PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT, A.S.

Begin Campus: DuBois, Fayette, Hazleton, Mont Alto, Shenango
End Campus: DuBois, Fayette, Hazleton, Mont Alto, Shenango

Program Description

This major helps prepare individuals to provide physical therapy services under the direction of a physical therapist in an ethical, safe and effective manner. Students develop knowledge and skills in data collection and the appropriate use of equipment and exercise associated with various physical therapy treatment modalities. In order to accomplish these tasks, the major utilizes a combination of basic science and non-science course work coupled with courses specifically designed for the physical therapist assistant student. Students must progress through the program as prescribed by the recommended academic plan for their campus of admission. The program culminates with a full semester of clinical experience.

The size of each entering class is limited so that optimal clinical experiences and practical application situations can be maintained. Clinical affiliations are maintained over a wide geographical area, and students may be required to make special housing and transportation arrangements for the clinical phase. Prior to the beginning of the clinical practicum, PTA students are required to complete clinical requirements that may include, but are not limited to: health examination, immunizations, FBI fingerprint check, child abuse clearance, state background check and drug screening. Students will be responsible for completion and purchase of the necessary checks/clearances through a University approved vendor and providing results to the clinical sites.

In addition to a PTA certification/licensure, many state licensing boards and clinical facilities require a criminal background check, child abuse clearance, and a drug screening. Students with criminal records should contact the physical therapy licensing board in the state they plan to practice prior to applying for admission to the PTA Program to inquire about potential restrictions for licensure.

What is a Physical Therapist Assistant?

Physical Therapist Assistants (PTAs) work as part of a team providing physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. PTAs implement interventions outlined in the physical therapist’s plan of care, collect data related to interventions, and modify selected interventions to progress patients to meet their individual goals. Individual treatment goals are designed to reduce pain, restore function, improve mobility and prevent disability. An Associate in Science Degree in Physical Therapist Assistant requires 5-semesters of study, including three full-time clinical practicums. The PTA Program prepares graduates to take a national examination for certification/licensure as a PTA.

You Might Like This Program If...

You might like this major if you are interested in working with people of all ages who have medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their ability to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTAs work under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist to provide meaningful interventions, such as exercise, training for walking and other activities, and the use of physical agents and electrotherapy.

Entrance to Major

Students must request a Dean’s review to change to this Associate degree after admission to the University.

Additional Information

In addition to a PTA certification/licensure, many state licensing boards and clinical facilities require a criminal background check, child abuse clearance, and a drug screening. PTA students are required to complete clinical requirements that may include FBI fingerprint check, child abuse clearance, state background check and drug screening prior to the beginning of the clinical practicum. Students will be responsible for completion and purchase of the necessary checks/clearances through a University approved vendor and providing results to the clinical sites. Students with criminal records should contact the physical therapy licensing board in the state they plan to practice prior to applying for admission to the PTA Program to inquire about potential restrictions for licensure.

Degree Requirements

For the Associate in Science degree in Physical Therapist Assistant, a minimum of 70 credits is required:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Education</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requirements for the Major</td>
<td>61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9-12 of the 21 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 3-6 credits of GWS courses; 3 credits of GN courses; 3-6 credits of GS courses.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/associate-degree-general-education-program) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)
- Quantification (GQ): 3 credits
- Writing and Speaking (GWS): 3 credits

Knowledge Domains
- Arts (GA): 3 credits
- Humanities (GH): 3 credits
- Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS): 3 credits
- Natural Sciences (GN): 3 credits

Foundations or Knowledge Domains
- A General Education course selected from GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, or GS, and may include Integrative Studies (Inter-domain or Linked) courses: 3 credits
The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

University Degree Requirements

Cultures Requirement
3 credits of United States (US) or International (IL) cultures coursework are required and may satisfy other requirements

Writing Across the Curriculum
3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits
A minimum of 60 degree credits must be earned for a associates degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 60 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work
Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition
Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major
To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn a grade of C or better in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44).

