

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Melody Kentrus, *PT, DPT, Program Director*
 mkentrus@allegany.edu
 Allied Health 234A
 301-784-5535

Physical Therapy is a profession concerned with 1) management and enhancement of movement dysfunction; 2) restoration, maintenance, and promotion of patient function, wellness, and quality of life; and 3) prevention of impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities associated with disease or injury. The goal of this program is to prepare individuals with basic and applied knowledge and skills needed to practice as a Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) in a variety of settings. Physical Therapist Assistants provide patient care and treatment under the supervision of a Physical Therapist.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program has been designed as a 1+1 program with two related but distinct phases (Phase I and Phase II). Phase I consists of 28 general education college credits which can be completed in one to multiple years. However, it is required that the Biology coursework is completed within five years prior to application to phase II (unless otherwise waived by the PTA Program Director). It is recommended that all other prerequisite coursework is completed within five years prior to applying to Phase II. Admittance to Phase I requires only that the student be accepted to the college as a pre-PTA student. Phase II, also known as the Clinical Phase, consists of 42 credits and is highly specialized. This phase can only be taken at the Cumberland campus and runs 12 consecutive months from August to August. Admittance to Phase II is selective and based in part on proven academic success of the first phase, volunteer experience, an essay, and a professional interview.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Allegany College of Maryland has been designated as a Health Manpower Shortage Program. The Maryland State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has determined certain health occupations in the state to be in short supply. The Maryland Higher Education Commission has designated educational programs that correspond to these health occupations to be eligible for the Health Manpower Shortage Program. Maryland residents from counties other than Allegany County who register in this eligible program will be charged the out-of-county tuition rate. However, these students may be eligible to receive reimbursement for a portion of the cost difference between the in-county and out-of-county tuition rates. Funding availability for this program is based on funding from the State of Maryland and is thus subject to change each semester. Some restrictions apply. More information can be obtained by contacting the Admissions Office.

Successful completion of this program qualifies a student to apply for an Associate of Applied Science degree in Physical Therapist Assistant and take the state licensing exam. Not until successful completion of this examination can one work as a Physical Therapist Assistant.

PROGRAM ADMISSIONS

Phase I – PTA Application Process

Student Checklist

ALL of the requirements for application into Phase II of the Program must be submitted to the PTA department by the April 15th DEADLINE of the year in which the student is applying.

These requirements include SUCCESSFUL completion of a(an):

- Application to the College (go online at www.allegany.edu)
- Application to the PTA Program – Phase II
 - Including reading and signing off on understanding the Program Expectations.
 - Notice: it is to your advantage to submit the application form early. The observation forms do not need to be submitted with the application, but must be submitted prior to the April 15 deadline.
- Transcript which includes evidence that all Phase I prerequisite coursework was complete:
 - Before or during the spring semester of which the deadline falls.
 - Within 5 years for all biology prerequisites, unless waived by the program director.
 - With a “C” or better in each course.
 - With a minimum GPA of 2.5 for required coursework.
 - If transferring from another institution, the student should:
 - 1) consult early with the Admission’s Office to determine if specific courses will transfer;
 - 2) allow three weeks for processing of transcript(s);
 - 3) if enrolled in classes during the spring of which the deadline occurs, assure all transcripts are official and sent to the attention of ACM’s Admissions Office immediately upon completion of the spring semester, and notify the PTA Program Director when the transcript(s) have been sent. See college website for details on how to send acceptable transcripts.
- Observation Evaluation Forms which includes evidence that:
 - All hours were performed within the year of application.
 - A minimum of 40 hours were conducted with a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.
 - Twenty (20) hours were conducted in a hospital/long term care setting and 20 hours were conducted in an outpatient setting.
 - A different therapist signed off on the inpatient observation form than the outpatient observation form.
 - All forms were submitted or mailed directly to the College PTA Program by the supervising PT in a confidential manner.
 - Notice: Students may opt to do another rotation for an additional 20 hours if they feel they did poorly in a rotation. Additional hours need to be in the same setting in which they felt they may have performed poorly. The average of all rotations will be calculated towards the final score.
- Reflective Assignment from both inpatient and outpatient observations. Reflective assignments can be submitted separate from application but prior to the April 15 deadline.
- Advising meeting with the PTA Program Director or Clinical Coordinator within 6 months (recommended by the end of the fall semester) prior to the April 15th deadline to be sure the file is complete. This meeting may be via face-to-face, phone, or e-mail at the discretion of the Program Director;

- Social media footprint that is clean and professional or non-existent.
- Health Manpower paperwork (optional). You may qualify if you live in Maryland but not in Allegany County. This form can be obtained from and returned to the Admissions Office.

It is the student's responsibility to assure all application requirements are submitted to the PTA Program prior to the application deadline. If all of the above are met by the April 15th deadline, you will be notified by mail of an interview and essay time and date.

See PTA Program Phase II Clinical Application and PTA Program Booklet located on the ACM PTA website for more details.

