**General Information for Physical Therapy School:**

Prerequisites for admission to physical therapy school exhibit extreme variation between programs. As with physician assistant and pharmacy school, it is not possible to recommend a uniform curriculum that prepares the student for application to all physical therapy programs. Therefore, it is the student's responsibility to investigate the prerequisite course work and service required for all physical therapy programs of interest. Students interested will find links to accredited physical therapy programs across the nation at [http://www.apta.org/Education/schoollistings](http://www.apta.org/Education/schoollistings).

While no blanket curriculum exists, most physical therapy schools include the following courses in the curriculum required for admission:

- General Biology I and II (BIOL 196/196L, BIOL 197/197L)
- General Chemistry I and II (CHEM 121/121L, CHEM 122/122L)
- General Physics I and II (PHYS 151/151L, PHYS 152, 152L)
- Human or Mammalian Physiology

The course work listed above **DOES NOT SATISFY** the minimum course work required for any physical therapy program in the United States. It simply represents a small fraction of the coursework required by the majority of physical therapy programs. All programs require many more courses for admission, but variability in required curriculum prohibits recommendation of any course work beyond that described above. It is the student's responsibility to obtain information concerning prerequisite course work required by all physical therapy programs of interest.

Most physical therapy programs also require specific work experience in addition to course work. This experience often includes either work or service with a licensed physical therapist. Many programs specify a specific number of hours required, so the student must document all relevant experience attained.

Many physical therapy programs place restrictions the types of references acceptable for application. Some programs require two letters of recommendation from licensed physical therapists. The student must secure not only the appropriate number of reference, but also solicit them from the appropriate source.

Clearly, gaining admission into physical therapy school requires much planning and organization. The student must begin working towards satisfaction of required coursework, work experience, and references extremely early in his or her college career. In most circumstances, preparation begins during the freshman year. In other words, pursuing a career in physical therapy is a priority, not a fall back plan.

**Getting Ready to Apply to Physical Therapy School:**

As with all pre-professional programs, physical therapy schools have multiple admission requirements. These include:
- Completion of all pre-requisite course work
- Satisfactory GRE score
- Service and/or work experience
- Letters of recommendation

Investigate specific requirements for all programs of interest. Information for accredited programs in the United States is located at http://www.apta.org/Education/schoollistings. Like all professional schools, the student should complete all requirements as early as possible to maximize the probability of gaining acceptance to the desired program. The links to the left of this page provide general guidelines suggesting which requirements to satisfy during each year of college. Once again, these are only suggestions and it remains the student's responsibility to ensure completion of all prerequisites required for admission into physical therapy school.

**Freshman Year:**

Conduct research for all physical therapy programs of interest. Information for accredited programs in the United States can be found at http://www.apta.org/Education/schoollistings. Compile a list of all prerequisite course work for all programs. Also compile a list for service/work requirements and specifications for letters of recommendation. It is prudent for the student to take either the SAT or the ACT. Although it is currently not required for admission, this is important as the College of Sciences use these scores to place students in the appropriate Math and English courses. In addition to the standardized test, prospective students should take the Chemistry placement test to determine eligibility for enrollment in CHE121 (General Chemistry I). The Chemistry Department posts information concerning how to take this placement test at http://www.unlv.edu/Colleges/Sciences/Chemistry/Placement/. The student can obtain information concerning taking the Biology placement test by visiting the Biology Department Office located in WHI 101. Upon completion of research and the placement tests, register for appropriate course work required for the programs of interest. Since most programs require General Biology, General Chemistry, and General Physics, registration for at least one of these (or at least prerequisites for them) is essential.

Contact the Department of Physical Therapy to inquire about employment and/or volunteer opportunities with licensed physical therapists located near you. Some programs require at least 600 hours of practical experience with a licensed physical therapist before considering a student's application. If it is not possible to acquire relevant experience during the fall or spring semesters, plan on committing to a significant amount of work and/or service during the summer. Get to know the supervising physical therapist since most programs require letters of reference from professionals in the field.

**Sophomore Year:**

Visit web sites to determine if the programs of interest implemented any changes in required curriculum or service. If this occurred, modify the list of requirements compiled during the freshman year appropriately. Consult the list of prerequisites and register for required course work. Continue to acquire required service and/or work experience during the summer.
**Junior Year:**

Go to the web sites for programs of interest and determine if any modifications to prerequisite course work or work/service requirements were implemented and modify the list of requirements if necessary. Information for accredited programs within the United States can be found at [http://www.apta.org/Education/schoollistings](http://www.apta.org/Education/schoollistings). Determine what each program requires for completion of the application process and compile a list of these requirements. Register for required course work and begin completion of the application process for each of the programs.

Most programs require the GRE as the standardized test for admission. Programs requiring the GRE usually implement the General Test, but some require specific subject tests. Consult the web site or directly contact the admission office for specific requirements. The student will find information on testing locations, test dates, and registering for the GRE at [http://www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org).

Most programs require letters of recommendation from two licensed physical therapists and one faculty. The letters are usually submitted directly to the admissions committee. In the unusual event that the program requires an evaluation from the pre-health committee, schedule a meeting as early as possible. The committee requires three letters of recommendation, a resume summarizing all relevant service and work experience, a statement of intent, and a list of programs the student intends to apply to.

**Senior Year:**

Complete all required course work and service. If all requirements are satisfied, take courses for personal enrichment. If possible, try to relax during the summer, it might be the last chance you get for a while!