

Physical Therapy, D.P.T.

Degree Offered

- Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)

Nature of the Program

The WVU Division of Physical Therapy was established in 1970 under the auspices of the School of Medicine to help meet the need for physical therapists in West Virginia. The program became an entry-level doctoral degree program in Fall 2005. The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), a specialized body recognized by the Council on Postsecondary Accreditation. Forty full-time students are admitted in a typical annual admissions cycle. Preference is given to West Virginia residents and non-residents who have attended a West Virginia college or university or who have ties to West Virginia. All other non-residents who meet program requirements will also be considered for admission.

Students admitted into the program complete three years of combined classroom, laboratory, and clinical education, and part-time and full-time supervised clinical practice in various clinics in West Virginia and other states. A doctor of physical therapy (DPT) degree is awarded upon completion of the program which entitles the graduate to apply for examination for state licensure. A license to practice physical therapy is required by all states.

The Profession of Physical Therapy

Physical therapy is a hands-on health care profession that defines and promotes the movement system as the foundation for optimizing movement to improve the health of society. The physical therapist is uniquely qualified to evaluate and manage an individual's movement system across the lifespan to promote optimal development; diagnose impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions; and provide interventions targeted at preventing or ameliorating activity limitations and participation restrictions. The movement system is the core of physical therapist practice, education, and research.

Demand for physical therapy services is expected to continue over the next ten years. The Bureau of Labor Statistics projects growth of 21 percent from 2020 to 2030, which is much faster than average for all occupations. The demand for physical therapists in all practice settings is affected by such factors as an aging population and increased emphasis on a healthy, active lifestyle. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is the professional organization which represents therapists on healthcare issues and advocates for the profession with government and payor agencies to assure that physical therapy will continue to be a favorable career choice.

Physical therapists are respected members of the healthcare team. They work with other healthcare providers such as physicians, occupational therapists, music and arts therapists, rehabilitation nurses, psychologists, social workers, dentists, podiatrists, speech pathologists, and audiologists. Physical therapists work in hospitals, private physical therapy offices, community health centers, corporate or industrial health centers, sports facilities, research institutions, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, schools, pediatric centers, and colleges and universities.

Some physical therapists work as employees in these settings, while others are self-employed as owners or partners in private practices. Settings, employment arrangements, career responsibilities, and career opportunities depend on the interests and skills of each practitioner.

ADMINISTRATION

CHAIR

- Ivan Mulligan - PT, DSc, ATC, CSCS (Rocky Mountain University)
Associate Professor; Sports and Orthopedic Physical Therapy

ASSISTANT DEAN AND DIRECTOR, PT CLINICAL SERVICES

- Corrie Mancinelli - PT, PhD, GCS (West Virginia University)
Professor; Orthopedics and Geriatrics

DIRECTOR OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

- Anne Swisher - PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA (West Virginia University)
Professor; Cardiopulmonary, Oncology

DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL EDUCATION

- Ralph Utzman - PT, MPH, PhD (West Virginia University, Virginia Commonwealth University)
Professor; Balance Disorders, Professional Roles

DIRECTOR OF RESIDENCY EDUCATION

- Renee McGinnis - PT, DPT, OCS (West Virginia University)
Assistant Professor; Orthopedic PT

CHAIR, ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE

- Carol Waggy - PT, PhD, CHS (West Virginia University)
Associate Professor

CHAIR, CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

- Teresa Rice - PT, NCS, MPH, EdD (West Virginia University)
Associate Professor

FACULTY

PROFESSORS

- Dina Jones - PT, PhD (University of Pittsburgh)
Arthritis, Community-Based Physical Activity
- Corrie Mancinelli - PT, PhD, GCS (West Virginia University)
PT Clinical Services, Orthopedics and Geriatrics
- MaryBeth Mandich - PT, PhD (West Virginia University)
Neuroscience, Pediatric Physical Therapy
- Teresa Rice - PT, MPH, EdD, NCS
Neurologic PT, TBI & Vestibular
- Bill Stauber - PT, PhD (Rutgers University)
Electrotherapy, Muscle Physiology
- Anne Swisher - PT, PhD, CCS, FAPTA (West Virginia University)
Cardiopulmonary, Oncology
- Ralph Utzman - PT, MPH, PhD (West Virginia University, Virginia Commonwealth University)
Clinical Education, Professional Roles, Balance Disorders

