

Pre-Physical Therapy at JWU

Coursework: JWU courses for PT entry overview

<https://documentcloud.adobe.com/link/track?uri=urn:aaid:scds:US:e3751761-e886-4610-ab58-d5a86f1f47d2>

Getting Started: <https://www.apta.org/your-career/careers-in-physical-therapy/pt-admissions-process>

Comparison of Program Requirements Courses: <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/>

Comparison of Program Requirement PT Hours: <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/5257/PT-Observation-Requirements-by-Program>

Programs: Using the links above as a starting point, look into programs early as start dates and requirements vary. In-state, public schools are often most affordable and best chance of acceptance, although few states have them currently. URI is one that does have a state PT school.

PT Observation: START EARLY! Prior to holiday breaks, contact any medical contacts you may have and ask about possibility of observing PTs. Schools vary in terms of required hours, but shoot for at 100 (see link above), with at least 2 different PTs. Some students find PT Aide jobs. Document in log (see FAQ).

* Consider using your PT Observation/PT Aide work for internship credit, contact Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond for this.

Community Volunteering: Service in just about any capacity is encouraged! Food pantries, online crisis counseling, tutoring, hospital volunteering, religious volunteering, Greek-life volunteer projects, etc.. Document in log (see FAQ).

GRE Testing: Schools vary in whether or not GRE required. Start thinking early about whether or not the schools you will be applying to do as often > \$200 each attempt. If so, consider buying a GRE prep study book or study program early (Magoosh, Kaplan, & Princeton Review are definitely helpful, but expensive!). <https://ptcasdirectory.apta.org/5254/GRE-Requirements-and-Codes-by-Program>

See FAQ for more details.

Scientific Research: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in a scientific research project. Undergraduate research opportunities are often available within your major (advertised when they become available) or by applying to outside summer research fellowships (go to AMCAS, How to Gain Experience). * Also, you can contact JWU Experiential Learning as approach junior-year status or beyond to search for research opportunities as part of an internship.

International Medical Outreach: Not required, but some successful candidates take part in volunteer travel programs outside of the US. Have known students who worked in medical camps in Peru and Vietnam over school breaks. *Be careful as some may have significant costs.* See link below:

<https://www.volunteerhq.org/blog/how-to-volunteer-abroad-as-a-physical-therapist/>

<https://www.volunteeringolutions.com/blog/recommended-pre-med-volunteer-projects-abroad/>

Application Process:

Begin ~1 ½ years before hope to begin PT school

GRE: If taking, plan on taking 1 ½ years (often late Winter) before you plan to matriculate into PT school as will give you time to re-take if necessary.

Write PTCAS Personal Statement:

Start 1 year (often Spring) before you plan to matriculate. Take help from writing tutors/faculty on personal statements!

PTCAS Application: Portal opens each year on July 5th. Best to have application submitted early, by early Fall, before you plan to matriculate.

PTCAS Recommendation:

3-4 total: 1-2 faculty (at least 1 science suggested), 1-2 PT care, and/or 1 other.

Interviews: Top candidates will be asked for interviews 3-9 months prior to matriculation. Ask for help to prep from faculty or Experiential Learning!

IMPORTANT Pre-PT FAQs:

1. Keep log on your computer of your experiences, including names of persons you work with as you will need to document your experience later in your application.
2. Science mastery and grades, especially the BCPs (Biology [BIO], Chemistry [CHM], and Physics [PHY] courses) should be strong as possible in order to be competitive for any of these programs!
Take advantage of tutoring & consider re-taking a course if grade less than/equal to a C, especially in the core sciences.
3. Please be aware that ALL collegiate grades will be counted when you applied (even if you re-take a course) and will be converted to standardized PTCAS system which adjusts your JWU GPA slightly (ex. B+ at JWU = 3.5 → adjusted PTCAS system B+ = 3.3).
To do this, MAKE A COPY of the link, follow instructions, & save a copy for your records: <https://1drv.ms/x/s!Ak5n0wrbFYysg4Ff52Yr8vziv-huAw?e=crPGbl>
4. In 2019-19, the average adjusted overall GPA for PT school admissions is 3.57. US acceptance rate was ~31% in 2020-2021.
5. Many accepted students have taken one to several gap years in order to improve their applications, gain experience, and save up money before actually applying. More maturity is a big positive in the health field as often had more experience with patients & readier for the rigors of an intensive, quick program. As of 2016, the average age of acceptance was 25 years of age.
6. Your state of residence is the one in which you are claimed by parent/custodian or file as an independent on income taxes, not necessarily where you live, and sometimes an issue when parents are divorced. Some forward-thinking students move to states with state, public medical schools to establish residency in those states as an independent for 1-2 years (ie. no parent/guardian claiming you as a dependent on taxes for that year, set up banking/license in that state) before applying.
7. GRE specifics: To register, go to https://www.ets.org/gre/revised_general/register/
Note, no subject tests are generally required.
“Many PT schools will take at least 144 for the verbal and quantitative and a 3.0 for the writing portion; however, top schools such as the University of Southern California—which is one of the best schools for physical therapy—require at least 150 points in the first two categories, with additional points awarded to those who score higher.” (<https://theptblog.com/chances-into-pt-school/>)
If not taking the GRE, please realize that no GRE requirement drastically increases the applicant pool, sometimes making acceptance more challenging.
8. If you are not a strong candidate by graduation, some students continue to take courses (or re-take) through accredited programs online or in-person. Some great examples are Portage Education <https://portagelearning.com/> and UC Berkely Extension Sciences.
Some students also go into post-bac programs (often expensive) that are designed to give experience, help with GRE testing, and take classes; some give promises of interviews at their PA school upon successful completion. One example of many is at Tuft’s University is <https://medicine.tufts.edu/education/physician-assistant> or search “Post-Baccalaureate Pre-Medical Northeastern.”