

Admission & Program Overview

2021

University of Washington
Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program

UW Medicine
DEPARTMENT OF
REHABILITATION MEDICINE

University of Washington Doctor of Physical Therapy Program
Box 356490 1959 NE Pacific Street, Seattle, WA 98195
dptprgm@uw.edu <https://www.physicaltherapy.uw.edu/>

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Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program Curriculum Program Overview

The University of Washington (UW) Curriculum in Physical Therapy (PT) is accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education \(CAPTE\)](#).* The curriculum is a graduate professional entry-level education program designed to follow the completion of a four-year bachelor's degree in any major. Program participants earn a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree and are eligible to take the national PT licensing exam.

The profession of physical therapy will appeal to those who enjoy physical activity, service to others, and one-on-one therapeutic relationships. Physical therapists work with individuals having movement or mobility problems in order to prevent, restore or resolve the dysfunctional condition. Physical therapists find work in hospitals, private clinics, public schools, health maintenance organizations, skilled nursing facilities, rehabilitation centers and home health agencies. Currently, a conservative estimate of the annual salary for a new graduate is \$75,000.

Certain essential attributes and skills are exercised in the practice of the profession. These include: the ability to learn new tasks; emotional stability; the ability to make sound judgments; effective communication skills; the ability to detect subtle changes; functional discernment of spatial relationships; the ability to perform, evaluate and interpret diagnostic tests; good problem solving skills; the ability to safely assist others with their movements; and demonstration of professional ethical behaviors.

Because of the limited number of training positions available in physical therapy schools, students may wish to prepare themselves to be competitive candidates for several PT programs at once. Listings of accredited PT programs are available on the [American Physical Therapy Association](#) website. Finally, there is an all-Rehabilitation Programs (PT/OT/P&O) Open House each year in fall on campus. Details as to the exact date/time/location will be available on the [program website](#).

*CAPTE

1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Phone: 703-706-3245 Email: accreditation@apta.org

DPT Application Requirement

Graduate Record Examination (GRE)

Applicants are *required* to submit the [Graduate Record Examinations \(GRE\) General Test](#) scores. The test is available year-round in a computer-based format. Advance registration is required and students should plan ahead in order for scores to be reported in a timely manner. (Those who have taken the test previously must inquire early to be sure their scores can be properly reported. GRE scores must be no more than 5 years old). Other standardized test scores such as GMAT, MCAT, LSAT or DAT are not accepted. There is no minimum GRE score requirement for admission to the UW DPT Program. We strongly suggest taking the GRE by September 30, 2020 as it usually takes 10 – 15 business days to receive official scores.

Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL)

International applicants and applicants who have obtained their undergraduate degrees from non-English speaking countries must take the [Test of English as a Foreign Language \(TOEFL\)](#). This exam is also available throughout the year from computer-based testing centers, similar to the GRE. There are many options available for GRE and TOEFL test preparation and registration. Visit the [Educational Testing Service website](#) for more details. To be considered for the program, applicants must meet the required minimum score of **100 (iBT)**.

Please review the [international applicant information](#) and [English language proficiency requirements](#).

PT Related Work or Volunteer Experience

Due to COVID-19, we have reduced the minimum observation requirement to 25 hours in the 2020-21 admission cycle (i.e. for Autumn 2021 entry)

Most successful candidates have gained extensive exposure to physical therapists working in a broad variety of PT service delivery environments and with many different types of patients. In addition, effective applicants are able to obtain strong letters of reference from PTs with whom they have interacted. Students are expected to arrange their own PT-related experiences. Training is typically acquired on-the-job. Becoming a volunteer in the physical therapy department of a hospital or a private clinic is a good place for novices to start. The minimum number of hours of direct PT experience required for application is **25**. Volunteer, paid, observation or shadow hours are counted equally.

Experience is considered direct if a PT is on staff.

