



# Pre-Physical Therapy

## University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

### 2009-2010

Physical therapy is an allied health profession that focuses on the prevention and rehabilitation of various musculoskeletal injuries or problems. The ultimate goal of physical therapists is to facilitate the return of patients to pre-injury levels of functioning. Physical therapists are an integral part of any comprehensive health care team. They frequently work with other health care providers, such as physicians, occupational therapists, athletic trainers, nurses, dentists, psychologists, social workers, podiatrists, and speech pathologists and audiologists.

Although a large number of physical therapists work in hospitals, a majority can be found in private physical therapy offices, rehabilitation centers, community health centers, nursing homes, home health agencies, corporate or industrial health centers, sports facilities, research institutions, schools, pediatric centers, and universities.

The following list of courses has been designed to meet the pre-physical therapy requirements of the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, University of Wisconsin-Madison, University of Minnesota, and Mayo School of Health-Related Sciences. **Students are strongly advised to contact admissions counselors at the graduate schools they are interested in attending to make sure that all undergraduate course prerequisites are being met.**

Requirements at other schools may vary, so students should be aware of their specific admission requirements. Pre-physical therapy students should plan their courses each semester until graduation in consultation with both their pre-physical therapy advisor and academic advisor within their major.

**Degree: Pre-physical therapy is a program of study, not an academic major. No specific academic major is required for pre-physical therapy.** Physical therapy programs are at the graduate level; thus, the completion of a bachelor's degree is required for admission. The majority of students will choose one of the following majors to complete their pre-physical therapy requirements:

1. Kinesiology major with emphasis in Human Performance (no minor is necessary in this major)
2. Athletic Training major (no minor is necessary in this major)
3. Biology major with chemistry or pre-professional health minor

#### Recommended Pre-Physical Therapy Courses:

**UW-La Crosse** -- <http://www.uwlax.edu/PT/>

General Biology (4 credits) - Biol 100, 110 or 111  
Human Anatomy and Physiology (8 credits) - Biol 214 and 314 recommended  
Chemistry (8 credits) - Chem 103 and 104 recommended  
Physics (8 credits) - Phys 211 and 212 recommended  
Psychology (3 credits) - Psych 100, 230 or 351 recommended  
Statistics (3 credits) - Math 246  
Sociology (3 credits) – Soc 101

**UW-Madison** -- <http://www.orthorehab.wisc.edu/pt/program/index.shtml>

Biology (1 semester) - Biol 100 recommended  
Chemistry (2 semesters) - (a) Chem 103 and 104 or (c) Chem 103 and 150 recommended.  
Physics (2 semesters) - Phys 211 and 212 recommended  
Human Anatomy and Physiology (2 semesters) - Biol 214 and 314 recommended  
Biomechanics and Exercise Physiology - Kins 304 and 308 recommended  
Statistics through ANOVA and linear regression - Math 246 or PSYC 265  
Psychology (6 credits) – Psc 230 & 351 recommended

**University of Minnesota** -- <http://www.med.umn.edu/physther/>

General Biology course and a second Biology course of the student's choice (both with labs)  
Human Anatomy and Physiology - Biol 214 and 314 recommended  
Chemistry - Chem 103 and 104 recommended  
General Physics - Phys 211 and 212 recommended  
Psychology - Psyc 100 and 351 recommended  
Mathematics - Math 111 or 114 recommended (pre-calculus not acceptable)  
Statistics - Math 246 recommended

**Mayo School of Health-Related Sciences** -- <http://www.mayo.edu/education/education.html>

Biology (at least 4 courses with labs) - Biol 214 and 314 recommended and 2 other biology lab courses  
Chemistry (at least 2 courses with labs) - Chem 103 and 104 recommended  
Physics (at least 2 courses with labs) - Physics 211 and 212 recommended  
Statistics (1 course) - Math 246 recommended  
Psychology (at least 6 credits) - Psyc 100, 230 and 351 recommended  
Sociology, Anthropology, Philosophy, Ethics, Speech, or Death/Dying (at least 3 credits)  
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) certification

Other area schools with physical therapy programs are **Marquette University** in Milwaukee, **Carroll University** in Waukesha, WI, the **College of St. Catherine** in St. Paul, the **College of St. Scholastica** in Duluth, MN, **Concordia University** in Milwaukee, **Northwestern University** in Evanston, IL and **University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee**.

**Work Experience in Physical Therapy:** All physical therapy programs require observational or actual work experience in physical therapy prior to admission. UW-La Crosse and UW-Madison require a minimum of 40 hours; Minnesota and Mayo require a minimum of 100 hours. This work experience can be used to meet your service-learning graduation requirement.

**Graduate Record Exam (GRE):** Completion of the GRE general test is required for admission to most physical therapy programs. Combined verbal and quantitative scores should equal 1000 points or higher.

**Grade Point:** Minimum grade point averages (GPA) to be considered for admission are 2.75 at Northwestern, 3.0 at UW-Madison, U. Minn., and Mayo Clinic, and 3.2 at UW-La Crosse. However, because admissions are extremely competitive, most recent GPA's have been 3.5 or higher. Thus, it is imperative that most of your college grades be A's, starting during the freshman year. Pre-Physical Therapy students need to be aware that it is nearly impossible to improve one's GPA after a poor start in the freshman year.

**Interviews:** Most programs invite the top student applicants for interviews by an admissions committee. Interview questions will be designed to assess the applicant's understanding of the physical therapy profession, leadership skills, communication skills, and self-perception.

**Professional Associations:** Learn more about physical therapy at the website for the American Physical Therapy Association <http://www.apta.org>.

**For more information, you may contact:**

UWEC Pre-physical therapy advisors in Human Performance:

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