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<td>PSYCH 100</td>
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<td>BIOL 161</td>
<td>Human Anatomy and Physiology I - Lecture</td>
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<td>BIOL 162</td>
<td>Human Anatomy and Physiology I - Laboratory</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 163</td>
<td>Human Anatomy and Physiology II - Lecture</td>
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<td>Human Anatomy and Physiology II - Laboratory</td>
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<tr>
<td>ENGL 15</td>
<td>Rhetoric and Composition</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT 120</td>
<td>Human Musculature and Functional Anatomy</td>
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<td>PT 150</td>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant Procedures I</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT 160</td>
<td>Therapeutic Exercise I</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 250</td>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant- Procedures II</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 260</td>
<td>Therapeutic Exercise–II</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT 285</td>
<td>Clinical Reasoning for the PTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT 290</td>
<td>Professional Issues in Clinical Practice</td>
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<td>PT 384</td>
<td>Applied Kinesiology</td>
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<td>PT 395E</td>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant–Practicum I</td>
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<td>PT 395F</td>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant–Practicum II</td>
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<td>PT 395G</td>
<td>Physical Therapist Assistant–Practicum III</td>
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Additional Courses
Select one of the following: 3
- PSYCH 212: Introduction to Developmental Psychology
- PSYCH 270: Introduction to Abnormal Psychology

Select one of the following: 5
- PSYCH 200: Pathophysiology
- PSYCH 200W: Pathophysiology
- PSYCH 271: Pathophysiology I
- PT 271 & PT 272: and Pathophysiology II
- PT 271W: Pathophysiology I
- PT 272 & PT 272: and Pathophysiology II

Select one of the following: 5
- PT 280: Rehabilitation
- PT 280W: Rehabilitation
- PT 281: Rehabilitation-1
- PT 282: Rehabilitation-2
- PT 281 & PT 282: Rehabilitation-1
- PT 282W: Rehabilitation-2

Courses that include clinical education experiences may require the student to travel long distances or obtain housing near the assigned clinic. Housing and transportation arrangements are the responsibility of the student.

Academic Advising

The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy)

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Suggested Academic Plan

The suggested academic plan(s) listed on this page are the plan(s) that are in effect during the 2019-20 academic year. To access previous years’ suggested academic plans, please visit the archive (http://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/archive) to view the appropriate Undergraduate Bulletin edition (Note: the archive only contain suggested academic plans beginning with the 2018-19 edition of the Undergraduate Bulletin).

DuBois Campus

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
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<td>BIOL 161</td>
<td>3 PT 384‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 162</td>
<td>1 BIOL 163†</td>
<td>3</td>
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</tr>
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<td>PSYCH 100</td>
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PT 100S 3 General Education Course‡ 3

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Second Year

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<th>Credits Summer</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>PT 160†</td>
<td>3 PT 395E†</td>
<td>3 PT 395G†</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 271W†</td>
<td>3 PT 260†</td>
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<td>PT 272†</td>
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<td>PT 290†</td>
<td>2 PT 285†</td>
<td></td>
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<td>PT 281†</td>
<td>2 PSYCH 212†</td>
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Total Credits 70

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
† Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
‡ Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
† Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GN, GA, GH, and GS). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.
General Education Course (GH or GA); US/IL Recommended

| PSU 8 | 1 |

**Second Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PT 150†</td>
<td>2 PT 260†</td>
<td>3 PT 395F*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 160†</td>
<td>3 PT 272†</td>
<td>2 PT 395G*</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 250†</td>
<td>3 PT 282W†</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>PT 271†</td>
<td>3 PT 285†</td>
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<td>PT 281†</td>
<td>2 CAS 203, ENGL 202C, HDFS 129, PSYCH 212, or PSYCH 270†</td>
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<td>PT 290†</td>
<td>2 PT 395E*</td>
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</table>

| Total Credits 71 |

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
† Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
‡ Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

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W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GN, GA, GH, and GS). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

Academic Advising Notes:

A student’s career/graduate school plans should be considered in developing an individual academic plan. Be sure to consult an adviser in this department when scheduling courses.

