

Guidelines for pre PT Students

Generic pre PT requirements

- **Psychology:** 2 semesters (Note: some schools require Developmental or Abnormal some just say 2 semesters)
- **Biology:** 2 semesters
- **Anatomy & Physiology:** 2 semesters. NOTE: At Centre, only one section of each of these classes will be offered each YEAR (e.g. A&P1 in the fall A&P2 in the spring.)
- **Chemistry:** 2 semesters
- **Physics:** 2 semesters- Some may prefer calculus level, but for most algebra based is sufficient.
- **Statistics:** 1 semester
- **Some programs also require:**
 - Speech/communication
 - Additional Social or behavioral science courses
 - Medical terminology
 - Exercise Physiology
 - First-Aid/CPR
 - Research Methods
- **Visit the Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service website**, where you can look up each of the different programs, including their prerequisites, deadlines, average GPA requirements etc.
 - <http://www.ptcas.org/DirectoryProgramsList/>

Pre-Physical Therapy Notes: (AKA what I learned from talking to admissions officers)

1. Keep your GPA up, especially in the sciences.

- a. Many colleges have an average entering class GPA of 3.6-3.7.
- b. At most colleges, it's OK to re-take a course, but how they factor re-takes varies. Sciences are the most important; don't re-take for a C in French or History.
- c. You may take a few of your science pre-req classes outside of Centre, but only a few.
 - i. For example, since Physics isn't required for the BNS, PSY majors, you could take it during the summer. NOTE PHY 110 IS required by the BIO major.
- d. For the pre-reqs that we don't offer ("Physiology" of A&P, or "Medical Terminology"), it's perfectly OK to take them through a community college or online (from an accredited 4 yr. college). A few prefer 4 year though (Duke)
- e. Some colleges will prefer that you take your classes (or re-takes) at a 4 year college but will accept community college credits (e.g. Duke, but UK and WKU were fine with BCTC).

2. If your GPA isn't as good as you like, make SURE you get a really good score on the GRE.

- a. Some colleges recognize that GPA's are not all the same, so some will weigh the GRE a little more than your GPA (UK does not!).
- b. Most colleges also recognize improvement over time. The PTCAS gives a GPA per academic year so if you're doing better now than you did as a first-year, which will look more favorably than if you went down over time, or have never improved.

3. One internship is not as good as two or more.

- a. Do a variety of internship experiences, orthopedic, pediatric, geriatric, inpatient, stroke/TBI rehab, etc. **Show you can and want to work in any field.** Be able to use these experiences in your letter of intent, essays, and short answers for when you apply.

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- b. Most colleges only require 40 hours, but shoot for 100, it doesn't matter if it's paid, internship, or volunteer, just get out there and get as much "hands on" experience as you can.
- c. Make sure you make a good impression with your PT adviser because you WILL need a VERY good letter of rec from them.

4. On that note... **Make sure you get REALLY GOOD letters of recommendation.**

- a. Make sure you work closely with the people who will be writing your letters.
- b. STRONG letters from faculty in your major or a faculty member that you've worked closely with (e.g. research, or taken several classes from them), will help you stand out from the crowd.
- c. A STRONG letter from a faculty member in a different program than your own are better than Luke-warm or tepid letters from someone in your program (e.g. if you went abroad with someone in the languages and you turned out to be their "right hand person" on the trip and they are forever grateful for all the help you provided).
- d. If the person you ask says "I can, but..." (insert equivocation here)" take that as a signal that the letter might not help you get in and could possibly even hurt your chances.
- e. The admissions officers say that too often even "good" letters are too generic. "Chris got an A in my class, she was a good student and turned in all of her assignments on time." This is not the same as "I worked closely with Chris over an (x long) project. During that time, Chris demonstrated to me that she had exceptionally strong skills in (x, y and z examples)." Make sure you put yourself in a position to be able to earn the second type of letter.

5. **Visit the school, do your homework on the school, and practice your interview skills.**

- a. How well the program fits you is as important as how well you fit the program.
- b. Make sure you know what their requirements are.
- c. Make sure you know the environment of the program (e.g. team-work vs independent study).
- d. Make sure you are prepared for your interview.
 - i. Get to know the names of the faculty and what areas they work in.
 - ii. Prepare your own questions, show that you've done your homework on the school
 - iii. Practice your interview; meet with the Pre PT adviser or Career Services to do a mock interview.
 - iv. Be confident in your abilities and what you have to bring to the interview.
 - v. Personal "Anecdotes" about experiences you've had in your internships are a good way of showing your preparedness and your personal convictions.