Letters of Recommendation

Submit three (minimum) or four (maximum) letters of recommendation. Applicants must obtain at least one recommendation letter from a PT they assisted or shadowed while getting their observation hours. Other acceptable recommenders/evaluators are professors, academic professionals including TA and pre-PT advisors, healthcare professionals, former employers or supervisors.

Personal Statements

Applicants must submit a PTCAS Standard Essay and a UW Custom Question Essay. Since there is no Interview for the UW DPT program application process, these two statements become the primary means by which applicants can express their aptitude for the profession of physical therapy, and the unique personal qualities and attributes that will allow them to be successful.

Minimum Academic Requirements

Prior to the application deadline of October 15, 2020, the student must have met the following minimum academic requirements:

- Overall undergraduate cumulative GPA of 3.0
- 3.0 GPA over PT prerequisite courses alone (Due to COVID-19, if the institution elected to use the P/F or S/NS grading option, you can use the pass/satisfactory credits to fulfill prerequisite course requirements. This only applies to the courses offered in Winter 2020, Spring 2020 and Summer 2020.)
- 2.0 (C) or higher grade in each prerequisite course
- At least half of the PT prerequisite courses completed at the time of application (5/11)

These requirements must be maintained until successful program entrance and all prerequisite courses must be finished at that time. Finally, applicants must have completed a 4-year bachelor's degree before starting the graduate-level DPT program. There is no preferred major for the bachelor's degree.

To meet prerequisite requirements, credits may be used from college-level coursework taken any time in the past. In addition, courses can be taken at any regionally accredited institution of higher education. We will accept AP credits as long as your undergraduate institution has awarded credits.

PT Prerequisite Courses

You may use credits from college-level coursework taken any time in your academic career (There is no expiration date). Prerequisite courses may be taken at any regionally accredited institution, including community colleges or online providers.

Under each prerequisite subject, you'll find a list of acceptable courses that will meet the prerequisite requirements. Courses from other schools may vary in content, level and credits and still meet the prerequisites for this program.

You can also see the UW equivalent course(s) for some of the prerequisite requirements. You may compare the course descriptions in your college catalog to gauge approximate equivalencies. If you attended one of the Washington state community colleges, check the [UW Equivalency Guide](#).

Due to the large number of applications we receive each year, we do not provide pre-admission course/transcript evaluations.

Anatomy - Human Anatomy is highly recommended. Lab recommended.

Acceptable courses: A&P combined course, Neuroanatomy, Vertebrate, Advanced, Animal, Human or Mammalian. UW course [BIOL 310](#).

Physiology - Human Physiology is highly recommended. Lab recommended.

Acceptable courses: A&P combined course, Vertebrate, Advanced, Animal, Human or Mammalian. UW course [BIOL 118/119](#).

Biology (2 courses) - Any course covering macro-to-micro-focused general biology is acceptable. Lab recommended. A&P and Botany courses are NOT accepted.

Acceptable courses: Advanced, Cell, Embryology, General, Genetics, Histology, Immunology, Microbiology, Molecular or Zoology. UW course [BIOL 180, 200 or 220](#).

Chemistry (2 courses) - Any course covering inorganic, organic or biochemistry is acceptable. Lab recommended.

Acceptable courses: Advanced, Biochemistry, Inorganic or Organic. UW course [CHEM 142, 152, 162, 120, 220 or 221](#).

Physics (2 courses) - A course covering mechanics, heat, sound and/or electromagnetism is acceptable. Lab recommended. UW course [PHYS 114/117, 115/118 or 116/119](#)

Psychology - Any psychology course

Acceptable courses: Abnormal, Adolescent, Advanced, Child, Death/Dying, Developmental, General, Growth & Development, Human Behavior, Life Span Development, Psychopathology, Rehabilitation, Social or Sports.

Behavioral Science - Any course focusing on human behavior across the disciplines of psychology, sociology or anthropology is acceptable.

