

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

This Selective Program has a competitive entry selection process based on a competitive point system. Application requirements are included in the description below.

Associate of Applied Science

Physical Therapist Assistants, or PTA's, are skilled health care providers who work under the supervision of a physical therapist. PTAs assist the physical therapist in implementing treatment programs to help restore or improve function, relieve pain, encourage independence and educate patients and their families.

PTAs work in settings such as hospitals, nursing homes, outpatient clinics, home health, schools, sports facilities and more. Patients/clients treated in physical therapy range from newborns to the elderly and sample diagnoses include athletic injuries, back/neck problems, strokes, spinal cord injuries, cerebral palsy, arthritis and post-surgical conditions such as total joint replacements.

Care provided by a PTA may include:

- teaching patients/clients exercises to increase movement and flexibility.
- helping increase a patient's/client's balance, strength and coordination.
- providing training for activities such as walking with crutches, canes or walkers.
- use of physical agents and electrotherapy such as ultrasound and electrical stimulation.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South Texas College is accredited by:

Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)
3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100
Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085
Telephone: 703-706-3245
Email: accreditation@apta.org
Website: <http://www.captionline.org>

To contact the program/institution directly, please call 956-872-3152 or email dianah@southtexascollege.edu.

Application Requirements

All applicants must:

- Participate in the required Prospective Student Information session. To schedule a session please contact Mari Ponce-Vargas, Student Success Specialist, at marip@southtexascollege.edu or 956-872-3216. For additional information visit <https://www.southtexascollege.edu/pta/> or contact the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at 956-872-3161.
- Be admitted to the college as a high school graduate or GED equivalent.
- Meet TSI College Readiness Standards, or meet TSI exemption standards.
- Complete all prerequisite courses with a minimum grade of "B" as listed in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program degree plan. BIOL 2401 Anatomy and Physiology I must be completed within the past five years and PTHA 1409 Introduction to Physical Therapy must be completed within the past two years.
- Complete the HESI A2 (Admissions Assessment) Exam as follows: Achieve an

English Language Composite Score of 75% or higher, a Science (Anatomy & Physiology) Score of 75% or higher, and a Math Score of 75% or higher. Scores must be current within the last 2 years. HESI A2 Exemptions are not permitted.

- Earn a minimum grade of "B" in "Introduction to Physical Therapy" course within the last two years. Required HESI A2 English Language Composite, Science, and Math test scores are needed to register for this course.
- Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale in all courses, including transfer courses, and those completed at STC.
- Pass a criminal background check, 10-panel drug screen through approved providers, and complete all required immunizations including Hepatitis B series. Students with criminal histories must provide proof of licensure eligibility from the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners (ECPTOTE) www.southtexascollege.edu/go/pta-chel. This process may take up to 6 months to complete. For more information contact the NAH Clinical Affairs Specialist at 872-3022.
- Submit Documentation of Experience Forms as evidence of a minimum of twenty-five (25) hours of volunteer or work experience under the supervision of a PT or PTA in two different settings, for a total of fifty (50) hours. One experience should be completed in an inpatient setting (hospital or nursing facility), and the other should be completed in a different type of setting such as an outpatient clinic or pediatric center. Home Health hours are not accepted. Therapists who supervise volunteer experiences cannot be a relative or personal friend of the student applicant.
- Meet Technical Standards as stated by the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.
- Submit a completed Program application by stated deadline. For more information contact the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at 872-3161 or access the information online at <https://www.southtexascollege.edu/pta/>.

Competitive Entry Selection Process

The PTA Program selection process is based on a Point System evaluation. Points are awarded for GPA in prerequisite and general education courses, HESI A2 Exam scores, volunteer/experience forms, cumulative GPA, PTA Manual of Student Standards assessment, written assignment, personal interview & group activity scores, and optional points listed on the Application Form (e.g., completion of CSFH 0101 College Success for Healthcare course with a B or better). Applicants are ranked numerically based on points earned and may be accepted, placed on an alternate list, or not accepted. Meeting application requirements does not guarantee admission. Typically, 20 new positions are available annually, subject to resources. If an accepted applicant declines, an alternate may be admitted. In the case of a tie, selection is based on the application.

To support a more holistic admissions process, applicants who meet all minimum requirements may submit an optional personal statement. This allows them to explain extenuating circumstances affecting their GPA, test scores, or education gaps, demonstrating their character and commitment to becoming a PTA.

A new applicant pool is established for each admission period. Non-admitted applicants must re-apply for future consideration. Applications are available annually from the PTA Program

web page, with a submission window from the last week of March to the last week of May. All coursework for application points must be completed by the end of the Spring semester. Selection occurs in the summer, and newly admitted students must attend mandatory Program Prep Sessions and complete Orientation programming before beginning program classes in the fall.

