



SMU PRE-HEALTH PROFESSIONS

Suggested Pre-Physical Therapy Plan

Note: Some science courses may be completed in summer terms.



Individual program requirements may change at any time, and this plan may not reflect the most current information. It is the student's responsibility to review, understand, follow, and remain up to date with the policies, guidelines, and requirements (including prerequisite coursework) of each individual physical therapy program and the application service, PTCAS.

This plan could vary depending on the major chosen. Consult your academic advisor and check individual degree plans for suggested sequencing of courses. **Grades of C (not C-) or better** are required to meet specific science (and math) prerequisites for admission to PT (physical therapy) school. **Consult with your advisor before advancing to the next level course.** Combined science and math prerequisites include courses coded as biology, chemistry, physics, math, and statistics.

1 st Year Fall				1 st Year Spring			
CHEM	1303	General Chemistry I		CHEM	1304	General Chemistry II	
CHEM	1113	General Chemistry I Lab		CHEM	1114	General Chemistry II Lab	
BIOL	1301	Introductory Biology I		BIOL	1302	Introductory Biology II	
BIOL	1101	Introductory Biology I Lab		BIOL	1102	Introductory Biology II Lab	
WRTR	1312	Introduction to Academic Writing		WRTR	1313	Writing and Critical Reasoning	
MATH	1337	Calculus		STAT	2331	Statistics	

2 nd Year Fall				2 nd Year Spring			
BIOL	2441	Anatomy & Physiology I		BIOL	2442	Anatomy & Physiology II	
PHYS	1307	General Physics I		PHYS	1308	General Physics II	
PHYS	1105	Physics I Lab		PHYS	1106	Physics II Lab	
PSYC	1300	Introduction to Psychology		PSYC	2332	Developmental Psychology	

3 rd Year Fall				3 rd Year Spring			
APSM	3411	Exercise Physiology	GRE →				

Students can choose any major; however, courses offered in Applied Physiology & Health Management (APHM) are a good fit for students interested in becoming physical therapists. Additional recommended (or required) courses may include **Medical Terminology, Speech/Communication, Biomechanics, Anatomy of Movement, Physiology of Health and Disease, and Nutrition**. Additional courses in behavioral science (psychology/sociology) are also recommended (or required) by some programs. Medical Terminology is not offered at SMU. **Review program websites to confirm required prerequisite courses, observation hours, and documentation.**

Statistics can be moved to a later semester to better accommodate a student's schedule. Pre-physical therapy students may incorporate study abroad in their college plan, usually before the spring of Year 3 or during the summer. Meet with your academic advisor and plan ahead.

Students may complete PHYS 1303/1105 & PHYS 1304/1106 instead of PHYS 1307/1105 & PHYS 1308/1106. **Note: MATH 1338 is a prerequisite (or co-requisite) for PHYS 1304. Physics can be moved to a later semester to better accommodate a student's schedule.**

It is the student's responsibility to understand the specific requirements for individual programs. Most PT programs strongly recommend or require observation hours. Refer to individual programs for the required (or recommended) number of healthcare experiences (HCE) - including shadowing, volunteering, or employment. Applicants also may be required to have a licensed physical therapist verify the hours. Consult with individual programs for specific documentation requirements.

Pre-physical therapy students should plan to take the GRE in early spring of the year they intend to apply (no later than April/May). The GRE (Graduate Record Exam) is offered multiple times during the year. **Some programs may no longer require the GRE.** Meet with the Office of Pre-Health Advising or Dr. Scott Davis (Applied Physiology and Health Management) for more information.



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Important Steps for Pre-PT Students

1. Compile a list of schools – Is the GRE required or recommended?
2. Research individual programs – What prerequisites are required?
3. Complete prerequisites.
4. Seek Healthcare Experiences (HCE) including shadowing – How many hours are recommended or required?
5. Document all experiences – What documentation is required?
6. Attend virtual or in-person PT program fairs/information sessions.
7. Take the GRE (no later than April/May in the year of application).
8. Craft personal statement and meet with letter writers for letters of recommendation.
9. Apply to programs using [PTCAS](#) (Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service).

Application Timeline (begin process in January of the year of application) for PT School

1. Create a PTCAS account – Applications open in mid-June for submission.
2. Request 3 Letters of Recommendation (minimum).
3. Request official transcripts.
4. **Submit application as soon as possible due to rolling admissions.**
5. Register for [Casper](#) (situational judgement test) if required and submit results.
6. Submit Supplemental Applications.
7. Prepare for Interviews (usually during the fall of Year 4 or year of application).

Important Resources

- PTCAS (Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service): www.ptcas.org
- Course Prerequisites by Program: <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/5287/Comparison-of-Course-Prerequisites-by-Program>
- PT Observation Hours by Program: <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/5257/PT-Observation-Requirements-by-Program>
- Directory of PT Programs: <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/39/List-of-PTCAS-Programs>
- Overview of Admissions Process: <https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/pt-admissions-process>