Hazleton Campus

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

**First Year**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 161†</td>
<td>3 BIOL 163†</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIOL 162†</td>
<td>1 BIOL 164†</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**ENGL 15 or 30‡**

| 3 General Education Course | 3 |

| PSYCH 100† | 3 PT 120† | 2 |

| PT 100† | 3 General Education Course | 3 |

Total Credits 70

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
‡ Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
# Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
‡ Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement
1 This course satisfies the University United States/International Cultures requirement.
2 This course satisfies the University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement. The clinical practicum component of this course is a three week full-time experience in a physical therapy practice setting.
3 This is a six week clinical practicum that is a full-time experience in a physical therapy practice setting.
4 PT 100 will be offered in the spring.

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

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W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GN, GA, GH, and GS). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

Additional Notes:

Program Notes

Students are required to take a total of 3 credits in ARTS and 3 credits in HUM during the first 2 semesters.
KINES 13 is optional, student must be certified in Professional Rescuer, CPR, and First Aid.

Students are allowed to attend graduation ceremonies, but officially do not receive diploma until August, upon successful completion of their summer practicums.

A student’s career/graduate school plans should be considered in developing an individual academic plan. Be sure to consult an adviser in this department when scheduling courses.

**Mont Alto Campus**

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What if report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan. Be sure to consult an adviser in this department when scheduling courses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Year</th>
<th>Credits Spring</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>PT 100S *1</td>
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<td>BIOL 161 (GN) ††</td>
<td>3 PT 384 *</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 162 (GN) ††</td>
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<td>ENGL 15 or 30 (GWS) ‡</td>
<td>3 BIOL 164 (GN) *</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYCH 100 (GS) †</td>
<td>3 General Education Course (GQ) ‡</td>
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<tr>
<td>General Education Course (GH or GA); US/IL recommended</td>
<td>3 General Education Course (GH or GA); US/IL recommended</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Credits</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
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<table>
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<th>Credits Spring</th>
<th>Credits Summer</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>PT 150 *</td>
<td>2 PT 250 *</td>
<td>3 PT 395F †§</td>
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<td>PT 160 *</td>
<td>3 PT 260 *</td>
<td>3 PT 395G †§</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 271W * †</td>
<td>3 PT 272 *</td>
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<td>PT 281 †</td>
<td>2 PT 282 *</td>
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<td>PT 290 †</td>
<td>2 PT 285 *</td>
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<td>PT 395E †§</td>
<td>3 ENGL 202C, PSYCH 212, CAS 203, HDFS 229, or PSYCH 270 ‡</td>
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**University Requirements and General Education Notes:**

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W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GN, GA, GH, and GS). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

**Advising Notes:**

- A student’s career/graduate school plans should be considered in developing an individual academic plan. Be sure to consult with an adviser in this department when scheduling courses.
- Humanities or Arts: It is highly recommended the Arts, Humanities, and General Quantification courses be taken in the first two semesters of the PTA Program curriculum. The sequence in which these courses are taken is per student selection.
- Quantification: Choose any Quantification (GQ) course that is available at Mont Alto of the World Campus. Typically students elect to take one of the following: MATH 17 Finite Math, MATH 21 College Algebra, MATH 34 Math of Money, STAT 100 Statistical Concepts and Reasoning, STAT 200 Elementary Statistics (4 credits), PHIL 12 Symbolic Logic. Note that not all Quantification courses are available every semester at the Mont Alto campus. Other General Quantification courses may be available that will satisfy this General Education requirement of Associate Degree programs. It is highly recommended that the Arts, Humanities, and General Quantification courses be taken in the first two semesters of the PTA Program curriculum. The sequence in which these courses are taken is per student selection.
- US/IL requirement is recommended to completed through the GH/GA credits.
Shenango Campus

The course series listed below provides only one of the many possible ways to move through this curriculum. The University may make changes in policies, procedures, educational offerings, and requirements at any time. This plan should be used in conjunction with your degree audit (accessible in LionPATH as either an Academic Requirements or What If report). Please consult with a Penn State academic adviser on a regular basis to develop and refine an academic plan that is appropriate for you.

First Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fall</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<th>Credits</th>
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<td>3 BIOL 164*</td>
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<tr>
<td>BIOL 162‡</td>
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<td>1 Humanities Elective (GH)</td>
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<td>ENGL 15‡</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 PT 120</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>PSYCH 100†</td>
<td></td>
<td>3 PT 384†</td>
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<tr>
<td>PT 100†</td>
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<td>3 Quantification Elective (GQ)†</td>
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Second Year

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<th>Credits</th>
<th>Spring</th>
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<tr>
<td>PT 160†</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>PT 260†</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PT 270W†</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>PT 280†</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Behavioral Science Elective (GS)†</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Credits 70

* Course requires a grade of C or better for the major
† Course requires a grade of C or better for General Education
‡ Course is an Entrance to Major requirement
¶ Course satisfies General Education and degree requirement

University Requirements and General Education Notes:

US and IL are abbreviations used to designate courses that satisfy University Requirements (United States and International Cultures).

W, M, X, and Y are the suffixes at the end of a course number used to designate courses that satisfy University Writing Across the Curriculum requirement.

GWS, GQ, GN, GA, GH, and GS are abbreviations used to identify General Education program courses. General Education includes Foundations (GWS and GQ) and Knowledge Domains (GN, GA, GH, and GS). Foundations courses (GWS and GQ) require a grade of ‘C’ or better.

Program Notes

Students must complete a 3-credit course in "United States Cultures (US)" or a 3-credit course in "International Cultures (IL)."

Career Paths

The Physical Therapist Assistant program prepares its graduates for positions in a number of traditional and non-traditional career settings and for opportunities for higher education.

Careers

Physical Therapist Assistants provide health care services to patients of all ages and health conditions in a variety of settings, including: outpatient clinics, hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing, extended care or sub-acute facilities, home, education or research centers, schools, hospices, industrial, workplace or other occupational environments, fitness center and sports training facilities. PTAs must graduate from a CAPTE-accredited program and are required to obtain licensure in most states to work. Students seeking licensure as a PTA must apply to the licensing authority of the jurisdiction (state) in which the graduate is seeking licensure and then register for the National Physical Therapy Examination for PTAs administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy.

BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS OCCUPATIONAL OUTLOOK HANDBOOK IN HEALTHCARE (https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/mobil)

Opportunities for Graduate Studies

Many students choose to continue their education at Penn State and complete bachelor's degrees in a variety of disciplines, including: Rehabilitation and Human Services; Letters, Arts and Sciences; Human Development and Family Studies; or other related field of study. Advisers assist interested students in completing bachelor's degrees and meeting prerequisite qualifications to apply for doctoral degrees in physical therapy (DPT) or other field of graduate study.

Professional Resources

- American Physical Therapy Association (http://www.apta.org)
- Pennsylvania Physical Therapy Association (http://www.ppta.org)
- Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (http://www.fsbpt.org)

Accreditation

The Associate of Science degree in Physical Therapist Assistant at Penn State is accredited by the:

Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, Virginia 22314
Telephone: 703-706-3245
Email: accreditation@apta.org
Website: http://www.capteonline.org

Graduation from a physical therapist assistant education program accredited by CAPTE is necessary for eligibility to sit for the licensure examination, which is required in all states.

Accreditation by Campus

Penn State DuBois

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Penn State DuBois is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) and is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) which is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE).
Penn State Fayette
The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Penn State Fayette, The Eberly Campus is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-706-3245, accreditation@apta.org.

Penn State Hazleton
The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Penn State Hazleton is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-706-3245, accreditation@apta.org.

Penn State Mont Alto
The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at the Penn State Mont Alto is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-706-3245, accreditation@apta.org. (accreditation@apta.org)

Penn State Shenango
The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Penn State Shenango is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, 703-706-3245, accreditation@apta.org.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE COMMISSION ON ACCREDITATION IN PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION (http://www.capteonline.org/home.aspx)

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