Acceptable Psychology courses- Abnormal, Adolescent, Advanced, Child, Death/Dying, Developmental, General, Growth & Development, Human Behavior, Life Span Development, Psychopathology, Rehabilitation, Social or Sports.

Acceptable Behavioral Science courses – Community Health, Human Sexuality, Marriage/Family, Personal Health or Social Work.

Statistics - A statistics course in any discipline is acceptable. Calculus is NOT accepted.

PROFILE OF THE CLASS ENTERING IN 2020

Admission Statistics:

Total applicants	1,017
Student accepted into program	48
Prerequisite GPA (average)	3.68 (range: 3.20 – 4.00)
Cumulative Undergraduate GPA (average)	3.64 (range: 3.00 – 3.99)
GRE General Test (average of all 3 sections)	62.39 percentile
PT related work/volunteer hours (average)	1,325 (range: 114 – 11,032)

Student Demographics:

Total Number:	48	
Gender:	Male: 15	Female: 33
Residency:	In-State: 21	Out-of-State: 27
Age:	Average Age	25.67 (range: 21 - 45)
Race/Ethnicity:	African American	1
	Asian	14
	Caucasian	22
	Hispanic/Latino	3
	Multiracial	8

APPLICATIONS

There are two applications, i.e. one for the PTCAS and one for the UW Graduate School. Both applications are required to be reviewed and considered for admission.

PTCAS Application

The deadline for application to the Autumn 2021 DPT program is October 15, 2020. The UW DPT Program uses the [Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service \(PTCAS\)](#) for the program application. The PTCAS application will open on June 17, 2020.

Since PTCAS processing may take up to 4 to 5 weeks, we strongly encourage applicants to submit all required materials as early as possible. The PTCAS application should have “Verified” status before the application closes on October 15, 2020.

Please be aware that the PTCAS application closes at **11:59 pm EST**. Check the closing time in your time zone.

- 11:59 PM (EST)
- 10:59 PM (CST)
- 9:59 PM (MST)
- 8:59 PM (PST)
- 7:59 PM (AST)
- 6:59 PM (HST)

UW Graduate School Application

Students must also submit an institutional application to the UW Graduate School, in addition to their PTCAS application. It is recommended that both applications be submitted simultaneously, but they are processed differently. The Graduate School application should be completed [online](#). The Major/Program code is Pre-Doctor (REHABX-10-3-0). The non-refundable application fee is \$85.00.

Policy on Re-applicants

There is no limit to the number of times a student may apply to the program. A new file is created annually for the applicant and the current file is the only one seen by the application review committee.

Policy on Returning Students

Returning students who previously dropped out of the program, or students declining an offered position, must re-apply and are subject to the same review process used for other applicants.

Equal Opportunity and Accommodation

The University of Washington reaffirms its policy of equal opportunity regardless of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, or status as a veteran in accordance with University policy and applicable federal and state statutes and regulations. The University of Washington is committed to providing access and reasonable accommodation in its services, programs, activities, education and employment for individuals with disabilities.

To request disability accommodation, contact the Program at 206-598-5333 or the Disability Services Office at: 206-543-6450/Voice, 206-543-6452/TTY, 206-685-7264/FAX, or e-mail at dso@u.washington.edu. Admitted students can also request accommodation for instruction at [this website](#).

Complaints against the Program

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) maintains a [complaint procedure](#) for issues involving program integrity after all remedies at the institution have been exhausted.

