0 last 60 units	2.8 last 60 units, 2.6 prerequisites	C or above in pre-reqs	3.0 overall, 3.0 last 60 units	3.0 overall	2.8 overall and prerequisite
PT Experience Required	80 hours- 20 inpatient	Required- No minimum, at least 1 inpatient and 1 outpatient	40 hours inpatient	50 hours- 25 inpatient	150 hours	Substantial Experience highly rec.	100 hours min. in 2 or more settings. Min. 40 hr per setting
GRE	contact program	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Letters of Recommendation	3 required	3 required- 1 faculty, 1 PT	2- 1 PT from, 1 faculty	3 required- 1 faculty, 1 PT	3 required- 1 PT	3 required- 1 faculty, 1 PT	3 required- 1 PT, 1 faculty, 1 PT or faculty
Pre- Requisite Courses	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab	Human Anatomy, Human Physiology- each w/ lab
	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab	Chem. 1 yr. w/ lab
	Physics 1yr. w/ lab	3 sem. Psych.	Gen. Bio. 1 yr w/ lab	2 sem. Psych.- 1 abnormal	Abnormal Psychology	2 sem. Psych	2 sem. Psych
	Statistics	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab	2 sem. Physics w/ lab
	1 additional natural science course	2 sem. Bio. w/ lab	Statistics	1 sem. General Bio. w/ lab	Statistics	2 sem. Bio.	English Comp.
	Psych, Hum/Dev., Comm.*See website for additional reqs.	3 u. upper div. biology, stats, comm	2 sem. Psych., English comp., Exercise Physio.	Stats, Ex. Physio., Medical Term.	Cell Bio. Or Vertebrate Histology or Micro	One sem colleg-level math	Statistics