

# Pre-Physical Therapy

Physical therapists apply scientific and medical knowledge in the treatment of patients of all ages to alleviate pain; to prevent, correct, or minimize deformities; and to improve patients' general health and functional ability.

The program at Ohio State is a post-baccalaureate Doctor of Physical Therapy program. Thus, new freshmen and transfer students who are interested in physical therapy as a career will complete an undergraduate program of their choice in preparation for application to the 13-quarter post-baccalaureate program in physical therapy.

The program at Ohio State allows the university to give students the increased exposure to subject material that is demanded by the changes in health care and physical therapy practice. It ensures that physical therapy graduates from Ohio State will receive the background they need to be truly well prepared and effective professionals and competitive for practice nationwide.

## Pursuing Physical Therapy at Ohio State

There is no one "right" major at Ohio State in preparation for the Doctor in Physical Therapy (DPT). Students may select a course of study that is somewhat related to the professional area, such as biology, chemistry, biochemistry, or exercise science, but there really are no limits as long as the necessary prerequisite course work is integrated into the undergraduate major.

Students apply to the DPT program after completion of the bachelor's degree. DPT program candidates should follow an undergraduate curriculum that is broad and comprehensive in preparation for a very people-oriented profession. Students are urged to take advantage of academic opportunities in the arts and humanities as well as the sciences and to develop strong communication and interpersonal skills.

In choosing to complete an undergraduate degree at Ohio State, prior to the DPT program, students may enroll in any academic unit offering the undergraduate degree the student has elected to pursue. Undecided or undeclared students may enroll in the Exploration program for the first year or two of university enrollment. However, many students may choose to enroll in the School of Allied Medical Professions (AMP) for the first year or two as AMP pre-major students.

Ohio State students in any undergraduate major who are interested in pursuing Physical Therapy are invited to join the Pre-DPT/MOT Club. Contact the Physical Therapy Division Office for information.

## How to Prepare for the Doctor in Physical Therapy Program at Ohio State

Admission to the Doctorate in Physical Therapy is competitive. Qualified applicants must have a bachelor's degree, at least 3.0 overall GPA, and will be required to submit competitive GRE scores. In addition, applicants must have completed at least 40 hours of direct association with a physical therapist in a physical therapy department or clinic.

The undergraduate preparation for physical therapy should include a strong science, social science, and research foundation. The following prerequisite courses must be completed prior to beginning the DPT program\*:

- General chemistry (10 credit hours)
- General physics (10 credit hours)
- Biology
- Psychology
- Human growth and development
- Medical/scientific terminology
- Human physiology
- Physiology of exercise
- Human or vertebrate anatomy (including dissection lab)
- Statistics
- Research design

\*A complete list of Ohio State courses that fulfill these prerequisites can be found on the Physical Therapy web site at [amp.osu.edu/PT](http://amp.osu.edu/PT). Click on "Future Students."

In addition, students are encouraged early on in their undergraduate years to participate in some type of observation, volunteer and/or paid work experience in a physical therapy setting.

## Physical Therapy Requirements

The professional physical therapy curriculum is an integrative, instructional, laboratory, and clinical experience organized around a case-study format. During the first quarter students are introduced to anatomy and neuroscience as well as the profession of physical therapy. During each subsequent quarter students study the normal function of a body system (musculoskeletal system, nervous system, etc.) or life period (e.g., pediatric) and pathologies related to this system/period. They learn evaluation and treatment of the patient and obtain a thorough understanding of the health care delivery systems in which these patients might be seen. Case studies and patient demonstrations are used to bring the clinic to the classroom throughout the curriculum. Two four-week clinical experiences are interwoven early within the curriculum to allow students

**For more information, check these web sites:**

**Pre-Physical Therapy:** [amp.osu.edu/PT](http://amp.osu.edu/PT)  
**Allied Medical Professions:** [amp.osu.edu](http://amp.osu.edu)  
**American Physical Therapy Association:** [apta.org](http://apta.org)

**Ohio State:** [osu.edu](http://osu.edu)  
**Admissions:** [undergrad.osu.edu](http://undergrad.osu.edu)  
**First Year Experience Program:** [fye.osu.edu](http://fye.osu.edu)

to further investigate their instructional experience and clinical practice. In the final year, students complete 32 weeks of clinical internships at distinct clinical settings.

### Students in the Physical Therapy program benefit from the following:

- Caring faculty committed to teaching with personalized instruction
- Excellent laboratory facilities
- Affiliations with numerous local clinical sites
- Clinical affiliations in respected centers throughout the country
- Excellent job placement opportunities

### Co-Curricular Opportunities

Ohio State offers many opportunities for students to learn and grow outside of the classroom. These range from cooperative education (co-op) and internships to study abroad programs to student organizations. Co-ops and internships place students in professional environments while they are Ohio State students. Ohio State offers more than 100 study abroad programs in 40 countries around the world. In addition, there are hundreds of student organizations on campus to meet the interests of a diverse student population. In particular, the pre-DPT/MOT club would be of interest to students looking to prepare for a career in Physical Therapy.

These opportunities enable students to gain valuable work experience, learn about cultures, and take on leadership roles before they enter the workforce. All of these experiences enhance learning and may provide an advantage in the job market.

### Honors & Scholars Opportunities

Ohio State offers the Honors & Scholars programs to create an environment of intellectual support and stimulation within a close-knit community of high-ability undergraduate students. Through these programs, students have access to smaller classes, undergraduate research opportunities, close working relationships with faculty, priority scheduling, and unique housing options.

Honors & Scholars programs represent great opportunities to be part of a smaller community within a large university. Good candidates for these programs will receive additional information after admission to the university. Learn more about the Honors & Scholars program at [honors-scholars.osu.edu](http://honors-scholars.osu.edu).

### Career Prospects in Physical Therapy

Physical therapists are employed in general hospitals, outpatient clinics, pediatric treatment centers, extended-care facilities, school systems, industry, community and government agencies, rehabilitation centers, curative workshops, and wellness/fitness facilities. Other employment areas include professional research, consultation, administration, teaching, and private practice.

Average starting salaries for licensed physical therapists range from \$45,000 to \$55,000 annually.

**Revised August 2007.** For the most up-to-date information on preparing to study physical therapy at Ohio State, please visit [amp.osu.edu/PT](http://amp.osu.edu/PT).

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