ASSOCIATE PROFESSORS

- Megan Burkart - DPT, West Virginia University, Board Certified Oncology Clinical Specialist
Oncology and Pain Specialist
- Kimeran Evans - PT, DPT (Virginia Commonwealth University)
Clinical Education, General Physical Therapy
- Valeriya Gritsenko - PhD (University of Alberta, Edmonton)
Neuroscience, Motor Control
- Ivan Mulligan - PT, DSc, ATC, CSCS (Rocky Mountain University)
Sports and Orthopedic Physical Therapy
- Carol Waggy - PT, PhD, CHS (West Virginia University)
Hand Therapy, General Orthopedics

ASSISTANT PROFESSORS

- Cheryl Brandmeir - PT, MS (Ithaca College)
Movement Disorders
- Yu-Jen Chang - PT, PhD (University of Southern California)
Musculoskeletal, Research, Prosthetics and Orthotics
- Melissa Henry - DPT, OCS (West Virginia University)
Orthopedic Physical Therapy
- Ketaki Inamdar - PT, PhD
Pediatric Physical Therapy
- Renee McGinnis - OCS, PT, DPT (West Virginia University)
Professional Roles, Orthopedics
- Justin Payette - PT, DPT, CSCS, SCS (Marquette University)
Sports PT

CLINICAL ASSISTANT PROFESSOR

- Michael Timko - PT, MS, FAAOMPT (West Virginia University, University of Pittsburgh)
Orthopedic and Manual Therapy

PROFESSOR EMERITUS

- John J. Petronis - PT, MS (West Virginia University)
Orthopedic Physical Therapy

Admissions for 2025-2026

For the most up-to-date information, including temporary adjustments to requirements due to effects of COVID-19, please refer to our admissions website at: <https://medicine.wvu.edu/pt/>

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

The following requirements must be met to apply to the WVU Physical Therapy Program:

1. Completion of a baccalaureate degree:

Applicants must complete a baccalaureate degree at an accredited US college or university prior to May of the year of matriculation. Students may apply with any degree background, as long as all prerequisite courses are completed.

2. Completion of prerequisite courses:

Prerequisite courses (listed in the table below) must be completed at a regionally accredited 2- or 4-year US college or university. Applicants may be enrolled in prerequisite courses at the time of application. However, all prerequisite courses and the undergraduate major must be successfully completed by the end of the Spring semester (typically mid-May) of the year of entering the program.

The applicant must earn a minimum grade of C in each prerequisite course.

It is recommended that prerequisite courses in human anatomy and human physiology be completed within two years prior to admission.

Pre-requisite Courses	WVU Course Number
Biology with lab (8 hours)	(BIOL 101 and BIOL 101L, BIOL 102 and BIOL 102L) OR (BIOL 115 and BIOL 115L, BIOL 117 and BIOL 117L)
Chemistry with lab (8 hours)	CHEM 115 and CHEM 115L, CHEM 116 and CHEM 116L
Physics with lab (8 hours)	PHYS 101, PHYS 101L, PHYS 102 and PHYS 102L
General psychology (3 hours)	PSYC 101
Developmental psychology (3 hours)*, should include development across the human lifespan	PSYC 241
Introductory statistics (3 hours), must include descriptive and inferential statistics	STAT 211 or ECON 225
Human anatomy (3 hours)**	BIOL 345 or EXPH 440 or PALM 205 or PASS 319
Human physiology (3 hours)***	PSIO 241 or PSIO 441 or BIOL 235

*

A course in Developmental Psychology is strongly recommended, although other psychology courses (abnormal, social) are accepted. Students should seek Developmental Psychology courses that cover the entire human lifespan, from birth through older adulthood, when possible. Courses in Sports Psychology may not be used for this prerequisite.

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The anatomy courses included in the DPT curriculum are extremely rigorous. Students should seek out the highest level anatomy course(s) available. The minimum prerequisite is a 3 credit hour course in Human Anatomy; ideally with a laboratory. We will accept a 2-semester, 8 credit sequence of combined Human Anatomy & Physiology. Courses in comparative, mammalian, or animal anatomy will not be accepted.

