

Pre-Physical Therapy Fact Sheet

Creighton
UNIVERSITY

Student Success
Advising Resources and Support

Prerequisite and Recommended Courses

Pre-PT students should research schools carefully to be aware of all prerequisite courses and other admissions policies, as prerequisites vary among PT programs. Students should meet with a Pre-Health Advisor in their freshman year to develop their timeline for application to PT school.

PREREQUISITES OFTEN REQUIRED FOR PT SCHOOL

The following courses are commonly required by PT schools:

- General Biology I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - BIO 201/205 & BIO 202/206
- General Chemistry I & II w/ Labs - 8 hours - CHM 203/204 & CHM 205/206
- General Physics I & II w Labs - 8 hours - PHY 201/205 & PHY 202/206
- Human Anatomy w/ Lab - 3-4 hours - EXS 331 or PHA 310/311
- Physiology w/ Lab - 3-4 hours - BIO 449/450 or EXS 320
- Statistics - 3 hours - Many options for courses
- Psychology - 3-6 hours - Often General Psychology and Abnormal or Lifespan/Developmental
- English - 3-6 hours - Including composition

ADDITIONAL NOTES

- For Creighton's PT program, students do not need to complete labs with their Anatomy or Physiology courses, but a number of schools *do* require labs.
- Creighton's PT program also requires students to have 6 hours of Theology (often completed via the Magis Core Christian and Biblical Tradition).
- Some schools may not regard credit earned through examinations (AP/CLEP/IB) as being equivalent to completing required courses, but they may accept higher-level college courses as substitutes. Research individual schools for their policies regarding AP/CLEP/IB credits for prerequisite courses.

PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY GROUPS AND RESOURCES

Pre-Physical Therapy Club: All pre-PT students should participate in the Pre-Physical Therapy Club. This student organization provides leadership opportunities to further explore and gain experience in the PT profession. Learn more on CU Involved:

<https://cuinvolved.creighton.edu/organization/prept>

CU School of Pharmacy and Health Professions (SPAHP): Make an appointment with SPAHP admissions office personnel in the spring of the year applying to personalize the application process.

Creighton Preference: The Creighton Doctor of Physical Therapy Program gives preferential admission consideration to Creighton undergraduate students who complete all prerequisite coursework at Creighton. Students who fully participate in the pre-professional communities and have a cumulative GPA of 3.25 are guaranteed an interview.

BECOMING A COMPETITIVE APPLICANT

Applicants to physical therapy (PT) programs must complete a minimum of 90 credits (three years) of college coursework which includes the pre-PT prerequisites. Most pre-PT students complete a bachelor's degree prior to entering a PT program. Competitive applicants for admission have solid academic records, well-rounded co-curricular experiences, supportive letters of recommendation, and can clearly articulate their reasons for choosing the PT profession.

Selecting a Major, Grades, and GPA

Students are encouraged to choose a major where they can demonstrate strong overall academic performance, while also focusing on developing a solid foundation in the sciences. Ideally, a major should be based on student interests and should support an alternate career. PT programs look for students who demonstrate the academic ability to handle rigorous course loads.

Grades play a crucial role in PT school admissions, reflecting a student's ability to handle challenges. Maintaining grades above a "B" is important, especially in the two years prior to applying. Grades below a "B" or having more than two withdrawals (W) may raise concerns about academic readiness or judgment.

GPA's calculated on PT school applications include coursework done at all colleges attended and all attempts at a course.

Aim for GPA's of **3.3 or above**.

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COURSE SCHEDULING CONSIDERATIONS

Freshmen and sophomores usually take only two natural science or math subjects each semester.

Biology:

General Biology I (BIO 201/205) and General Biology II (BIO 202/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. Completion of either General Chemistry I (CHM 203) with a grade of "C" or better or Introductory General Chemistry 1 (CHM 102) with a grade of "B-" or better is required to take General Biology II.

Chemistry:

General Chemistry I (CHM 203/204) and General Chemistry II (CHM 205/206) are typical choices for freshman fall and spring. To be eligible to take General Chemistry in the freshman year, students must achieve a sufficient score on the Quantitative Assessment for New Students (QANS). Students who do not achieve a sufficient QANS score will need to complete CHM 102 with a grade of "B-" or better to progress to CHM 202.

Physics:

Students who have sufficient math and physics (a year of high school physics or a semester of college introductory physics, math through pre-calculus) are eligible to take General Physics I (PHY 201/205) and General Physics II (PHY 202/206). Prospective math, physics, and chemistry majors may take alternate sections of General Physics and additional math.

Math:

Pre-PT students will take a Mathematical Reasoning course for the Magis Core. The math course they choose will depend on their preparation and major of choice.

Sample First Semester Schedule

Course sequencing may vary depending on a student's readiness

- General Biology w/ Lab (4 hours)
- General Chemistry I w/ Lab (4 hours)
- Magis Core Class (3 or 4 hours) - ENG or Critical Issues & COM 101
- Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PHL or THL
- Maybe another Magis Core Class (3 hours) - PSY or Foreign Language
- RSP Class (.5 hours)
- Pre-Professional Community (0 hours)

CO-CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

Volunteer & Service

It is important to demonstrate sustained commitment over time. Students should have service experiences in healthcare and non-healthcare settings. Check out the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice for opportunities:
<https://www.creighton.edu/scsj>.

Shadowing

Shadowing physical therapists is essential for gaining professional insight and meeting PT program requirements. Schools often require documented shadowing hours, with some, like Creighton's PT program, mandating at least 60 hours. Shadowing in diverse settings and sustained experience with one PT can strengthen applications, especially when a recommendation letter from a PT is needed. Research individual program requirements for specifics.

Research

Research can help students demonstrate intellectual curiosity, communication skills, and collaboration. See the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship for opportunities:
www.creighton.edu/curas.

Leadership and Teamwork

Students must demonstrate leadership and interpersonal skills. Consider initiating group projects, serving as an officer in a student organization, or working as a teaching assistant. Students must also demonstrate the ability to work collaboratively.

Healthcare Experience

Students should pursue hands-on patient experience through volunteering or employment, such as working as a PT/OT Tech, CNA, EMT, or rehabilitation aide.

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