



School of Physical Therapy

## Frequently Asked Questions on DPT Admission

### **Do I need a specific degree in order to apply to the DPT program?**

We accept any Bachelor's degree from any regionally accredited institution, as long as you complete our specific prerequisites. The Bachelor's degree that you choose will not affect your admissions process, however, some degrees encompass our prerequisites more than others and some degrees prepare you more appropriately for the Physical Therapy Program curriculum. Some suggested degrees include Pre-Physical Therapy (also called Exercise Science), Biology, Health Science, Psychology, Kinesiology, Sports Medicine, and Athletic Training.

### **Does AP coursework count for the prerequisites?**

Yes, successfully completed coursework will count as long as the awarded credits meet the minimum number of credits according to our list of prerequisite courses. Please note, that because AP coursework is typically ungraded, this will not factor into your GPA calculations.

### **How many observation hours should I obtain?**

While our program only requires a minimum of 25 observation hours, additional hours in a variety of PT settings may help you know more about PT and thus help you in your interview. FYI - The median number completed by all PTCAS applicants last year was 219.

### **What is the timeline to know if I'm accepted into the program?**

Since this is our charter class, we are accepting applications on the FSC website. This will allow us to conduct interviews throughout the fall and spring semesters based on the applicant pool. Per CAPTE (the accrediting body for Physical Therapy programs) regulations, the earliest that we are permitted to notify applicants of acceptance will be after Candidacy status is granted. We anticipate this will be early May 2019. The program coursework would then commence in August 2019.

### **How many people apply each year?**

Since we plan for our charter class to begin in 2019, this is an unknown to us. The most recently available data from the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), indicates that an average of over 500 applicants applies to each DPT program per year, however, we expect a much smaller number since this is our first year for accepting applications.

### **Does your program conduct a background check or drug test prior to admission?**

As part of your application, applicants will be required to disclose any previous felony or misdemeanor convictions. A criminal record will not necessarily prevent an applicant from enrolling in our program; however, failure to disclose any past or pending charges may be grounds for immediate dismissal. Our program will require criminal background checks and/or drug tests in order to verify an individual's suitability to participate in clinical education practicums, to confirm a student's eligibility for licensure, and to ensure patient safety.

### **What is your expected class size?**

Our class size is planned to be a maximum of 36 students per cohort. Since the average class size for a DPT program is 46 students (*Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service 2016-2017 Applicant data: A report of the American Physical Therapy Association, December 2017*), we feel that this sets our program apart and will create a more optimal learning environment for our students.

### **When will the program be accredited?**

Florida Southern College is seeking accreditation of a new physical therapist education program from CAPTE. We have submitted an Application for Candidacy, which is the formal application required in the Pre-accreditation stage. Submission of this document does not assure that the program will be granted Candidate for Accreditation status. Achievement of Candidate for Accreditation status is required prior to implementation of the professional phase of the program; therefore, no students may be enrolled in professional courses until Candidate for Accreditation status has been achieved. Further, though achievement of Candidate for Accreditation status signifies satisfactory progress toward accreditation, it does not assure that the program will be granted accreditation.

The final decision regarding accreditation by CAPTE will be made prior to the first graduating class of the program.

### **Can I take all the required courses at my local Community College?**

If you graduated from college with a major in which you took little or no science coursework, it is possible to complete much of the remaining prerequisites at a Community College that is a regionally accredited institution of higher learning.

### **Does it help to be a Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) first?**

PTA programs are generally not considered to be a “stepping-stone” to a DPT degree. The PTA curriculum differs from that of the DPT curriculum and does not provide the needed prerequisites required for most DPT programs. According to APTA data, less than 2% of enrolled students were PTAs prior to enrolling in a PT program (<http://www.apta.org/ProspectiveStudents/Admissions/PTProcess/>).

### **Can I work while I'm enrolled in the program?**

There is very little time outside of class and study time for students to be able to work at very many jobs. Classes will often consume most of the weekday hours of 8:00 am to 5:00 pm with only short breaks in between. However, it is obvious that in today's world of increasing educational costs, some students will have to work. There are sometimes part-time jobs available in the physical therapy community and we will try to keep students aware of these opportunities. We strongly recommend that first-year students do not work to enable a smooth transition into graduate school. The best opportunities for working are during the weekends and over breaks.

### **Can I attend the program part-time?**

No. The program at Florida Southern College is designed for the full-time student and is only offered in a full-time accelerated format to be completed year-round in less than 2 ½ years.

### **Do you have any out of state clinical opportunities?**

Yes, we have clinical agreements with many states throughout the United States. Additionally, if you have a specific area or location that you would like for your clinical practicum, we are very open to facilitating a new agreement that would be a good fit for the program and the student. Please feel free to discuss this more with our Director of Clinical Education, Dr. Christine Morgan (863-680-4679 or [cmorgan@flsouthern.edu](mailto:cmorgan@flsouthern.edu)).

### **“What sets your program apart from other DPT programs?”**

One of the innovative parts of our curriculum is the Integrated Professional and Community Education (IPCE). The purpose of the IPCE course series is to provide students the opportunity to apply the knowledge and skills learned during didactic coursework while meeting essential community needs. On a weekly basis, all of our students will provide volunteer services at one of four community organizations the program partners with. This is a unique opportunity that exposes the students to work with patients/clients across the lifespan, within the environment in which they live, work and age; and better prepares them to deliver physical therapy services that meet the needs of an increasingly diverse and evolving society

### **Who can I contact for more information about Admission to the School of Physical Therapy?**

Please contact Dr. Alex Siyufy, Associate Professor, [asiyufy@flsouthern.edu](mailto:asiyufy@flsouthern.edu)

Graduation from a physical therapist education program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; phone; 703-706-3245; [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org) is necessary for eligibility to sit for the licensure examination, which is required in all states.

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