

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND PRELAW CENTER

Indiana University Bloomington ■ University Division ■ Maxwell Hall 010 ■ Bloomington IN 47405
812-855-1873 ■ Fax 812-856-2770 ■ hpplc@indiana.edu ■ www.hpplc.indiana.edu

PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Degree

Definition: Physical therapists (PTs) are healthcare professionals who diagnose and treat individuals of all ages, from newborns to the elderly, who have medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTs provide interventions utilizing therapeutic exercise, physical agents and assistive devices to restore function, relieve pain and prevent or limit permanent disabilities. They may also participate in administrative, teaching and research activities.

The Indiana University Physical Therapy program is an accredited entry level doctoral program offered through the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences in Indianapolis and requires 3 years (35 continuous months) of full-time study. The professional and clinical assignments include affiliated centers in Indiana and other states. Admissions requirements include a bachelor's degree in any major and approximately 45 credit hours of specific prerequisite courses. These prerequisite courses may be part of, or in addition to, the undergraduate degree requirements for your chosen major and may be fulfilled at IU Bloomington (but could be completed elsewhere). Applicants for IU's DPT Program must complete the following IUB courses.

IMPORTANT

This document has been prepared for Indiana University Bloomington students by the Health Professions and Prelaw Center. Please note that specific requirements and policies can change at any time without notice. Students are responsible for obtaining the most current information directly from the application services, and the school(s) and program(s) in which they have an interest. Visit the following website: http://shrs.iupui.edu/physical_therapy/.

COURSES REQUIRED FOR ADMISSION ^{1,2}	IUB Credit Hours
General College Chemistry³	
Principles of Chemistry and Biochemistry I, CHEM-C 117	5
Principles of Chemistry and Biochemistry II, CHEM-C 118 ^{4,5}	5
General College Physics³	
General Physics I, PHYS-P 201 or Physics I, PHYS-P 221	5
General Physics II, PHYS-P 202 or Physics II, PHYS-P 222	5
Human Anatomy	
ANAT-A 215	5
Human Physiology	
PHSL-P 215 or BIOL-P 451 Integrative Human Physiology (senior science majors only)	4 - 5
Basic Statistics⁶	
Choose one statistics courses from various options: e.g. Statistical Techniques, SPEA-K 300.	3
Introductory Psychology⁷	
PSY-P 101 or 102	3
Lifespan/Human Development Psychology	
Choose one of the following: Introduction to Lifespan Development, HPER-F 150; Life Span Development, EDUC-P 314; or Developmental Psychology, PSY-P 315 ⁸	3
Humanities/Social Sciences	
Choose two 3 credit hour course from the following departments/categories: Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology, Art, History, Philosophy, Literature, Religion, Music, minority studies (various departments), Journalism, Folklore and Classical Studies.	6
TOTAL CREDIT HOURS TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO BEGINNING PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM	44 - 45

NOTE: Proficiency in medical terminology and computer skills is also required. Proficiency can be demonstrated through formal course work, on-line instruction with a certificate of completion, or self-study with departmental examination. Students must also be competent writers. (See recommended elective course list for IU's DPT Program.)

¹ A minimum grade of “C” (not “C-”) is required for all courses required for admission (pre-professional courses).

² Careful planning is required. Some courses are only taught only once each year. Others have strict prerequisite and/or co-requisite course requirements. Visit the College of Arts & Sciences bulletin website for more info about their courses (choose the most recent one listed): <http://www.indiana.edu/~bulletin/iub/>.

³ All chemistry, physics, human anatomy and human physiology courses used to fulfill admission requirements must be considered a science major level course and include a lab.

⁴ CHEM-C 118 is offered only in the fall semester.

⁵ Students who are interested in seeking admission to medical and dental school programs as well should NOT take CHEM-C 118. They are advised to take Organic Chemistry Lectures I & II, CHEM-C 341 and 342, Organic Chemistry Lab I, CHEM-C 343, and Intermediate Organic Chemistry, CHEM-N 330.

⁶ Other options: MATH-K 300 or 310, PSY-K 300 or 310, CJUS-K 300, ECON-E 370 or S370, LAMP-L 316, SOC-S 371, STAT-S 300.

⁷ Some IUB students applying to this program may have received credit for PSY-P 151, 152, 155 or 106 instead. These are all considered introductory psychology courses and would be acceptable for admission purposes.

⁸ Prerequisites are required for this (and any other 300-level psychology) course.

Recommended Electives for IU’s DPT program:

Medical Terms, CLAS-C 209; Abnormal Psychology, PSY-P 324; Biomechanics, HPER-P 391

Computer Literacy: various options, including (but not limited to) CSCI-A 110, SPEA-V 261, BUS-K 201

Writing courses: Argumentative Writing, ENG-W 270; Advanced Expository Writing, ENG-W 350 (or any Intensive Writing course offered by the College of Arts and Sciences); Professional Writing Skills, ENG-W 231.

