

# 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](mailto:accreditation@apta.org)  
Website: <http://www.captionline.org>

If needing to contact the program/  
institution directly, please call 956-872-3152  
or email [dianah@southtexascollege.edu](mailto: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](mailto:marip@southtexascollege.edu) or 956-872-3216. For additional information log onto <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](http://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 the following selection criteria: GPA of PTA Program 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 which may be obtained from items listed on the Application Form (for example, completion of CSFH 0101 College Success for Healthcare course with a B or better, etc.). Qualified applicants are numerically ranked based on the number of acceptance points earned, and are either accepted, placed on an alternate list or not accepted. Due to program size limitations, meeting application requirements does not guarantee admission to the program. The typical number of new positions available on an annual basis is 20; the final number is dependent upon available resources. Should any of the accepted applicants decline admission, an alternate will be offered acceptance to the program. In the case of tied applicants, finalists will be chosen based on the date of application.

A new applicant pool is established for each admission period. Applicants who are not admitted for the current application period must

re-apply to be considered for a later application period. PTA Program applications are available annually from the PTA Program web page. The window for submission of completed applications opens the last week of March and closes the last week in May of the current year. All courses to be considered for application points must be completed by the end of the Spring semester of the current year. Selection of students is made one time a year during the summer. Newly selected students attend mandatory Program Prep Sessions and Orientation programming in the summer and begin program classes in the fall semester.

## 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.

\*STC Board Policy (#3337) applies to all students participating in a Nursing or Allied Health Program clinical course. This policy requires all students to pass a criminal background check and drug screening prior to enrolling in a clinical course. This policy is being implemented to ensure uniform compliance with healthcare agencies and state licensing regulations. Students having questions about this rule should see the Clinical Affairs Specialists, the PTA Program Chair or the Dean of the Nursing and Allied Health Division. All consultations are confidential.

## Program Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate communication skills that result in effective information exchange and collaboration with patients, their families, and other healthcare personnel.
2. Demonstrate competent entry-level PTA skills in implementing interventions identified in the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
3. Complete clear and relevant physical therapy patient care documentation according to practice guidelines.

4. Demonstrate respect for patient/client differences, values, and preferences in the delivery of physical therapy services.
5. Apply effective clinical decision-making skills within the context of available evidence-based practice to carry out the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
6. Recognize the role of the PTA in reimbursement and budgetary processes in the delivery of physical therapy services.
7. 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. Integrate the aspects of human structure, function, and dysfunction as a foundation for applying clinical judgment when carrying out the plan of care established by the physical therapist.

## Advisory Committee Members

Javier Rocha, PT, Village Care Nursing & Rehab  
Norma Castro, PTA, Doctors Hospital at Renaissance (acute care)  
Denise Ramos, PT, DPT, (Committee Vice-Chair)  
McAllen Heart Hospital  
Melanie Watson, PT, MPT, C/NDT, Milestones Therapeutic Associates  
Ricardo Escobedo, PTA, (Committee Chair) DHR Orthopedic & Sports Therapy Institute  
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

## Physical Therapist Assistant Associate of Applied Science

### TSI Liable

Course	Title	Credit Hours
<b>Pre-requisite Semester (Summer Session I)</b>		
BIOL 2401	Anatomy and Physiology I <sup>1</sup>	4
ENGL 1301	Composition I <sup>1</sup>	3
PTHA 1409	Introduction to Physical Therapy	4
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>11</b>
<b>First Semester (Fall)</b>		
BIOL 2402	Anatomy and Physiology II <sup>1</sup>	4
PTHA 1405	Basic Patient Care Skills	4
PTHA 1413	Functional Anatomy	4
PTHA 2201	Essentials of Data Collection	2
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>14</b>
<b>Second Semester (Spring)</b>		
PSYC 2314	Lifespan Growth and Development <sup>1</sup>	3
PTHA 1321	Pathophysiology for the PTA	3
PTHA 1531	Physical Agents	5
PTHA 2509	Therapeutic Exercise	5
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>16</b>
<b>Third Semester (Summer Session)</b>		
PTHA 1266	Practicum I	2
PTHA 2205	Neurology	2
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>4</b>
<b>Fourth Semester (Fall)</b>		
PTHA 2431	Management of Neurological Disorders	4

PTHA 2435	Rehabilitation Techniques	4
Humanities Elective <sup>1</sup>		3
Select one of the following:		
HUMA 1301	Introduction to Humanities I - Western	
PHIL 1301	Introduction to Philosophy	
PHIL 2303	Introduction to Logic	
PHIL 2306	Introduction to Ethics	
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>11</b>
<b>Fifth Semester (Spring)</b>		
PTHA 2266	Practicum II	2
PTHA 2267	Practicum III	2
PTHA 2339	CAPSTONE: Professional Issues	3
<b>Credit Hours</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Total Credit Hours</b>		<b>63</b>

<sup>1</sup> Identifies courses to fulfill minimum 15 credit hour General Education requirement