

Pre-Physical Therapy

The William J. and Marian A. Klish
Health Careers Center
Connecting students to possibilities

University of Wisconsin
Eau Claire

Physical therapy is an allied health profession that focuses on the prevention and rehabilitation of various musculoskeletal injuries or problems. The ultimate goal of physical therapists is to facilitate the return of patients to pre-injury levels of functioning. Physical therapists are an integral part of any comprehensive health care team. They frequently work with other health care providers, such as physicians, occupational therapists, athletic trainers, nurses, dentists, psychologists, social workers, podiatrists, and speech pathologists and audiologists. Pre-physical therapy is a program of study, not an academic major. No specific academic major is required for pre-physical therapy. The majority of students will choose one of the following majors to complete their pre-physical therapy requirements:

- Kinesiology comprehensive major with emphasis in Rehabilitation Science
- Biology standard major

Although a large number of physical therapists work in hospitals, a majority can be found in private physical therapy offices, rehabilitation centers, community health centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, corporate or industrial health centers, sports facilities, research institutions, schools, pediatric centers, and universities.

Admission Requirements:

- Bachelor's degree with any major from an accredited institution (required by most programs)
- Completion of all prerequisite courses
- Competitive overall and science GPAs (3.5 overall average for those accepted)
- Competitive Graduate Record Exam (GRE) score (required for some programs)
- Observational or work experience in physical therapy
- Letters of recommendation
- Completed application with Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) (for most programs)
- Face-to-face interview required by many programs

Required Pre-PT Courses: (Admission requirements and prerequisites may differ so it is important to check for specific requirements.)

Courses	Required Credits	Suggested UWEC Courses
Human Anatomy and Physiology	2 semesters	BIOL 214 & 314 (8cr)
General Biology	1-2 semesters	BIOL 221 (4cr)
Chemistry	2 semesters	CHEM 105 & CHEM 106 & CHEM 109 (8-9cr)
Physics	2 semesters	PHYS 211 & 212 (9cr)
Mathematics	Statistics	MATH 246 (4cr)
Med Terminology	1 semester	NRSRG 220 (1cr)
Psychology	2-3 semesters	PSYC 100 (3cr); 230 (3cr); 251 (3cr)
Sociology	1 semester	SOC 101 (3cr)

Recommended Courses: The following courses are recommended by some physical therapy programs:

- KINS 304 Biomechanics
- KINS 308 Exercise Physiology
- MATH 111 or 114 Calculus

Non-Academic Considerations: All physical therapy programs require observational or actual work experience in physical therapy prior to admission. Check the admissions requirements for each physical therapy program to determine the minimum number of hours and types of settings for observation.

Graduate Record Exam (GRE): This standardized exam is required for admission to most physical therapy programs. The exam consists of 3 sections, Verbal Reasoning, Quantitative Reasoning and Analytical Writing. It is often taken in the spring semester or summer following the junior year. Go to: <http://www.ets.org/gre> for more information on the GRE.

Suggested Pre-PT Curriculum: The following program is suggested for a student in any major. It is important that students work with a pre-PT advisor each semester. This is one example of how the pre-PT courses can be arranged. Courses will not necessarily be taken in this order. The order of courses taken will depend on the student's major.

Freshman year – Fall MATH* CHEM 105 + 106 LE & Major courses	Freshman year – Spring PHYS 211 KINS 294 LE & Major courses
Sophomore year – Fall BIOL 214 CHEM 109 PSYC 100 KINS 304 LE & Major courses	Sophomore year – Spring BIOL 314 MATH 246 PHYS 212 PSYC 230 Additional science course
Junior year – Fall PSYC 251 KINS 308 SOC 101 LE & Major courses (Prepare for GRE)	Junior year – Spring LE & Major courses (Take GRE and apply to schools in summer)
Senior year – Fall Complete Major/Minor/LE Additional recommended courses	Senior year – Spring Complete Major/Minor/LE Additional recommended courses

*Beginning course in mathematics depends on UWEC Mathematics Placement Exam score

UWEC Pre-PT Advisors:

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Life & Health Science Advisors in the Advising, Retention and Career Center (ARCC)

More Information:

- Mayo School of Health-Related Sciences (Rochester, MN) www.mayo.edu/education/education.html
- University of MN www.med.umn.edu/physther/
- University of Wisconsin – La Crosse www.uwlax.edu/PT/
- University of Wisconsin – Madison www.orthorehab.wisc.edu/pt/program/index.shtml
- University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee www.uwm.edu/graduateschool/physical-therapy/
- Carroll University www.carrollu.edu/gradprograms/physicaltherapy/
- Concordia University www.cuw.edu/programs/dpt/index.html
- Marquette University www.marquette.edu/physical-therapy/
- St. Kate's www.stkate.edu/academics/graduate-degrees/academic-programs/dpt
- St. Scholastica [www.css.edu/graduate/masters-doctoral-and-professional-programs/areas-of-study/doctor-of-physical-therapy-\(dpt\).html](http://www.css.edu/graduate/masters-doctoral-and-professional-programs/areas-of-study/doctor-of-physical-therapy-(dpt).html)
- Concordia – St. Paul www.csp.edu/academic-programs/doctor-of-physical-therapy-program/
- For a list of all schools: American Physical Therapy Association www.apta.org

Visit the *Health Careers Center* in Schofield Hall 30 or go to uwec.ly/hcc.

Join the *Pre-PT/OT Club* to learn more about healthcare, professional school applications, and physical therapy programs.

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