For the physiology prerequisite, we will accept a 2-semester, 8 credit sequence of combined Human Anatomy & Physiology. A separate Human Physiology course with lab is preferred. Animal, Mammalian, or Comparative Physiology courses are not acceptable.

3. Overall Cumulative GPA:

An overall cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required.

4. Prerequisite GPA:

A GPA in the prerequisite courses of 3.0 is required.

5. Volunteer/work experience in physical therapy:

A minimum of 40 hours of volunteer or work experience is required. This experience must be under the direction of a licensed physical therapist, and experience from two different practice settings is recommended. Practice settings include acute care/hospital, outpatient, adult rehabilitation hospital/center, nursing home, school system/pediatrics, and home health. Though these hours may be obtained during high school and college, some volunteer hours obtained during the junior or senior college years is strongly recommended. Volunteer/work experience must be completed within the US.

Hours devoted to internships in undergraduate majors in other fields (such as exercise physiology or athletic training) may NOT be used as part of the 40 hours of volunteer experience.

6. Three letters of recommendation

We require two references from US-licensed physical therapists with whom the student has worked in a clinical setting, either on a volunteer or work basis.

The third reference must be from a professor/instructor who taught the student in at least one course, or an academic advisor who is familiar with the applicant's academic background and performance.

We do NOT accept letters from physical therapist assistants or other healthcare providers.

We do NOT accept letters from relatives of the applicant, even if the relative is a physical therapist or professor.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED ITEMS FOR APPLICATION

Graduation Record Examination (GRE) scores:

Though not required, a GRE is recommended. Submit official GRE scores using institution code #7639 to the [West Virginia U Sch Med Phys Therapy]

APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications to the DPT program at West Virginia University are submitted through the Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service (PTCAS). The PTCAS application cycle will open June 15, 2024.

The application deadline is October 15, 2024. For an application to be considered, it must be marked as "Complete" by PTCAS and all supporting materials (GRE scores, letters of recommendation, etc.) must be received by PTCAS on or before the October 15th deadline.

Interviews

The admissions committee will offer personal interviews to well-qualified candidates. Interviews are conducted throughout the fall semester at the WVU Health Sciences Center.

OFFERS OF ADMISSION

Applicants accepted to the program will receive an offer of admission through their preferred email (as identified in PTCAS) with a link to an online Declaration of Acceptance form. Those wishing to accept a seat in the class will complete an online Declaration of Acceptance form. Applicants accepting the offer of admission will be sent an invoice from the WVU Graduate Admissions Office for a non-refundable deposit (\$400 for WV residents, \$800 for non-residents), which will be due within two weeks of receipt of the invoice. The deposit will be applied towards the first semester tuition. Failure to pay the deposit within the required time period will result in forfeiture of the seat.

EARLY ASSURANCE PROGRAM

The Early Assurance Program (EAP) provides a pathway for well-qualified WVU Exercise Physiology undergraduates to enter the DPT program following completion of their baccalaureate degree. To qualify, students entering WVU from high school must:

- Be admitted to WVU as an Exercise Physiology major
- Have a high school GPA of 3.50 or higher
- Have an ACT Math score of 24 or higher, or SAT Math score of 570 or higher

EAP students who meet the following requirements will continue into the DPT program following completion of their baccalaureate degree:

- Complete all prerequisite coursework (see table above) by the end of the spring semester of their junior year.
- Achieve both overall and prerequisite GPA of 3.50 or higher*.
- Meet the program's other admissions requirements, including a successful interview and satisfactory letters of recommendation, with the following exceptions:

- The GRE is waived for EAP students.
- EAP students must obtain at least 10 of the required 40 PT volunteer/observation hours in our program's faculty practice and/or at a WVU Medicine facility.
- Participate in meetings each semester organized by the DPT Admissions Committee and the Exercise Physiology academic advisor.

*EAP students will be evaluated for progression to the DPT program starting in June after completion of the junior year. Interviews will be conducted in August following the junior year.

Students who do not meet the EAP criteria for continuation outlined above but do meet our program's minimum admissions requirements are encouraged to apply using the traditional application process described above.

UPDATES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For updates, please periodically check the WVU Division of Physical Therapy website (<https://medicine.wvu.edu/pt/future-students/>).

Major Code: 8374

Physical Therapy (PT)

Course information for the doctor of physical therapy degree can be found on the following website: <http://medicine.hsc.wvu.edu/pt> (<http://medicine.hsc.wvu.edu/pt/>).