Graduation Requirements

To earn an Associate of Applied Science Degree as a Physical Therapist Assistant, a student must meet college graduation requirements and complete all coursework as prescribed in the degree plan with a minimum grade of "C." Students must achieve a minimum written exam average of 75 percent, a minimum laboratory exam average of 75 percent (for courses with labs), and a minimum overall course score of 75 percent to pass all PTA courses. Students must also meet specified professionalism standards each semester and pass the Level II Exit Exam with 75 percent as a requirement of the final Capstone course.

Licensure of Persons with a History of Criminal Conviction / Substance Abuse

- According to the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners PT Rules 343.5 the Board may deny a license to or discipline an applicant/respondent who has been found to have a history of substance abuse.
- According to the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners PT Rules 343.9 the Board may revoke or suspend an existing valid license, disqualify a person from receiving or renewing a license or deny to a person the opportunity to be examined for a license because of a person's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor if the crime directly relates to the practice of physical therapy.

Additional information regarding rules governing licensure may be found in the complete Physical Therapy rules located on the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy (<https://www.ptot.texas.gov/>) website.

Program Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate communication skills that result in effective information exchange and collaboration with patients, their families, and other healthcare personnel.
2. Students will demonstrate competent entry-level PTA skills in implementing interventions identified in the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
3. Students will complete clear and relevant physical therapy patient care documentation according to practice guidelines.
4. Students will demonstrate respect for patient/client differences, values, and preferences in the delivery of physical therapy services.
5. Students will apply effective clinical decision-making skills based on evidence-based practice and within the defined scope of practice for a PTA to implement the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
6. Students will recognize the PTA's role in reimbursement and budgetary processes in the delivery of physical therapy services.
7. Students will demonstrate professional conduct and adherence to ethical and legal guidelines that reflect a commitment to meet the expectations of the patients and community they serve, and the profession of physical therapy.

8. Students will integrate the aspects of human structure, function, and dysfunction to demonstrate PTA-appropriate clinical judgment when implementing the physical therapist's plan of care.

Advisory Committee Members

Ricardo Escobedo, PTA, (Committee Chair) DHR Orthopedic & Sports Therapy Institute
Denise Ramos, PT, DPT, (Committee Vice-Chair) McAllen Heart Hospital
Norma Castro, PTA, Doctors Hospital at Renaissance (acute care)
Melanie Watson, PT, MPT, C/NDT, Milestones Therapeutic Associates
Maria O. Aguilar, PTA, Doctors Hospital at Renaissance Inpatient Rehabilitation Center
Aaron Cantu, PT, DPT, HCA Rio Grande Regional Inpatient Rehabilitation Hospital
Jack Ruelas, OTR, Dept. of Occupational Therapy, UT Rio Grande Valley
Jose I. Suarez, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT, Moveo Performance
Cory Salinas, PTA, Windsor Nursing and Rehabilitation Center of Weslaco

Physical Therapist Assistant Associate of Applied Science

TSI Liable

Course	Title	Credit Hours
Pre-requisite Semester (Summer Session I)		
BIOL 2401	Anatomy and Physiology I	4
ENGL 1301	Composition I ¹	3
PTHA 1409	Introduction to Physical Therapy	4
Credit Hours		11
First Semester (Fall)		
BIOL 2402	Anatomy and Physiology II	4
PTHA 1405	Basic Patient Care Skills	4
PTHA 1413	Functional Anatomy	4
PTHA 2201	Essentials of Data Collection	2
Credit Hours		14
Second Semester (Spring)		
PSYC 2314	Lifespan Growth and Development ¹	3
PTHA 1321	Pathophysiology for the PTA	3
PTHA 1531	Physical Agents	5
PTHA 2509	Therapeutic Exercise	5
Credit Hours		16
Third Semester (Summer Session)		
PTHA 1266	Practicum I	2
PTHA 2205	Neurology	2
Credit Hours		4
Fourth Semester (Fall)		
PTHA 2431	Management of Neurological Disorders	4
PTHA 2435	Rehabilitation Techniques	4
Humanities Elective¹		3
Select one of the following:		
HUMA 1301	Introduction to Humanities I	
PHIL 1301	Introduction to Philosophy	
PHIL 2303	Introduction to Formal Logic	
PHIL 2306	Introduction to Ethics	
Credit Hours		11
Fifth Semester (Spring)		
PTHA 2266	Practicum II	2
PTHA 2267	Practicum III	2

PTHA 2339	CAPSTONE: Professional Issues	3
Credit Hours		7
Total Credit Hours		63

¹ Identifies courses to fulfill minimum 15 credit hour General Education requirement