Other Recommended Electives (based on admission requirements of programs in Indiana and adjacent states):

Biology courses (BIOL-L 112, 113 and 211); additional chemistry courses at the major level, including organic chemistry lectures and labs; additional humanities and social science courses; a public speaking class; and a course on research design (*e.g.* Methods in Research, PSY-P 211; Research Methods in Sociology, SOC-S 370).

Other Electives:

Electives allow students to explore areas of interest and broaden their education. Additional major level science courses will allow for flexibility in career planning (see footnote #5 of above). You might also wish to choose courses that will apply towards a minor or an alternative major.

IU SPECIFIC ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS AND STATISTICS

Shadowing and Observation

Students must complete a minimum of 16 hours total of observation, obtaining volunteer or other work experiences in two distinctly different settings (acute care, inpatient, nursing home, outpatient, pediatrics, etc.). Each experience must be at least 8 hours and be of sufficient time to enable the supervising physical therapist to adequately complete the Generic Abilities Assessment form. The form is available at the following website: http://shrs.iupui.edu/physical_therapy/. (Choose “Admissions”, scroll down to “How to Apply” and choose the PDF of the Clinical Observation Experience Form.)

Volunteering and Other Professional Development

- HPPLC advisors recommend additional volunteer and/or work hours beyond the minimum 16 that IU’s DPT program requires (See “Observation Experience” under “Other Requirements” on the “Admissions” page: http://shrs.iupui.edu/physical_therapy/admissions/.) Some PT programs require many more hours for admission purposes (possibly even 100 hours or more). The more time you spend involved in a PT environment, the easier it will be to assess whether or not you want to pursue that profession. *It’s never too early to begin observing or participating in the field!*
- The HPPLC office sponsors a PT Club that is active throughout the academic year. Join by attending any meeting. Find out about the meetings by adding your name to the HPPLC e-mail list for pre-PT students.
- Many Physical Therapy programs hold annual Open Houses. They are a great way to meet faculty and students currently in the programs and ask them questions you might not have the opportunity to ask otherwise.
- Visit the HPPLC website to find out which programs were represented at our annual Health Programs Fair in March 2009 (<http://www.indiana.edu/~udivhpp/medicine/med-hpf.shtml>).

Grade Point Average (GPA)

For matriculating class of fall 2009 (class of 2012):

- Minimum cumulative GPA required: 3.2
- Minimum Math/Science* GPA = 3.2
- Mean cumulative GPA of the entering class of 2009: 3.3 (range: 3.2 - 4.0)
- Mean prerequisite GPA of the entering class of 2009: 3.2 (range: 3.2 - 4.0)
- Mean Verbal GRE of the entering class of 2009: 469 (range: 450-720)
- Total applicants 133; total qualified 58; class size 38.

*Math/Science GPA is calculated using the applicant's grades for the anatomy, chemistry, physics, human physiology and statistics courses taken to satisfy the prerequisites for admission to the program.

Admission Test

GRADUATE RECORD EXAM (GRE) – IU's DPT program now requires the GRE for admission. No minimum score is required for any component of the test. However, the verbal portion will be weighted 50%. (See "Other Admission/Program Info" in this document for information about taking the GRE on the IU Bloomington campus, pg. 4 in this document.)

Application Information

- Admission information and applications are available at the following website:
http://shrs.iupui.edu/physical_therapy/.
- A minimum grade of **C** (not **C-**) is required for each admission course.
- A minimum *math/science prerequisite GPA of 3.2* is required.
- A minimum *cumulative GPA of 3.2* is required and *is weighted 50% for admission purposes*.
- At the time of application, students may not have more than two prerequisites remaining for completion.
- File an application for admission to the IU School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences *between August 1 and October 15* of the year prior to entry into the program. Applications will be reviewed on a competitive basis approximately one week after the deadline.
- Repeated courses: A maximum of 15 hours of prerequisite courses may be replaced.
- International students are eligible to apply to IU's program. Please visit the following website for more information and to download an application packet for more info: <http://www.iupui.edu/~oia/>.

Letters of recommendation

Letters of recommendation are not required for IU's program. However, a Generic Abilities Assessment must be completed by supervising physical therapists for each PT-related experience you have (see "Shadowing and Observation" above for information about the types of experiences needed and where to find the form).

Admission Interview

No interview is required for admission to IU's program.

Credit Hours Required Prior to Beginning Professional Program (but not necessarily at time of application):

- A bachelor's degree must be completed prior to beginning the PT program. The number of hours needed to complete a bachelor's degree varies, but is usually 120-128 credit hours (sometimes more).
- 44-45 credit hours of prerequisite coursework listed on page one of this document must be completed prior to beginning the program.

