

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Associate of Science



University Profile

The University of Saint Francis was founded in 1890 and has a rich heritage of offering quality education. Rooted in the Catholic and Franciscan traditions of Faith and Reason, the University of Saint Francis engages a diverse community in learning, leadership and service.

The campus has 108 acres of rolling lawns and trees with 19 buildings and four residence halls that surround beautiful Mirror Lake.

Personal attention to students is what makes a USF education so meaningful and enriching to its approximately 2,000 students.

What is a Physical Therapist Assistant?

Physical Therapy is the assessment, evaluation, treatment, and prevention of physical disability, movement dysfunction and pain resulting from injury, disease, disability, or other health-related conditions. A Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) delivers services under the direction and supervision of a Physical Therapist.

What are the job opportunities?

Physical Therapist Assistants work in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, extended care facilities, outpatient centers, home care, and schools. Salaries in this region for Physical Therapist Assistants begin at approximately \$28,000 a year. Job opportunities are available, and the projected prospects for future employment are good.

Does a Physical Therapist Assistant need certification to practice?

In most states, including Indiana, certification is required in order to practice as a PTA. In Indiana, a candidate for the certification exam must graduate from an accredited program. The University of Saint Francis Physical Therapist Assistant curriculum is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education.

What is the Physical Therapist Assistant Studies program?

The University of Saint Francis Physical Therapist Assistant Studies curriculum consists of four semesters of courses in general education and physical therapy theory and practice. The curriculum emphasizes

academic knowledge while offering hands-on experience in a variety of settings. The curriculum sequence begins every fall. Students with college experience may have the opportunity to attend part time, based on prior general education credits. Some students spread their course load over three years, completing many general education courses before enrolling in the four-semester (part or full-time) sequence of PTA courses.

Purposes

The University of Saint Francis Associate of Science Degree for the Physical Therapist Assistant is designed to:

1. Prepare students for entry-level practice as Physical Therapist Assistants.
2. Provide the healthcare community with skilled physical therapy practitioners who are able to apply theoretical knowledge to clinical practice.
3. Provide a learning environment that recognizes individual differences and promotes caring behaviors.
4. Promote critical thinking skills to effectively address patient care problems and to adapt to the rapidly changing challenges of healthcare.
5. Provide students with a strong educational foundation for life-long personal and professional growth.

Outcomes

At the completion of the Associate of Science Degree for the Physical Therapist Assistant, the graduate will be able to:

1. Demonstrate safe and effective physical therapy patient care skills.
2. Integrate related concepts and theories of the physical, social and behavioral sciences and humanities with physical therapy knowledge and practice.
3. Utilize critical thinking skills in the delivery of physical therapy services.
4. Uphold the ethical standards of the profession in all practice.
5. Value caring and respect for the individual needs of each person.
6. Demonstrate a commitment to growth and life-long learning.

What kind of classes will I take?

The curriculum consists of a solid balance of general education, physical therapy theory and clinical practice. (In addition, there are

university associate degree requirements in general education. These are outlined in the undergraduate catalog.) Changes may be made to the curriculum as necessary.

Semester I

Anatomy and Physiology I	3
College Algebra	3
Foundations for Success*	1
Intro to Physical Therapy	3
Patient Care Skills I	3
Concepts of Patient Care	2
Service Learning	2

Semester II

Anatomy and Physiology II	3
Physics/Physical Science	3
Intro to Psychology	3
English Composition	3
Patient Care Skills II	3
Functional and Applied Anatomy	3
Clinical Education I	1

Semester III

Human Growth and Development	3
Religion	3
Computer Information Systems	3
Patient Care Skills III	5
Medical Lectures (Med, Ortho, Neuro)	3
Clinical Education II	1

Semester IV

Patient Care Skills IV (6 weeks)	5
PTA Seminar (6 weeks)	2
Clinical Education III (5weeks)**	5
Clinical Education IV (5weeks)**	5
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* For first-time, full-time students only

** 5 credits = 5 weeks of full-time clinical affiliations

How many hours a week will I be in class?

Physical Therapist Assistant students are in class and clinical approximately 20 to 27 hours per week until the last 10 weeks of the curriculum. During these 10 weeks, students are scheduled to be in the clinic 40 hours each week. Students are assigned to a clinical facility where PTA practice occurs in a supervised environment.

