



Health Professions Student Center

WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY



Pre-Physical Therapy

Physical therapists help people develop the ability to move their bodies with ease, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. They develop treatment plans for patients of all ages, from newborns to the very oldest, that promote healing from injury, enable active lifestyles, or allow adaption to physical limitations. Physical therapists work in a variety of settings, including hospitals, private practices, outpatient clinics, home health agencies, schools, and fitness facilities.

Explore Your Options

Pre-physical therapy (PT) is not an undergraduate degree. The academic prerequisites for admission to a graduate-level PT program may be combined with any field of study. You are encouraged to pursue any major that interests you and in which you have a desire to succeed.

WSU students majoring in subjects from art to zoology have gone on to earn advanced degrees at professional schools all over the country.

And at WSU you are not locked into a major. If your interests change, we'll work with you to revise your goals and your academic plan.

Programs leading to a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) require a core set of science and education courses be completed prior to admission (see reverse for course listing). On average, after earning your bachelor's degree, you'll spend another three years completing your DPT studies.

Normally, you will begin the complex DPT application process in your junior year.



The Cougar Advantage

Becoming a successful applicant for any advanced degree requires more than just completing a series of classes. The Health Professions Student Center provides opportunities and resources to help you discover the path that is best for you.

Your Health Professions specialist can guide you through the nuances of preparing for a career as a physical therapist:

- Course selection
- Networking and volunteering
- Gaining industry experience
- Essay writing workshops
- Resume reviews
- Practice interviews
- GRE review and practice
- Requesting recommendation letters
- Reviewing application criteria
- Selecting professional schools
- Navigating the PTCAS centralized application service

Meeting with both your HPSC specialist and your academic advisor at least once a semester will maximize the combined support and expertise available to you.



Peer Support

With more than 300 active student clubs on campus, you're bound to find one that fits your style.

The WSU Pre-PT/OT Club can provide you with an academic and social support system and opportunities to get involved in community service projects, gain leadership experience, meet current healthcare professionals, build your personal portfolio, and prepare for graduate school.

Learn more at cas.wsu.edu/health/students/clubs.html.

✓ Preparing for Graduate School

The DPT application process is very competitive. Long before you begin to fill out the paperwork, you will need to work diligently to build a portfolio showcasing your academic success, personal achievements, industry experience, career goals, and your compassionate character.

GPA requirements vary from program to program. In general, you must have at least a 3.0 overall GPA to be seriously considered. Admitted students, however, often have a GPA of 3.4 or higher.

Admission committees for physical therapy programs consider your entire portfolio of skills and character, including:

- Evidence of compassion, empathy, and respect
- Good interpersonal and teamwork skills
- Personal integrity and high ethical standards
- Excellent English speaking and writing skills
- Extracurricular activities that demonstrate personal leadership skills
- Clear understanding of the roles and responsibilities of a physical therapist
- Ability to relate appropriately with diverse individuals, from children to adults to the elderly, and with a variety of disabilities, medical conditions, or injuries
- Extensive paid or volunteer experience in PT clinics, hospitals, or other settings
- Strong letters of recommendation from your college professors and physical therapists with whom you have worked
- Minimum scores on the Graduate Record Exam (GRE), usually taken just after your junior year

📖 Common DPT Prerequisite Courses

These courses may be taken concurrently with classes required for your chosen major field of study at WSU.

Anatomy

BIOL 315 Gross and Microanatomy

Biology (two semesters)

BIOL 106 Introductory Biology (organismal)

BIOL 107 Introductory Biology (cell biology and genetics)

MBIOS 101 Introductory Microbiology

Chemistry* (two semesters)

CHEM 105 Principles of Chemistry I

CHEM 106 Principles of Chemistry II

Human Physiology

BIOL 251 Introductory Human Physiology

Physics* (two semesters)

PHYSICS 101 General Physics

PHYSICS 102 General Physics

Psychology (one to three semesters)

PSYCH 105 Introductory Psychology

PSYCH 333 Abnormal Psychology

PSYCH 361 Principles of Developmental Psychology

Statistics* (one semester)

MATH 212 Introduction to Statistical Methods

PSYCH 311 Elementary Statistics in Psychology

Additional Coursework

Some DPT programs require further coursework in biology, mathematics, or social sciences.

* Students must meet WSU math standards to enroll.

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