Pre-Pt Planning Guide

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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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Math/Stats</th>
<th>Chemistry (any two)</th>
<th>Biology</th>
<th>Physics (any two)</th>
<th>Behavioral Science (2-3)</th>
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<td>Stats</td>
<td>CHEM 142/145</td>
<td>BIO 180</td>
<td>PHYS 114/117</td>
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<td>CHEM 162/165</td>
<td>BIO 220</td>
<td>PHYS 116/119</td>
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<td>CHEM 120</td>
<td>Anatomy w/ lab</td>
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<td>CHEM 221</td>
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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 career coach
- 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 career coach 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 career coach 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