What are the admission criteria?

The University of Saint Francis accepts a limited number of students each year into this academically competitive curriculum. The candidate's high school records should

reflect a college preparatory curriculum including four years of English, three years of mathematics, two years of social sciences, and three years of laboratory science including one year of physics. In addition to meeting University of Saint Francis admission criteria, candidates will be considered for admission to the program who meet the following criteria:

- A minimum of one year of high school algebra, chemistry and biology or the equivalent with a grade of “C” or better.
- Exposure to work in the health field through observation, volunteer service or employment.
- Knowledge concerning the profession of physical therapy.
- Two of the following criteria for admission:
 - High school cumulative GPA of “B” or better.
 - SAT math/verbal composite score of 1000 or higher or ACT composite score of 21 or higher. Prior to April 1995, a minimum SAT composite score of 800 is required. *
 - 12 or more credit hours in applicable college subjects with a cumulative GPA of “C” or above. At least three credits must be from a physical or biological science course.
 - Associate or higher level degree from a regionally accredited institution of higher education.
 - 12 or more credit hours at the University of Saint Francis with a grade of “C” or above in each class, including three credit hours from a biological or physical science course.

* The Psychological Services Bureau (PSB) for Health Occupations Aptitude Examination may be substituted for the SAT or ACT.

The PTA Admissions Committee will identify those qualified applicants who will be offered admission. Each application will be reviewed on an individual basis. Exception to the stated admission criteria may be made and applied fairly at the discretion of the Admissions Committee. Review of applications for the Fall PTA class begins in the prior September and continues until the class is full.

What may prevent my participation in the PTA program?

In order to participate in clinical experiences, clinical requirements as set by the Department of Physical Therapist Assistant Studies and clinical agencies must be met including, but not limited to, criminal background checks and drug testing.

How do I apply for admission?

Applications and all accompanying material will be reviewed by the PTA Admissions Committee until the class is filled and a “wait list” is generated.

1. Request an application for admission including the directed essay assignment and reference forms from the Office of Admissions or apply online at www.sf.edu.
2. Send the completed application along with the required, non-refundable application fee of \$20 to the Office of Admissions. Online application is free.
3. Have an official copy of your high school transcript showing GPA and ACT or SAT results sent to the Office of Admissions. Transcripts are considered official only when they are sent directly from the school and have a school seal or signature of a school official.
4. If you did not finish high school, have your high school transcripts sent in addition to your GED test score results.
5. Submit two professional references from an employer, teacher, pastor, or other professional. If you are currently employed, one reference should be from an employer. If you are currently a student, one reference should be from a teacher.
6. If you have attended post-secondary institutions, submit an official transcript from each institution attended. Transcripts are considered official only when they are sent directly from the school and have a school seal or signature of a school official.
7. If you are licensed or certified as a healthcare professional, you must submit a notarized copy of your license or certificate, or present the license or certificate in person to the Office of Admissions.
8. If you have been in military service, submit a copy of your DD214 military discharge form.

What if I want to become a Physical Therapist?

Physical therapy education programs at the master’s or clinical doctorate level are offered at many institutions in the region and throughout the country. Students enrolled at USF can prepare to enroll in a professional physical therapy educational program in two ways:

- Enroll in the USF two-year Physical Therapist Assistant Associate of Science Degree curriculum, followed by completion of a bachelor’s degree that includes physical therapy school prerequisites. Graduates with the USF PTA degree can practice as PTAs while completing their bachelor’s degree.
- Enroll in and complete a bachelor’s degree at USF that includes the prerequisites for physical therapy school.

The University of Saint Francis has established articulation agreements with the accredited professional physical therapy education programs at the University of Findlay and at Midwestern University. The articulation agreements facilitate enrollment of qualified USF graduates in these programs.

Financial Aid

Financial aid is available in the form of scholarships, grants, loans, and work study. Over 95 percent of undergraduate students receive some form of financial assistance; most receive more than one type of aid. Early estimator packages are available for dependent students during the fall at www.sf.edu/financialaid.

All students are encouraged to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Priority deadline is no later than March 10.

How do I find out more?

Contact the Office of Admissions at 260-399-8000 or 1-800-729-4732 or visit our website at www.sf.edu.