



School of Physical Therapy

## Frequently Asked Questions on DPT Admissions

### **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. If you are unable to obtain 25 observation hours due to COVID-19, please contact us to have this requirement waived.

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

We will have multiple interview dates with our first interview being in November and our final interview session being in the late Spring semester. Initial offers will be made in December and we will continue to make offers until the class size is filled. This will vary per year but is typically in March – May.

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

While each admission cycle varies, we typically have a range of 400 – 800 applicants apply to our program.

### **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.

### **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 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.

### **Can I work while I'm in 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. While working during school may seem undesirable, 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.

### **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 Admissions to the School of Physical Therapy?**

If you have specific questions, please email our department at [FSCDPTadmissions@flsouthern.edu](mailto:FSCDPTadmissions@flsouthern.edu)

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