

Physical Therapist Assistant

PTA Associate Level Degree

The physical Therapist assistant is an important member of the healthcare community, playing a vital role in wellness, prevention and rehabilitation under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist. It is believed that the PTA program plays an imperative role in producing rehabilitation professionals that demonstrate values that reflect positively on themselves, their profession and their community. Throughout this program knowledge and experience are acquired within a liberal arts environment which emphasizes honesty, civility, and personal and social responsibility. Each quality reflects outwardly on the strong character required to become a fundamental part of the physical therapy profession.

The faculty believe each student is an individual with varied past experience and learning styles. Similar to clients in a clinical setting, each student will need to be approached with this in mind. This will assist the student in finding success in his or her academic and clinical endeavor. The faculty will utilize various contemporary and conventional teaching styles with the goal of meeting the needs of a diverse student population. The faculty will strive to model professional attitude and behavior to exhibit the qualities that reflect positively on the program, university and profession.

The curriculum for the PTA program is designed to meet the needs of the physical therapy profession and follow closely the guidelines set forth by Commission for Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association. The curriculum is geared to sequential mastery of didactic material and practical skills. The integration of evidence based learning and application to case based scenarios facilitates development of sound critical thinking and decision making skills readily applicable to clinical practice. It is believed that this curricular format in conjunction with an environment of mutual respect, honesty, accountability and promotion of interaction between students and faculty, will allow for successful outcomes for both the student and the program at large.

Each faculty member offers a unique clinical and educational background, thus broadening the scope from which successful students will draw insight. The faculty are facilitators of the education process. Students are expected to play an active role in their educational experience, seeking additional learning resources and opportunities to encourage independent thinking and the development of the professional attribute of lifelong learning. Students are encouraged to engage peers in discussion, idea exchange and demonstrate an overall ability to interact respectfully with each other, faculty, clinical staff and patients. Students are provided with hands on laboratory experience and clinical affiliations that will encourage not only recall of information, but proficiency in transfer of knowledge to the skills essential for successful transition to post graduate employment.

Accreditation Status

The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Central Methodist University is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 660-248-6640 or email jspielba@centralmethodist.edu.

Program Goals & Objectives

Program Goal 1: The PTA program provides a curriculum that includes content and learning experiences that prepare graduates who are competent and safe in the provision of skills essential for carrying out the established plan of care under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist in the current healthcare environment.

Program Goal 2: To provide the effective resources and mentorship for program graduates to successfully complete the NPTE for PTAs, and obtain gainful employment.

Program Goal 3: To graduate knowledgeable entry-level professional physical therapist assistants who are well-versed in the PTA's point of entry into the patient/client management model, and who communicate effectively to meet the needs of a variety of health care settings.

Program Goal 4: The PTA program provides an environment that encourages students to pursue leadership roles and life-long learning opportunities, with the ability to contribute to the betterment of the profession and community in which they live.

Program Goal 5: The PTA program graduates physical therapy assistants who demonstrate sound critical thinking skills utilizing acquired knowledge, evidence based resources and clinical skills.

Program Objective 1: Be prepared to achieve licensure and practice effectively as an entry-level physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist.

Program Objective 2: Demonstrate the necessary skills and professional behaviors to practice as an entry level physical therapy assistant, including competence in performing assessment techniques and treatment interventions from within the physical therapist's plan of care for patients across the lifespan

Program Objective 3: Demonstrate appropriate, culturally competent communication with patients/clients, families, colleagues, and other health care providers.

Program Objective 4: Demonstrate a commitment to professional growth, service to others and lifelong learning

Non-Discrimination Policy

Central Methodist University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sexual preference, religion, sex, national origin, age or federally defined disability in its recruitment and admission of students. The university's educational programs, activities, financial aid, loan and scholarship programs are made available to all qualified students without regard to race, color, sexual preference, religion, sex, national origin, age, or federally defined disability. The university complies with all federal and state non-discrimination requirements.

