

### **NATURE OF THE WORK, EARNINGS AND OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK**

Physical Therapists (PTs) 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 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 2017, physical therapists' median salary was \$86,850. About 239,800 PT jobs were held in the U.S, with much faster than average growth of 28% projected through 2026. Demand for physical therapy services will come from the aging baby boomers, who are staying active later in life, and for the need to treat people with mobility issues stemming from chronic conditions, such as diabetes or obesity ([Occupational Outlook Handbook, 2018](#)).

### **PHYSICAL THERAPY PREPARATION**

Admission 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 Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification. Prerequisite 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.

**For a LIST AND DESCRIPTIONS OF PT EDUCATION PROGRAMS visit:**

- Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education's (CAPTE) database of accredited programs website:  
<http://www.capteonline.org/Programs/>
- The Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) website:  
<http://www.ptcas.org/DirectoryProgramsList/>

**For a chart listing ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS for PT programs visit:**

<http://www.ptcas.org/ProgramPrereqs/>

### **PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION**

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) accredits physical therapy programs. Professional (entry-level) physical therapist education programs in the United States only offer the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree to all new students who enroll. The Master of Physical Therapy (MPT) and Master of Science in Physical Therapy (MSPT) degrees are no longer offered to any new students in the United States ([APTA Education Overview, 2018](#)) 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.

There are currently 15 accredited Physical Therapy programs in California: Azusa Pacific University, Chapman University, Loma Linda University, Mount St. Mary’s College, Samuel Merritt College, Western University, UC San Francisco, San Francisco State, USC, CSU San Marcos, University of the Pacific, CSU Fresno (MPT/DPT), CSU Long Beach, CSU Northridge (MPT/DPT), and CSU Sacramento.

### PHYSICAL THERAPY LICENSURE

To practice in the US students need to graduate from an accredited professional physical therapy graduate program and pass the national licensure exam. Most programs require two to three years of education including didactic work and clinical training in various health care settings.

*This is NOT a comprehensive list of prerequisites for all programs. Students maintain responsibility for verifying course selection with individual programs.*

### AZUSA PACIFIC UNIVERSITY

<http://catalog.apu.edu/graduateprofessional/behavioral-applied-sciences/physical-therapy/physical-therapy-phd/>

Azusa Pacific University Prerequisites	IVC Courses
Biology - four courses from: Human Anatomy with lab Human Physiology with lab Cell Biology or General Biology with lab One additional Biology course	Four courses from: BIO 11 BIO 12 BIO 16 or BIO 1/BIO 1L or BIO 1H/BIO 1L One additional Biology course
One year of General Chemistry or Organic Chemistry	CHEM 1A & CHEM 1B or CHEM 12A & CHEM 12B
One year of Physics with lab	PHYS 4A & PHYS 4B
Exercise Physiology	KNES 104
Statistics	MATH 10, PSYC 10/10H, ECON 10/10H, or MGT 10/10H
General Psychology and Any other Psychology course	PSYC 1/1H and one of the following: PSYC 2, 3, 5/ 5H, 6, 7, 13/13H, 20, 30, 32, 33, 37/37H
English Composition	WR 1/1H
Humanities and Arts – two courses from: English Literature History/Political Science/Sociology Music/Art Appreciation Philosophy/Ethics (Recommended) Speech/Communication (Recommended)	Two courses from: LIT 1 Refer to catalog/schedule of courses offered MUS 20/20H or ARTH 20 PHIL 2 COMM 1/1H or COMM 5
<b>Additional Courses (recommended but not required):</b> Athletic Training, Exercise Science, Kinesiology/Biomechanics, Nutrition, and Writing Course	

## CHAPMAN UNIVERSITY

<https://www.chapman.edu/crean/academic-programs/graduate-programs/physical-therapy/admissions.aspx>

Chapman University Prerequisites	IVC Courses
One year of Biology with lab (not botany)	BIO 16 and BIO 80/80H
One year of Human Anatomy and Physiology	BIO 11 and BIO 12
One year sequence of General Chemistry with labs	CHEM 1A & CHEM 1B
One year sequence of General Physics with labs	PHYS 4A & PHYS 4B
One course in Psychology	PSYC 1/1H, PSYC 37/37H, or PSYC 6
One course in Social/Human Behavior	PSYC 1/1H, PSYC 37/37H, or PSYC 6
One course in Statistics	MATH 10 or PSYC 10/10H or ECON 10/10H or MGT 10/10H