Personal statement

A Personal Essay is required for IU's program. The essay should answer the question, "Why did you decide to pursue PT?" and should be 2 pages maximum, typed and double-spaced.

ADMISSION ISSUES, SUGGESTIONS AND NOTES

Consider a Back-up Plan

It's always wise to have a "Plan B" when applying to a program that has competitive admissions. Schedule an appointment to see a HPPLC health professions advisor to explore your options by calling 812.855.1873. Please visit the HPPLC Web site (<http://www.hpplc.indiana.edu>) before you meet with an advisor.

Other Admission/Program Info

- Policies, procedures and admission requirements vary from one program to another, HPPLC advisors suggest that you research all programs and apply to several.
- Visit the American Physical Therapy Association website for a list of accredited PT and PTA programs in the U.S. and Puerto Rico, www.apta.org. A comparison chart that lists admission coursework for these programs is also available there (in the text above the list of all programs, organized by state).
- You are strongly encouraged to find out whether or not the programs you're interested in applying to have rolling admission and **do not wait to apply until the deadline**. Your fall semester will be much more manageable if you don't wait!
- It is wise to begin assembling the parts required for the programs you are interested in applying to **before** the application becomes available. This includes:
 - researching the programs you'd like to apply to (www.apta.org -> Education Programs -> Student Resources) and contacting representatives about whether or not they are utilizing PTCAS this year (and any other questions you might have about the unique opportunities and financial assistance their programs offer);
 - reviewing for and taking the Graduate Record Exam, www.ets.org (work on your vocabulary by reading books and/or articles that require you to pick up a dictionary and look up the definition!);
 - reading through all of the available information on PTCAS about the current cycle requirements, including the checklist and FAQ's;
 - asking the required recommenders about whether or not they are willing to write letters of recommendation for you; and
 - begin writing your essay or personal statement (if needed for the programs you're applying to).
- The Graduate Record Exam is available on-campus at the Bloomington Evaluation Services and Testing (BEST) in Franklin Hall 014. The testing center is available for testing Monday-Saturday, 8am-10pm. Call 812-856-0684 to schedule a testing appointment. Check the GRE website at <http://www.ets.org/> for a sample test.
- *Cautionary note:* Students should be aware that some health professions programs will not accept Advanced Placement credit or credit-by-examination towards meeting admission requirements, or accept such credit only under restricted circumstances. Students should also be aware that receiving an exemption from a degree requirement is not generally considered equivalent to Advanced Placement credit, credit-by-examination, or credit from coursework.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Admission to IU's program is very competitive and admits only 36-38 students per class. Satisfying the basic admission requirements does not guarantee acceptance into the program. At this time, the following factors are considered in admission decisions:

- Cumulative GPA (weighted 50%)
- Prerequisite Math/science GPA
- GRE Verbal score (weighted 50%)
- GRE Quantitative score
- Evaluations from clinical supervisors
- Written personal essay

- Completion of B.S. or B.A. degree in any major

PROFESSIONAL PROGRAM STARTING DATE

The professional program begins in August, following the Medical School calendar. ***Students MUST have undergraduate degree requirements completed by June 1, no exceptions.*** Students will complete their course of study in nine continuous semesters, including two summers (or 35 months) of full-time study. Attending part-time is not possible.

CAREER INFORMATION

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Outlook Handbook, employment is expected to increase much faster than average (see <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos080.htm>).
- The median earnings for physical therapists was reported as \$66,200 in 2006, with the middle 50% earning between \$55,030 and \$78,080.
- Job opportunities are primarily in general medical and surgical hospitals, offices of physicians and other health practitioners, home health care services and nursing care facilities.
- All states require a licensure exam before practicing. For more information, visit the website of the American Physical Therapy Association: <http://www.apta.org>.

PHYSICAL THERAPY FAQ's

1) Which undergraduate major should I choose?

The IU PT program does not have a preference for any specific undergraduate major as long as all prerequisite courses are completed. The majority of other programs do not have a preference, either. The American Physical Therapy Association recommends that prospective PT students have excellent writing and interpersonal skills [<http://www.apta.org> -> Educational Programs -> Career as PT/PTA (link under "Student Resources" in left margin) -> PT/PTA Education FAQ].

You should choose your undergraduate degree considering the following factors:

- a) Which major includes the courses you would enjoy studying and also perform well in? Visit the University Division Majors & Career Series for help with choosing an IU Bloomington undergraduate major: <http://www.indiana.edu/%7Eudiv/majors/>.
- b) Which major would provide you with an alternate career if you change your mind about PT?
- c) Do you want to/need to complete your degree in four years?
- d) Does the major you're considering require or have room for the courses that you need to take for admission to the PT programs you're considering applying to? If not, would you be willing/able to take classes during the summer or add an additional semester or two?