Admissions Requirements

Applications will be accepted between January 1-March 15. Late applicants may be considered for qualified applicants if seats remain available beyond the March 15 deadline.

Requirements

1. Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences;
2. Applicants submit the application for admission to the PTA program.
3. Applicants submit an ACT with cumulative score of 20 or above or ATI TEAS score of 60 or above.
4. Applicants must score 20 or above on the ACT English sub score, OR have previously completed ENG110 and ENG111.
5. Applicants must score 22 or above on the ACT Math sub score OR have completed the prerequisite courses and be eligible to take MA103.
6. Applicants who have earned a bachelor degree are eligible for consideration for acceptance into the program without submitting an entrance exam score.
7. Applicants must have earned a high school GPA of 3.0 or higher to be considered for admission
8. Applicants with college level or dual credit courses must have earned a 2.75 cumulative GPA for all college level coursework.
9. Must earn a grade of C or higher in Human Anatomy if completed.
10. Applicants obtain and submit two (2) references. One must be from an employer or educator, the other may include coaches, organization leaders, individuals who can attest to the students' professional and organizational skills. A form is available as part of the application to the PTA Program.
11. Applicants must complete a **minimum** of 24 hours of observation in a physical therapy setting supervised by a licensed PT or PTA. It is recommended that the applicant obtain these hours in a variety of health care settings. Hours completed and signature of supervisor is required. A form is available as part of the application to the PTA Program.
12. The top 25 applicants, based on a predetermined scoring system, will be invited for a group interview process.

After Acceptance

1. Students must provide vaccination records for Rubella, Tetanus, Mumps, Polio, Chicken Pox, and submit proof of or waiver of Hepatitis B vaccination
2. Students must provide proof of physical examination to ensure that they are physically capable of performing the required minimum physical standards of the physical therapist assistant student
3. Students are required to be CPR certified as a Healthcare provider prior to clinical affiliations
4. A criminal background check must be completed-students will be notified via mail or email regarding the process of completing this requirement. Students are responsible for the cost of this process.*
5. A drug screen will be completed prior to clinical participation- students will be notified via mail or email correspondence regarding the process of completing this requirement. Students are responsible for the cost of this screen.*

6. Students are required to be covered by a personal health insurance

Consideration for admission to the program will be based on applicants meeting the above requirements. In the event that the number of applicants exceeds the number of positions available in the program, the best qualified applicants will be determined based on an established rubric. A wait list will be created for qualified applicants that were initially accepted. Wait listed students will be contacted in order placed on list in the event an accepted student gives up their spot in the cohort.

*An unsatisfactory result on the criminal background check or drug screen may result in an individual's inability to participate in clinical education experiences. Clinical education experiences are required for successful completion of the program.

PTA fees Additional Cost

In addition to tuition, housing, books/supplies, and transportation costs students in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program will incur additional expenses. Each of the following tasks must be completed prior to the beginning of the program. The following is a breakdown of the most common costs; which are subject to changes initiated by the vendor:

Individual costs to be paid by the student:

1. Criminal background check \$70-100
2. Urine drug screen \$65
3. CPR-American Heart Association \$50
4. Personal Health Insurance- Variable cost.
5. Professional membership to APTA- \$90/year

Information regarding acceptable vendors for certified background check and urine drug screen will be provided to each applicant by the Health Professions Division office.

Immunizations are required to be up to date. Cost of updating immunizations status will vary greatly dependent upon student needs and provider charges. Students are responsible for all charges related to updating immunization status. Each applicant should work with his/her primary care physician for updating and or to verify the immunization status. Details regarding these expectations and requirements will be enclosed in the letter of acceptance to the program and is included in the student handbook.

Program Fee

Liability Insurance: \$50 for duration of program. This is a requirement for participation in clinical labs and practice and is to be paid by the student at the start of the program.

