

ISU Doctor of Physical Therapy: FAQ

What academic degree is needed to become a physical therapist?

To practice physical therapy you must graduate from a program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) and have satisfactorily passed the National Physical Therapy Exam for Licensure.

Indiana State University is currently in CAPTE's pre-accreditation stage. Our program is applying for candidacy and once granted the *Candidate for Accreditation* status by CAPTE, students will then **officially** be able to begin coursework in the DPT Program. Prior to that time, students are still encouraged to apply to the program and if accepted, will be so "contingent upon CAPTE's provisional accreditation." We anticipate beginning our inaugural DPT class in the **Summer 2012** term.

For more information on this process, please write to the [American Physical Therapy Association](#), 1111 N. Fairfax Street, Alexandria VA 22314, or call 1-800-999-APTA.

What is the best undergraduate degree for ISU's DPT Program?

Physical therapists have various undergraduate degrees. From chemistry to athletic training, there is no one major that is looked to as the 'best', however a strong math and science background with a 3.0 GPA or higher is strongly recommended, and helps fulfill prerequisite requirements.

What are recommended elective courses to take during undergraduate years?

The more science courses taken as an undergraduate, the easier and more meaningful the professional curriculum will be. Courses in anatomy and physiology, biomechanics, psychology, and kinesiology will be extremely helpful to our incoming DPT students.

What is the minimum GPA needed for application?

A minimum GPA of 3.0 for is recommended for both cumulative and prerequisite courses.

Do you require the GRE?

Yes. All applicants to the DPT program must submit GRE scores which were taken in the last **5 years**. The GRE institution code for Indiana State University is **1322**.

Do I need to finish all prerequisite classes before applying to the program?

No. Our program requires students to finish all requirements by the end of your Spring semester, but you can apply before all prerequisites are completed. Applicants can submit an application which includes 'in-progress' courses, and they will still be considered for the program pending successful completion of the

'in-progress' courses. This includes both course work and PT observational experiences. All prerequisite coursework must have been completed within the past **7 years**.

Do all the prerequisite courses (like anatomy, physiology, chemistry and physics) require a lab component?

Yes. All science courses must have a lab included or the course will not fulfill the prerequisite.

Can I take prerequisite courses at a community college?

Yes. There are a number of prerequisite courses offered through community colleges. You will need to follow their standards for enrollment and once you have successfully completed the course, you will need to request an official transcript to be sent to:

DPT Program, Department of Applied Medicine and Rehabilitation
Indiana State University
Student Services Building, Room 201
567 N. 5th St.
Terre Haute, IN 47809

The DPT program follows Indiana State University's Transfer Guidelines for all prerequisite work. For more information on the University's guidelines, please visit: <http://www.indstate.edu/transfer/guidelines.htm>

Can I transfer into the DPT program at Indiana State University from another DPT program?

No. Transferring into the DPT program at Indiana State from another physical therapy program is NOT allowed.

Are interviews required during the application process?

Yes. After reviewing your application materials, you will be scheduled for an on-campus interview if you meet all of the initial requirements. The interview with the admissions committee lasts approximately 15 minutes, with additional information sessions before and/or after the interview as needed.

How many hours of observational experience are required? What counts?

You may perform your observational experience in any type of Physical Therapy setting as long as there are licensed physical therapists employed who will attest that you were there to observe for a minimum of 40 hours.

When does the DPT program begin?

Originally, classes were scheduled to begin in Summer 2012. With news of the Program's candidacy denial, classes are now scheduled to begin **Summer 2013**.

How long is the DPT program?

The DPT program requires the completion of a total of 100 post-baccalaureate degree credit hours (approximately 3-years). Seventy-one credit hours of the curriculum focus on didactic studies with 29 credit hours being in the area of clinical experience. Courses must be taken in predetermined sequence beginning with an advanced human anatomy courses in the first summer session.

Can I specialize in an area, like orthopedics, in the program?

No. The emphasis is on training a generalist in practice. An introduction to the specialty areas is available during clinical internships. Formal certification as a clinical specialist requires clinical experience and passing the specialist certification examination. Clinical specialty areas in physical therapy are: orthopedics, geriatrics, sports, neurologic, pediatrics, cardiopulmonary, and clinical electrophysiology.

What are clinicals?

Clinicals are the student's field experience that affords the opportunity to apply learned knowledge into clinical application. The Clinical experiences are required and will be in a variety of clinical settings (acute care, long term care, outpatient, in patient-rehab, etc.). Students will be required to participate in an acute care setting, outpatient setting, a neuro-rehab setting, and may pick an elective setting. The student must agree with all site requirements during their clinical. Requirements may include, but are not limited to, TB tests, vaccinations, criminal background check and drug screenings. Clinicals will last 8-10 weeks, in which students may be required to travel outside of the Terre Haute area. During these rotations, students are responsible for all travel, lodging accommodations and associated expenses.

What qualities make a good physical therapist?

As with most health professions, a physical therapist should be compassionate, caring and a good listener. Both communication and interpersonal skills are vital to the profession to ensure proper diagnosis and treatment. In addition, our faculty requires all graduates to commit to life-long learning and actively pursue opportunities for professional growth.

Are physical therapists licensed?

Yes. All physical therapists are required to have a license. Graduates from any accredited institution must pass the National Physical Therapy Examination. Other requirements for physical therapy practice vary from state to state according to physical therapy practice acts or state regulations governing physical therapy.

What is the average salary for a physical therapist?

The estimate median annual earnings of physical therapists, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, were \$72,790 in May 2008. Median annual wages in the industries employing the largest numbers of physical therapists in May 2008 were:

Home health care services	\$77,630
Nursing care facilities	76,680
General medical and surgical hospitals	73,270
Offices of physicians	72,790
Offices of other health practitioners	71,400

From the Bureau of Labor Statistics, <http://www.bls.gov/oco/ocos080.htm>

What is the employment outlook for physical therapist?

The Bureau of Labor Statistics expects employment of physical therapists to grow by 30 percent from 2008 to 2018. The growing elderly population will increase the demand for physical therapy services as well the baby-boom generation entering the prime age for heart attacks and strokes. This will cause an

increase in demand for cardiac rehabilitation, physical rehabilitation and therapeutic services. According to the Bureau, opportunities should be particularly good in acute care, skilled nursing, and orthopedic settings, where much of the elderly are treated. Employment prospects should be especially optimistic in rural areas as many physical therapists tend to cluster in highly populated urban and suburban areas.

Where can I find more general information about the physical therapy profession?

This is a great third-party resource for those interested in exploring more about physical therapy!
<http://www.physicaltherapydegreezone.com/>