Examples of undergraduate majors chosen by IU DPT students (past and present): Athletic Training, Biology, Chemistry, Communications, Education, Exercise Science, Health Science, Human Development, Music, Occupational Health Science, Psychology and Therapeutic Recreation.

Note: All of the majors listed are not necessarily offered by IU Bloomington. Students entering IU's DPT program are accepted from various universities in Indiana and around the country, so majors vary.

2) What is an entry level DPT degree?

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) is a post-baccalaureate degree conferred upon successful completion of a doctoral level professional or post-professional education program. It is a clinical doctorate, not a Ph.D. "Entry level" means that once a student has completed a Physical Therapy program and passed the licensing exam s/he is able to begin working directly in the field.

3) *What if I'm ineligible for admission to IU's PT program due to my math/science prerequisite GPA or my cumulative GPA?*

Most students apply to more than one PT program to allow for that contingency. Many other PT programs have lower minimum GPA requirements than IU does and stress other admission criteria instead: interview, letters of recommendation, work experience, volunteer hours, extracurricular activities and personal statements or essays. Instead of a cumulative GPA, some programs use the prerequisite coursework GPA as a determining factor. Some programs might include only the last 45-60 credit hours when calculating GPA. Visit the American Physical Therapy Association website, <http://www.apta.org>, and look for a list of accredited programs in the "Education" link for more information about other programs.

If IU's PT program is the only one you are considering applying to and your cumulative GPA is a 3.2 but your prerequisite math/science GPA is low, you may want to consider re-taking some of the required admission coursework. IU's School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences will allow students to replace up to 15 credit hours of prerequisite coursework.

4) *What is PTCAS and when do I use it?*

PTCAS is the Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service (www.ptcas.org) that students use when they are ready to apply to physical therapy (PT) programs (usually in the year prior to beginning the program) if the program requires using the service.

The list of participating PT programs will be updated in early July for the 2009-2010 admission cycle and the online application for the 2009-2010 cycle will be available on July 15, 2009.

6) *What is problem-based learning?*

Problem-based learning is a learning environment in which the facilitator (instructor) does not give answers, but asks students questions instead. Real cases are used during the sessions because they provide a greater challenge than what the imagination could provide. Students realize what they don't know while working through the possible diagnoses and seek out the answers on their own, bringing them back the next day to share with the facilitator and other students.

Susan Hawkins, an instructor at Chatham University's Physician Assistant program and an instructor of problem-based learning facilitators, states that using this method teaches students how to learn. She also asserts that because no one person is able to know the entire body of medicine these days, it prepares students for working in the current medical environment.

7) *What type of teaching style does the IU DPT program use?*

The Conceptual Framework for Clinical Decision Making Individual-Centered Approach was developed in a collaborative effort between students and faculty, and integrates five key models that guide contemporary physical therapist practice: the patient/client management model, Nagi, ICF, HOAC II, and dynamic systems model of motor control (see http://shrs.iupui.edu/physical_therapy/dept/philosophy.html).

It serves as a useful tool for teaching and learning clinical reasoning across the curriculum by providing a consistent, logical and organized context in which students learn to gather, interpret, plan and act when making clinical decisions. The clinical reasoning process illustrated in this Framework is presented repeatedly throughout the curriculum using patient case examples to help students develop an efficient and effective method of practice and achieve the program's educational objectives.

8) *What if I decide that I'm not interested in pursuing graduate studies, but I'm still interested in pursuing a career in PT?*

A Physical Therapy Assistant (PTA) works directly with patients under the supervision of a physical therapist. A two-year degree from an accredited institution is required to be eligible to sit for the licensure exam. Visit the American Physical Therapy Association to find a list of accredited programs. See "Career Information" for their website address.

IU DPT PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

Renee Akins
Student Enrollment Services Coordinator
IU School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences
1140 West Michigan Street RM 120
Indianapolis, IN 46202-5119
Phone: (317) 274-7238
Fax: (317) 274-4723
E-mail: reakins@iupui.edu

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We encourage you to use e-mail to ask questions and to communicate with our HPPLC advisors concerning physical therapy programs not only at IUPUI but nationwide. Send an email to an individual HPPLC advisor or to [udivhpp@indiana.edu](mailto:udivhpp@indiana.edu).

Please add your name to the HPPLC listserv by visiting the HPPLC website: [www.hpplc.indiana.edu](http://www.hpplc.indiana.edu). Also check the HPPLC website for notices about upcoming meetings, the Health Programs Fair, campus visits by admission representatives and other items of interest.

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