Grading/Program Progression

Graduation Criteria*

Students must earn a 75% (C) in all PTA courses to pass the course and remain in the PTA Program. PTA specific courses are only offered one time per year. Failure to pass the course with the required criteria will result in dismissal from the program.

Lab practical examinations will be given in PTA courses introducing technical skills. All lab practical examinations must be passed with a minimum of 75% (C). If a student is unsuccessful on the initial attempt remediation will be provided. The student must earn a minimum of 75% on the second attempt. 75% will be recorded as the score regardless of score achieved on second attempt. Failure to achieve the 75% required minimum score on the second attempt will result in failure of the course and withdrawal from the program.

Grading Scale: A 93-100, B 85-92.99, C 75-84.99, D 70-75.99, F 0-69.99

Clinical performance will be evaluated using the Clinical Performance Instrument for the Physical Therapy Assistant © APTA. Additional assignments will be required as noted in clinical education syllabi. Clinical grades will be recorded on a pass/fail basis, with consideration for CPI and assignment completion. Failure of a clinical will result in dismissal from the program.

Students that are able to complete the designated general education and PTA technical courses totaling 82.5 credit hours and maintain a cumulative GPA of 2.75 or greater will be awarded an Associate of Science Degree-Physical Therapist Assistant.

Physical Therapist Assistant Courses

PTA100 Introduction to Physical Therapy. 2 credit hours. Introduction to the profession of physical therapy and its place in the healthcare field. Provides a historical overview of the profession, an understanding the role of the PTA, as well as basic health care concepts, wellness and prevention, legal and ethical considerations, and documentation. Students are expected to relate healthcare observation and experiences to course material and discussion. Prerequisites: Formal acceptance into the PTA program

PTA101 Essential Skills for the PTA. 4 hours (2 lecture/2 lab). Course designed to introduce basic patient care skills. Principles of selected physical therapy interventions and data collection are presented, including gait training, posture assessment, range of motion, safety procedures, transfer training and wound management. The lab portion of the course is designed for application of basic skills, data collection and intervention techniques essential to clinical practice. Documentation requirements for physical therapy interventions are explored and refined with application to clinical case scenarios. Prerequisites: Formal acceptance into the PTA Program.

PTA102 Kinesiology. 4 hours (3 lecture/1 lab). This course explores human movement, anatomy and basic principles of biomechanics. Examines the relationship of anatomical structures to function. Emphasis on functional application to provide a foundation and rationale for the therapeutic interventions necessary for the physical therapist assistant student. The lab portion of the course is designed to allow application of data collection techniques including range of motion, posture and gait assessment. Prerequisites: BI109 or equivalent, PTA 101

PTA103 Modalities for the PTA. 4 hours (3 lecture/1 lab). Basic principles and application techniques of physical agents related to the practice of physical therapy will be introduced. Physiologic responses, indications and contraindications of commonly utilized modalities and massage will be included. The lab portion of the course is designed to allow application and demonstration of proficiency in the use of physical modalities and massage. Prerequisites: PTA 101, BI109 or equivalent

PTA104 Functional Human Anatomy. 3 hours (2 lecture/1 lab). This course is designed for a more in-depth exploration of musculoskeletal anatomy including surface anatomy, muscle origin, insertion, innervation and action. Students will apply knowledge of muscle structure and action to posture and functional activities. The lab portion of the course will emphasize the procedures and application of muscle strength testing. Prerequisites: PTA 101, BI 109 or equivalent

PTA200 Therapeutic Exercise. 4 hours (2 lecture/2 lab) This course explores the basic theories and therapeutic application of exercise. Application will be made to impairment in range of motion, joint mobility, strength, posture, balance and cardiorespiratory dysfunction. Students will have hands on exploration of equipment used for therapeutic exercise. Laboratory designed to allow application of therapeutic exercise techniques and exercise progression associated with various patient diagnosis. Prerequisites: PTA 102, PTA 103, PTA 104.