SELECTION PROCESS

The physical therapy application review committee members use the following criteria to judge the applicant's aptitude to succeed in the curriculum and in the profession:

- *Academic ability as evidenced by the quality and quantity of coursework, academic performance, and GRE scores;*
- *Non cognitive attributes of the applicant that will help us identify a diverse group of incoming students to our program*
- *Knowledge of the nature of the profession and demonstration of qualities consistent with the role of the physical therapist as shown by PT experience, application essays, and letters of recommendation;*
- *Ability to communicate as documented by letters of recommendation and demonstrated in the application itself;*
- *Involvement in constructive activities (i.e. organizations, projects, creative endeavors, honors, etc.).*

The Physical Therapy Advisory & Evaluation (PT A&E) Committee of the UW School of Medicine considers the guidance of the application review committee and makes the final decision on which applicants will be recommended for acceptance into the University and the physical therapy program. Status notification emails will be sent in late January. Entrance into the program for those recommended is contingent on acceptance by the Graduate School and upon meeting the program requirements described in this document.

PROFESSIONAL CURRICULUM

The graduate professional physical therapy education program at the University of Washington includes eleven consecutive quarters of instruction, with a new cohort of students beginning each fall. Normally, attendance is full-time during the day Monday through Friday. Enrolled students complete over 165 required credits with an average load per quarter of 15. Clinical education assignments are also full-time, requiring 40 hours per week attendance and after hours preparation and study time. The first phase of the curriculum includes the following courses: pathophysiology, neurophysiology, functional anatomy, assessment procedures, professional seminar, rehabilitation diagnoses, neuroanatomy, kinesiology, modalities, therapeutic exercise, patient evaluation, functional mobility skills, acute care practice and clinical experience. The second phase of the program includes courses in rehabilitation psychology, management of musculoskeletal disorders, motor development, neuroscience rehabilitation, lifespan issues, biomechanics of exercise, critical thinking, prosthetics/orthotics, wound care procedures, professional practice topics, differential diagnosis, pharmacology, physical therapy administration, capstone project, and clinical experience.

A four-week full-time clinical experience occurs in summer between the first and second year of didactic instruction. Also, the final program year (3rd year - Autumn, Winter and Spring Quarters) is spent entirely in clinical experiences. During this time, students complete three, 11-week assignments of mentored clinical instruction. The capstone project is also accomplished concurrently with the final clinical portion of the program; and a formal Case Study/Research Report is written and disseminated. The program culminates with the Capstone Symposium, Commencement, and the award of the DPT degree.

A more detailed listing of courses for the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine (including the DPT curriculum) may be found in the [University of Washington Course Catalog](#). The UW DPT Curriculum follows the [UW academic calendar](#).

Student Achievement and Promotion

Students must maintain a 3.0 grade point average (GPA) on required courses (with a minimum of 2.7 in each course) during the professional phase of the program. A required course with a grade below 2.7 may need to be repeated. Students whose performance falls below this level will be placed on academic probation and allowed two quarters to raise their GPAs. Students must have demonstrated professional behaviors and a very high rate of attendance throughout the program. In addition, they should have attained acceptable grades in each required course, as well as receiving credit for their clinical education experiences, in order to graduate. Failure to meet minimum standards will result in dismissal from the program. All decisions regarding student achievement and promotion are made by the PT Faculty and the PT A&E Committee with due process and consideration.

TUITION, PROGRAM EXPENSES & SCHOLARSHIPS

Tuition for DPT students during the academic year 2020-2021 is \$7,218 per quarter for residents and \$12,214 per quarter for non-residents. Tuition may increase each fall by 5-10%. Annual fees are approximately \$1700. We suggest budgeting \$2,000 for books and course materials for the entire program. Students will also be assigned to some out-of-town clinical experiences and should be prepared to meet additional travel and housing expenses (\$5,000 - \$7500). You can see the information at the [DPT Cost & Financial Aid website](#).

Washington State Residency is difficult to establish if moving here for educational purposes only. You must work with the [UW Residency Office](#) to provide all required documentation to establish WA domicile.

It is recommended that students obtain personal health insurance. See the Health Insurance Help information on [the Hall Health Center](#) website.

It is also helpful if the selected insurance covers immunizations since PT students must participate in the [Health Sciences Immunization Program \(HSIP\)](#). Find more details on required injections/procedures, most of which are paid by the student.