Phase II – Clinical

Admission to the Clinical Phase (Phase II) of the Program is competitive and completion of all requirements does not guarantee admission. Acceptance is based on Evaluative Criteria as described in the PTA Program Booklet. Feel free to contact the Physical Therapist Assistant Program for answers to any additional questions about the application process.

See PTA Program Phase II Clinical Application and PTA Program Booklet located on the ACM PTA website for more details. Phase II of the PTA Program includes the professional coursework and can only be taken at the Cumberland Campus of ACM. Students should plan for full time school for 12 consecutive months (fall and spring semesters both with a possible 2- week early start followed by a summer session) from August to August not counting orientation days. It is the student's responsibility to be prepared for approximately 40 hours per week of class, lab, clinic, and travel time. This preparation should include travel to a variety of clinics all over the region and may require temporary relocation. Transportation and the cost involved is solely the responsibility of the student. This portion of the curriculum is very intense and does require a substantial commitment of time and effort. Phase II course work must be completed with a "C" or better with the student having maintained an overall 2.5 GPA, or the student will not be able to proceed in the program.

Once admitted into the Clinical Phase (Phase II), students are required to provide proof of:

- ACM Medical Health Examination Record Form which includes a:
 - physical examination indicating good mental and physical health;
 - satisfactory health record, including immunizations;
 - signature of completion by a licensed, practicing physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant;
 - signature of the student indicating agreement with their records.
- American Heart Association Basic Life Support CPR Certification
- First Aid Certification
- Health/medical insurance;
- Liability insurance;
- APTA Membership (American Physical Therapy Association);
- PTA uniform purchase (includes professional dress, scrubs, and name badge);
- Criminal background record check.
 - If participating in clinical rotations in Pennsylvania, students must also obtain PA Access to Criminal History (PATCH), fingerprinting, and a Child Abuse History Clearance.
 - During enrollment, any official change or the initiation of any governmental proceeding affecting the information revealed by the required criminal or child abuse background check must be reported immediately by the student to the director of the Physical Therapist Assistant program.
 - If a student has a criminal background history, he/she can still be admitted to the program. However, he/she may be unable to find clinical site placement or take the licensure examination. It is the responsibility of the student to report criminal background information to the licensure review board prior to sitting for the exam. Students will not be permitted to participate in clinical affiliations until these items have been submitted to the clinical coordinator.
 - Please note that different clinical sites may require additional information (i.e., fingerprinting, drug tests, etc.)
- Computer and internet knowledge and access.
- Ability to have transportation to and from various clinical sites all over the region.

The above phase II post acceptance requirements are the financial responsibility of the student. This cost is beyond tuition, fees, and books. A more detailed list of estimated costs can be found on the PTA Program Website in the PTA Program Handbook under Section III Student Information.

PROGRAM PATH

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

TWO-YEAR CAREER PROGRAM

PREPARATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

FIRST SEMESTER

	<u>Credit Hours</u>
Physical Therapist Assistant 101 (Introduction to Physical Therapist Assistant)	2
Biological Science 121 (Musculoskeletal Anatomy of the Human) ¹	4
English 101 or 102 (English Composition I or English Composition II)	3
Medical Administrative Assistant 110 (Medical Terminology)	3
Psychology 101 (General Psychology)	3
Total:	15

SECOND SEMESTER

Biological Science 201 (Human Anatomy and Physiology) ¹	4
Mathematics 109 (Probability and Statistics) or Mathematics Elective	3
Psychology 203 (Human Growth and Development)	3
Speech 101 (Speech Communication)	3
Total:	13

THIRD SEMESTER

Physical Therapist Assistant 202 (Procedures)	5
Physical Therapist Assistant 203 (Pathology I)	2
Physical Therapist Assistant 205 (Modalities I)	3
Physical Therapist Assistant 209 (Clinical Kinesiology)	4
Physical Therapist Assistant 213 (Clinical I)	2
Total:	16

FOURTH SEMESTER

Physical Therapist Assistant 204 (Pathology II)	2
Physical Therapist Assistant 206 (Modalities II)	3
Physical Therapist Assistant 208 (Principles of Rehabilitation)	4
Physical Therapist Assistant 210 (Therapeutic Exercise)	4
Physical Therapist Assistant 214 (Clinical II)	2
Total:	15

SUMMER SESSION (following fourth semester)

Physical Therapist Assistant 216 (Trends)	1
Physical Therapist Assistant 218 (Practicum I)	5
Physical Therapist Assistant 219 (Practicum II)	5
Total:	11
Total Credit Hours:	70

¹ Students may elect to take both Biological Science 207 and 208 in place of both Biological Science 121 and 201. If the student's long-term goal is to obtain a four-year degree, then it is recommended that the student take Biological Science 207 and 208.

NOTE: The program may start one to two weeks prior to the college dates for the fall, spring, and summer sessions. Students will return on campus in the summer for final two to three days of class.

NOTE: All courses specifically identified by course number are graduation requirements for this program.

ACCREDITATION

The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Allegany College of Maryland is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Avenue, Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22305-3085, telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 301-784-5538 or email jandres@allegany.edu.