PTA201 Pathophysiology for the Physical Therapist Assistant. 3 hours. This course will examine the pathogenesis and medical management of disease and disorders of the following systems: cardiovascular, endocrine, metabolic, gastrointestinal, genital, reproductive, hematologic, hepatic, biliary, immune, integumentary, lymphatic, musculoskeletal, respiratory, nervous, renal and urologic. Implications for the physical therapist assistant will be addressed. Prerequisites: BI 109 or equivalent, PTA 200, PTA 205

PTA202 Orthopedic Rehabilitation. 4 hours (3 lecture/1 lab). This course offers an in depth study of musculoskeletal conditions. Physical therapy assessment, and interventions for orthopedic conditions will be explored. Consideration for geriatric and pediatric populations will be made. The lab portion of the course provides students with the opportunity to apply therapeutic exercise and assessment techniques to common orthopedic conditions, and an introduction to the application and use of prosthetic and orthotic devices. Prerequisites: PTA 200, PTA 205

PTA203 PTA Neurologic Rehabilitation. 5 hours (4 lecture/1 lab). This course provides an in depth study of the pathology, pathophysiology and medical intervention as well as physical therapy assessment and treatment of neurological disease and dysfunction. A general overview of anatomy and physiology of the nervous system as well as adult and pediatric neurologic diseases and dysfunction will be provided. Principles and concepts pertaining to sensation, perception, motor control, and neuro re-education will be examined. The lab portion of the course will allow application of assessment techniques, data collection, and previously learned skills to patients with neurological diagnoses. Prerequisites: PTA 201, PTA 202, PTA 206

PTA204 PTA Seminar. 2 hours. The course will incorporate previously acquired didactic and clinical knowledge to complete and present clinical case studies. Included is a comprehensive review and mock exams in preparation for the NPTE. Leadership and life-long learning benefits, licensing, state practice act review, and employment preparation will be addressed to prepare the student to transition into clinical practice. Prerequisites: PTA 201, PTA 202, PTA 206

PTA205 Clinical Education I. (4 weeks) 4 credit hours. This is a full time 4 week (40 hours/week) clinical education experience designed to allow students to apply hands on patient care. Students will be expected to integrate acquired knowledge and basic assessment, data collection and intervention skills to the clinical setting. The student will work under the direction and supervision of an approved licensed physical therapy professional. Students will apply professional behaviors to the professional setting. Skills

learned in Essential Skills, Introduction to Physical Therapy, Kinesiology, Modalities, and Therapeutic Exercise will be practiced. Students must successfully complete all lab practical examinations and skills checks from previous PTA courses to progress to the clinical. Prerequisites: PTA 102, PTA 103, PTA 104, PTA 200.

PTA206 Clinical Education II. (4 weeks) 4 hours. This is a full time 4 week (40 hours/week) clinical education experience designed to allow students to progress their clinical skills with application to a wider range of patient diagnosis. Students will apply knowledge and skills associated with orthopedic conditions and noncomplex medical conditions. Students will experience increased participation in ancillary components of physical therapy practice to facilitate continued development of professional behaviors. The student will work under the direction and supervision of an approved licensed physical therapy professional. Students must successfully complete all lab practical examinations and skills checks from previous PTA courses to progress to the clinical. Prerequisites: PTA 201, PTA 202, PTA 205

PTA207 Clinical Education Experience III. (6 weeks) This terminal clinical education experience is 6 weeks in length (40 hours/week). This experience is designed to allow physical therapist assistant students to apply knowledge and skills acquired throughout the PTA program to a wide variety and complexity of patients. Students will experience a broad range of practice responsibilities with increasing degrees of independence. Students will have the opportunity to integrate aspects of physical therapy practice including administrative, inter-professional communication and professional development to prepare the student for entry-level practice. Students must successfully complete all lab practical examinations and skills checks from previous PTA courses to progress to the clinical. Prerequisites: PTA 203, PTA206. Concurrent with PTA 204