PHYSICAL THERAPY CURRICULUM

Note: This is subject to change without notice.

Code	Title	Hours
PT 701	Professional Development 1	3
PT 706	Advanced Clinical Anatomy	5
PT 708	Movement Diagnosis 1	2
PT 713	Lifespan Functional Movement	2
PT 714	Foundational Science 1	4
PT 715	Evidence Based Physical Therapy 1	3
PT 716	Kinesiologic Foundations	4
PT 718	Movement Diagnosis 2	3
PT 720	Clinical Education 1	2
PT 723	Developmental Life Tasks	3
PT 724	Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy 1	3
PT 725	Evidence-Based Physical Therapy 2	3
PT 727	Neurobiologic Foundations	4
PT 729	Physical Therapy Interventions 1	3
PT 731	Professional Development 2	1
PT 734	Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy 2	3
PT 736	Orthopedic Physical Therapy 1	4
PT 738	Movement Diagnosis 3	1
PT 739	PT Interventions 2	3
PT 740	Clinical Education 2	1
PT 741	Professional Development 3	3
PT 743	Geriatric Physical Therapy	2
PT 745	Evidence Based Physical Therapy 3	1
PT 746	Orthopedic Physical Therapy 2	4
PT 747	Neurorehabilitation 1	3
PT 754	Foundational Science 3	3
PT 749	Survey of PT Practice	1
PT 744	Foundational Science 2	2
PT 756	Orthopedic Physical Therapy 3	4
PT 757	Neurorehabilitation 2	3
PT 758	Movement Diagnosis 4	1

PT 759	Prosthetics and Orthotics	3
PT 760	Clinical Education 3	5
PT 761	Professional Development 4	2
PT 770	Clinical Education 4	5
PT 771	Professional Development 5	3
PT 773	Pediatric Physical Therapy	3
PT 775	Evidence Based Physical Therapy 4	1
PT 780	Clinical Education 5	8
PT 781	Professional Development 6	1
PT 785	Advanced Clinical Decision Making	2
Independent Study (Optional)		
PT 795	Independent Study	
PT 797	Research	5
Total Hours		122

SUGGESTED PLAN OF STUDY

First Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
PT 701 (Pre-fall)		3 PT 724		3 PT 734	3
PT 706 (Pre-Fall)*		5 PT 720		2 PT 731	1
PT 708		2 PT 723		3 PT 738	1
PT 713		2 PT 727		4 PT 736	4
PT 714		4 PT 729		3 PT 739	3
PT 715		3 PT 725		3	
PT 716		4			
PT 718		3			
		26		18	12

Second Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours	Summer	Hours
PT 740		1 PT 744		2 PT 760	5
PT 741		3 PT 754		3 PT 761	2
PT 743		2 PT 756		4 PT 797	1
PT 745		1 PT 757		3	
PT 746		4 PT 758		1	
PT 747		3 PT 759		3	
PT 749		1 PT 797		2	
PT 797		2 Independent Study (Optional) PT 795			
		17		18	8

Third Year

Fall	Hours	Spring	Hours
PT 773		3 PT 780	8
PT 775		1 PT 781	1
PT 771		3 PT 785	2
PT 770		5	
		12	11

Total credit hours: 122

*

The professional curriculum begins in summer before first year. Students should plan for these courses to begin on or around June 1st.

Major Learning Outcomes

PHYSICAL THERAPY

This program is designed to prepare future physical therapy professionals for practice with special emphasis on meeting the needs of the citizens of West Virginia. This is done by the delivery of instruction focused on providing students with knowledge, skills, and behaviors consistent with professional excellence as described below:

Graduates will:

- Deliver high quality physical therapy services to individuals and communities across a continuum of care, including rural settings
- Demonstrate the ability to make sound clinical decisions characterized by critical thinking, information literacy, and based on scientific evidence
- Demonstrate the ability to collaborate as a unique member of inter-professional teams
- Provide care distinguished by inclusion, cultural sensitivity, advocacy, trust, respect and appreciation for both individual differences and population health disparities
- Demonstrate a commitment to the health of the community through participation in primary, secondary and tertiary prevention programs
- Demonstrate attributes of life-long learning through ongoing professional development, engagement in professional organizations and advocacy for the profession