



PROFESSION OVERVIEW

Physical therapists (PTs) help injured or ill people improve their movement and manage their pain. These therapists are often an important part of the rehabilitation, treatment, and prevention of patients with chronic conditions, illnesses, or injuries.

LENGTH OF PROGRAM

- **Doctoral Program:** Typically three – five years



COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The prerequisites for physical therapy schools **vary greatly**. A student's best resource for finding program-specific requirements is the **Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS)**; <http://www.ptcas.org/ProgramPrereqs/>.

Ultimately, it is the responsibility of the applicant to know the exact requirements and deadlines for each school to which they apply.

The courses below will provide a strong foundation for PT school.

- **One year of general biology** BIOL 107/108
- **One year of general chemistry** CHEM 201/CHEM 202
- **One year of physics** PHYS 101/102 or PHYS 105/106
- **Introductory psychology** PSYC 100
- **Statistics** BIO 209 or PSYC 227
- **Schools may require English, additional biology, math and/or other courses**

ADMISSION CRITERIA

PT programs are looking for well-rounded applicants. The following list identifies criteria considered during the application process. Check the Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) for average grade point average (GPA) and Graduate Record Exam (GRE) scores and required observations hours for programs of interest; <http://www.ptcas.org/ProgramPrereqs/>.

- Overall and science GPA

- Knowledge of, and commitment to enter, a helping health care profession

- PT-related experience/observation

- Interview

- GRE scores

- Interpersonal communication, problem solving, critical thinking and leadership skills

- Letters of evaluation



APPLICATION TIMELINE

The application timeline is unique depending on when you are prepared and ready to pursue physical therapy school. If you plan to apply directly after graduating from IWU, you will want to complete the prerequisite courses by the end of your junior year and apply during the summer before senior year. If you choose to take a gap year, you should complete your prerequisites by the end of your senior year and can then apply the summer after graduation OR when you are ready.

Students today are often waiting a year or more after graduation before applying to a health professions school. This does not put the applicant at a disadvantage. Many programs look favorably upon applicants who have taken an extra year or two to mature and gain work experience, and who can make a better decision regarding a career in a health profession; see **"Make the Most of Your Gap Year"** (<https://students-residents.aamc.org/applying-medical-school/article/making-most-your-gap-year/>).

APPLICATION SERVICE

The Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service (PTCAS); www.ptcsd.org outlines critical dates for the application cycle. Check with application service and specific program websites for deadlines.

STANDARDIZED TEST

Typically, the Graduated Record Exam (GRE) is required of applicants to physical therapy school. The exam is offered year-round and consists of three sections: Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning and Analytic Writing. The test should take about 4 hours to complete. The scaled score for the Verbal and Quantitative Reasoning sections ranges from 130-170, and the Analytical Writing scaled score section ranges from 0-6. Unofficial scores are received 10-15 days after the exam.

You can find more information regarding the GRE, including free and low-cost preparation materials, at www.ets.org/gre.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) <https://www.apta.org/>
- Exploring Health Careers <https://explorehealthcareers.org/>



American Physical Therapy Association
The Science of Healing. The Art of Caring.



Don't forget to check out **Handshake!**

Handshake is your one-stop source for internship and job postings, campus recruiting, career fairs, and career center resources. Once you're on the login page, enter your iwu.edu email address and click next. If you are already in the system, then you can just select "IWU Single Sign-on" and enter your IWU net-ID and password.

Please visit www.iwu.edu/career-center/handshake for more information on Handshake.