Physical Therapy Information

Career Description

Physical therapists (PTs) work closely with patients to help restore function, improve mobility, relieve pain, and prevent or limit permanent disabilities. Patients may include accident victims and individuals with disabling conditions. A PT works to help their patients reintegrate into the community or workplace by implementing a treatment strategy catered to an individual patient’s needs. The average salary for physical therapists is $86,850 (bls.gov).

Academic Factors for Physical Therapy School Admission

- **Major:** Students interested in attending a physical therapy program may choose any major while at BYU. We recommend that you choose a major you like, and then incorporate the prerequisite courses into your schedule. Also, choose a major that can be your contingency plan if you do not get accepted to PT school or later choose not to go.
- **GPA:** Both your cumulative GPA and science GPA are an important part of your application. In the 2016-2017 application cycle, the mean overall GPA of BYU students accepted to PT schools was 3.43 and the mean science GPA was 3.19.
- **GRE Scores:** In the 2016-2017 application cycle, the average GRE score of BYU students accepted to PT schools was 156 (Verbal Reasoning), 155 (Quantitative Reasoning), and 4 (Analytical Writing).

Sample Prerequisites

*Remember, this list is a sample and may not be adequate for every school. Consult with your selected schools for actual requirements and better accuracy. Pay close attention to lab requirements and specific credit hours required.

**Psychology**

- PSYCH 111 General Psychology 3 credits
  *Some schools require additional psychology classes

**Statistics**

- STAT 121 Principles of Statistics 3 credits

**Biology**

- PDBIO 120 Science of Biology 3 credits
- MMBIO 121/122 General Biology & Lab 3 credits

**Anatomy & Physiology**

- PDBIO 220 Human Anatomy with Lab 3 credits
  (*may not fulfill all requirements as it is only 3 credits instead of 4)
- PDBIO 305 Human Physiology 4 credits
- PDBIO 363 Advanced Physiology Lab 1 credit
- EXSC 463 Exercise Physiology 3 credits

**General or Inorganic Chemistry**

- CHEM 105 General College Chemistry 4 credits
- CHEM 106 General College Chemistry 3 credits
- CHEM 107 General College Chemistry Lab 1 credit

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Physics

PHSCS 105 General Physics I 3 credits
PHSCS 107 General Physics Lab I 1 credit
PHSCS 106 General Physics II 3 credits
PHSCS 108 General Physics Lab II 1 credit

or PHSCS 121/123 (calculus-based)

Mathematics

MATH 111 Trigonometry 2 credits
MATH 112 Calculus 4 credits

Non-Academic Factors Considered for Physical Therapy School Admission

- **Rolling Admissions**: PTCAS, the centralized application service for PT schools, opens in July. Due to rolling admissions it is very important to submit your PT school application as close to the opening date as possible. Often students who are otherwise qualified are not accepted solely due to the fact that there were no more available seats because the student applied too late.

- **Clinical Experience**: Clinical experience with a PT is vital when applying to a PT program. You should become acquainted with a few PTs and shadow, volunteer, or work to gain some firsthand experience in what PTs do on a daily basis. To be competitive, try to obtain at least 150 total shadowing hours in at least two different settings.

- **Community Service**: Emphasis on service varies, but it is recommended to have a history of service, approximately 50+ hours per year. Service activities should demonstrate consistent and long term commitment to helping others, but do not need to be physical therapy related. Community service (teaching English classes, humanitarian service projects, etc.) completed on a mission is a good starting point, but engagement in your own community is seen as more valuable and should demonstrate a current pattern of service.

- **Leadership**: Most students are able to accrue leadership experience over the years as they are involved in working, service, and extracurricular activities.

- **Research**: Experience participating in hypothesis-based research always looks good on your application and is strongly recommended.

General Timeline

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