## CSU NORTHRIDGE

<https://www.csun.edu/health-human-development/physical-therapy/program-prerequisites>

CSU Northridge Prerequisites	IVC Courses
Biology with lab	Any BIO course with a lab
Anatomy with lab	BIO 11
Physiology with lab	BIO 12
One year of General Chemistry with lab	CHEM 1A & CHEM 1B or CHEM 12A & CHEM 12B
One year of General Physics	PHYS 2A & PHYS 2B or PHYS 4A & PHYS 4B
Statistics	MATH 10 or PSYC 10/10H or ECON 10/10H or MGT 10/10H
Psychology	Any PSYC course
Psychology – Upper division	Not available at IVC

## CSU LONG BEACH <http://web.csulb.edu/colleges/chhs/departments/physical-therapy/requirements-for-admission/index.html>

CSU Long Beach-Biology w/Physiology option Prerequisites	IVC Courses
Human Physiology	BIO 12
Human Anatomy	BIO 11
Introduction to Evolution and Diversity	BIO 80/80H
Introduction to Cell and Molecular Biology	BIO 16
Statistics	MATH 10 or PSYC 10/10H
Two semesters of Chemistry I	CHEM 1A & CHEM 1B or CHEM 12A
Two semesters of General Physics	PHYS 2A & PHYS 2B
General Psychology	PSYC 1/1H

## UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

<https://dpt.usc.edu/residential-dpt-program/admissions/application-requirements/>

USC Prerequisites	IVC Courses
Two semesters of General Biology (not Botany or Zoology)	BIO 1 & BIO 16
Two semesters of Human Anatomy and Physiology with lab	BIO 11 & BIO 12
Two semesters of General Chemistry with lab	CHEM 1A & CHEM 1B
Two semesters of General Physics with lab	PHYS 2A & PHYS 2B
General Psychology or Abnormal Psychology	PSYC 1/1H or PSYC 37/37H
Statistics	MATH 10 or PSYC 10/10H
College-level geometry or trigonometry is recommended but not required	MATH 124
Work Experience (volunteer or paid)	A minimum of 150 hours of clinical experience in a variety of physical therapy settings is required.

## LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY

<https://alliedhealth.llu.edu/academics/physical-therapy/degree-options-physical-therapy/entry-level-doctor-dpt#prereq>

The ENTRY-LEVEL DOCTORATE program is for individuals who have an earned Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university

Loma Linda University Prerequisites	IVC Courses
<b>Natural Sciences</b> Human Anatomy & Physiology with lab sequence General Chemistry with lab sequence General Physics with lab sequence Statistics (one course)  Two additional Biological Science courses Medical Terminology	BIO 11 & BIO 12 CHEM 1A & CHEM1B PHYS 2A & PHYS 2B or PHYS 4A & PHYS 4B & PHYS 4C MATH 10 or PSYC 10/10H or ECON 10/10H or MGT 10/10H Two additional Biological Science courses Not Available at IVC
<b>Social Sciences</b> General Psychology Human Growth and Development	PSYC 1/1H PSYC 7/HD 7 or PSYC 6
<b>Communication</b> Speech	COMM 1/1H
<b>Work Experience</b>	A minimum of 80 hours of work/observation experience (volunteer/employee) in a physical therapy department, 20 hours of which must be in an in-patient setting and 20 hours must be in an outpatient setting.

## MOUNT ST. MARY'S - LOS ANGELES

<https://www.msmu.edu/graduate-programs/physical-therapy/admission/>

Mount St. Mary's – LA Prerequisites	IVC Courses
Two semesters of Biology with lab	BIO 2 and BIO 5 or BIO 16
Two semesters of Human Anatomy and Physiology	BIO 11 & BIO 12
Two semesters of Chemistry with lab	CHEM 1A & CHEM 1B
Two semesters of Physics with lab	PHYS 2A & PHYS 2B
One semester of General Psychology Two Psychology Electives - 6 units, developmental highly recommended	PSYC 1/1H PSYC 7/HD 7 and PSYC 6
One semester of Statistics	MATH 10 or PSYC 10/10H or ECON 10/10H or MGT 10/10H
One semester of Oral Communication	COMM 1/1H
Once semester of Written Communication	WR 1/1H
One Upper-Division Science, Psychology or Kinesiology course	Not Available at IVC
<b>Additional Recommended Courses:</b> <i>Computer Science/Literacy, Ethics/Critical Thinking, Gerontology, Kinesiology, Motor Learning/Development and Psychobiology</i>	