

WHAT IS PHYSICAL THERAPY (PT)?

Physical therapy is the medical practice that utilizes therapeutic exercise, physical modalities such as massage and electrotherapy, assistive devices, and patient education and training for the preservation, enhancement, or restoration of movement and physical function impaired or threatened by disability, injury, or disease. The following is a brief guide to the courses students will need to take at the University of Dubuque to meet the prerequisite course requirements for The University of Iowa's Physical Therapy program.

PREREQUISITES:

NOTE: EACH PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM ESTABLISHES ITS OWN SET OF PREREQUISITES. CHECK THE WEBSITES OF THE SCHOOLS IN THAT YOU ARE MOST INTERESTED TO OBTAIN A CURRENT LIST OF UNDERGRADUATE REQUIREMENTS.

Listed below are the courses at the University of Dubuque that students must complete to meet the University of Iowa's Physical Therapy prerequisite course requirements for admission.	
Physics (8 credits)	PHY 151 (MATH 112 is a prerequisite for this course.) and PHY 152
Math (6 credits)	MATH 150 and MATH 230
Chemistry (8 credits)	CHM 111 (MATH 112 is a prerequisite for this course.) and CHM 112
Biological Sciences, Intro. (8 credits)	*BIO 135 (General Zoology) and BIO 235 (Cell Biology)
Biological Sciences, Adv. (4 credits)	*Upper-level Biology course (for which an introductory course is a prerequisite) Options may include BIO 218, BIO 235, and BIO 314, for example. See advisor for more info.
*Anatomy and Physiology	BIO 211 (Anatomy and Physiology I) (CHM 105 or Equivalent is a prerequisite) and 212
Social and Behavioral Sciences, Humanities (6 credits)	PSY 110, PSY 220/223/227, SOC 111, 1 Additional SB or HU course. (Candidates are encouraged to complete this requirement with courses that have a writing component.)
<i>If you choose not to major in one of the natural sciences, you may wish to include one or two additional science electives in your program of study if your schedule permits.</i>	

In addition to coursework and exam requirements, most PT programs require direct PT Observation Hour requirements that will be verified by the Physical Therapist you shadowed.

Some PT programs DO NOT require an undergraduate degree. Please look at program specific requirements.

EXAM AND GPA:

The Graduate Record Exam (GRE) is a standardized examination that consists of four multiple-choice sections that cover basic mathematics and reading comprehension skills. The GRE is designed to measure general academic ability. It is required by most of the American PT schools. Typically, students take the GRE about one calendar year prior to their intended date of matriculation to professional school. The GRE is a nationally standardized test, similar to the ACT and SAT. A GRE score is good for three years at most schools, so taking the test in the spring of junior year does not necessarily mean that you must enter PT school right after college graduation. Average scores are:

REVISED: 150+ on Verbal and 150+ on Quantitative; 3.5 on Analytical Writing

OLD: 500 on Verbal and 500 on Quantitative (minimum 1000); 3.5 Analytical Writing

Grade Point Average (GPA): Minimum GPA requirements vary from program to program, but MOST programs have a minimum 3.0 GPA requirement but competitive GPA's are closer to a 3.5. In addition, most programs require that all prerequisite courses must be passed with a "C" or better.

TIMELINE:**Freshman Year:**

- Connect with a Health Professions Advisor or Faculty Member.
- Start taking basic sciences (See chart above).
- Think about possible majors (Study what you love).
- Begin getting involved with volunteer opportunities (campus and community).
- Start medical experience (EMT, Scribe, Shadowing, etc).
- Look into getting involved in undergraduate research and talk to professors.
- Go to your professor's office hours.
- Join some student organizations.

Sophomore Year:

- Continue with next sequence of courses.
- Stay involved in extracurricular activities (PT, volunteer, etc).
- Begin to think about becoming an officer in your organizations.
- Begin research on professional schools, their requirements, and assess your competitiveness.
- Investigate GRE preparation options.
- **BOTTOM LINE:** Keep working on the things you established your first year!!

Junior Year:

- Talk to Health Professions advisor or faculty member to narrow program options and assess competitiveness (Fall semester).
- Register for the GRE (Fall Semester).
- Study for GRE and take it(Spring/Summer).
- Identify 3 individuals to write letters of recommendation (Spring Semester).
- Complete Application (PTCAS) (Spring Semester-Summer).
- Schedule a mock interview with Career Services.
- Keep working on the things you have established thus far.

Senior Year:

- Submit Application(s) if you haven't already (Fall semester).
- Wait to be contacted for interview from medical schools.
- Continue with activities and professional experiences/shadowing.
- Talk with an advisor about Plan B if necessary.
- Finish degree requirements and GRADUATE!

RESOURCES:

The University of Iowa Physical Therapy Program [Click Here](#)

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) [Click Here](#)

APTA Program Prerequisites [Click Here](#)

GRE Information/Dates [Click Here](#)