Liability insurance is provided by the Program. The University of Washington is self-insured and all enrolled students are covered for professional liabilities arising from negligent acts and omissions committed in the course and scope of their university duties.

Housing & Food

Housing and food costs may be reduced via shared or University housing options. Contact [Housing and Food Services](#) or see the [Graduate Student Housing](#). Also, see the resources at the [UW Graduate School Student Resources](#).

Financial Aid

Information on financial assistance and scholarships may be obtained from the [UW Office of Student Financial Aid](#). Information on the [Childcare Assistance Program](#) may be obtained at 206/543-1041. Students should apply for all types of financial aid as soon as possible after January, prior to potential admission to the program. Most students arrange for [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) if they need financial assistance, as there is little time available for employment during the curriculum.

Residents of Alaska, Hawaii and Wyoming may wish to investigate a special tuition supplement program available through the [Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education \(WICHE\) Professional Student Exchange Program \(PSEP\)](#). This program may provide funds for certified students to compensate for most of the difference between resident and non-resident tuition.

Scholarships

In 2020-2021 Academic Year, the following scholarships are available to DPT students:

- Jo Ann McMillan Endowed Fellowship Fund (1st year student)
- Maureen McGee Endowed Fund (1st year student)
- Dr. Marjorie A. Moore Endowed Scholarship (2nd year student)
- Mary Gross Hutchinson Memorial Scholarship (2nd year student)
- Dr. Mark Guthrie Scholarship (3rd year student)

Note: The amount of each scholarship award could vary depending on available funding and number of students selected.

Once enrolled, there may be some local organizations that have small scholarship opportunities. The DPT Program Manager will send out the information to students.

Clinical Education Policy

The University of Washington Division of Physical Therapy takes pride in the vast array of clinical educational opportunities available to our students throughout the Pacific Northwest and nationally. Students are required to complete clinical experience in inpatient and outpatient settings. Additionally, students must participate in clinical experiences with diverse populations, including urban and non-urban settings, regions and populations identified to be underserved, and location outside of the Greater Seattle Metropolitan region. Students will make suitable financial arrangements to cover costs, including travel and relocation/temporary lodging, associated with required clinical experience (\$5,000 - \$7,500 in addition to tuition/fees).

Applicants will be made aware of this policy at the time of application to the Division of Physical Therapy and, as part of the application process, will be asked to sign a statement demonstrating their understanding of this policy. Exceptions to this policy are rarely granted.

Criminal History Background Check

Clinical internship placement sites require trainees to undergo an extensive criminal history background check, especially for crimes against vulnerable populations. All applicants accepting admission to the DPT program will be required to pay for and complete a fee-for-service criminal background check in order to identify any history that may interfere with the student's ability to finish the clinical portion of the curriculum.

PROGRAM OUTCOMES AND LICENSING

Student outcome data (graduation, licensure exam pass rate and employment) is available on our [website](#).

After graduation, to qualify for practice, students must pass the national physical therapist licensure examination (NPTE), which is administered across the USA via computer in a fixed date pattern. Students are eligible to take the exam prior to the completion of the final internship assignment. However the time required to prepare for the exam may distract from full engagement in the final internship, and also competes with the time required to complete the capstone project. Students can wait until after graduation before sitting for the NPTE, as an interim permit is available to cover practice between graduation and license attainment. Applicants should be aware that licensure and employment may be affected by a history of substance abuse, gross misdemeanor or felony conviction, or other condition that the licensing board determines would seriously affect the applicant's ability to practice physical therapy. For more information on state licensing requirements, visit the [WA State PT Board website](#).

In the State of Washington, physical therapists are covered by independent practice laws. This means that PTs need not receive a physician referral for patient treatment if the client's medical condition is of neuromusculoskeletal origin. Physical therapists can choose from a full array of employment options including full- or part-time work hours, day or week-end shifts, and many different specialized or general practice settings