

Pathway to
Physical Therapy
B.S. in Biology

INTRODUCTION

Many students enter the B.S. in Biology program interested in pursuing physical therapy as a career. The B.S. in Biology program prepares students to apply to Doctorate of Physical Therapy (DPT) programs by offering all prerequisite courses typically required by these programs as either major requirements or electives. Many students also complete a psychology minor to fulfill requirements of some DPT programs. Because entrance into these schools is highly competitive, students should pursue additional qualifications to increase their likelihood of acceptance. This road map details the steps a typical student may take in developing a competitive resume and application for DPT programs and is based upon the observations of faculty within the biology department who have successfully mentored accepted students. Please note that these requirements and recommendations are based upon the minimum requirements and recommendations of physical therapy programs in Georgia and the region.



For more information on opportunities within the B.S. in Biology program, visit www.yhc.edu/academics/math-science/biology.



TYPICAL REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO DPT PROGRAMS:

Listed below are some of the common prerequisites of DPT programs, but it is important that you explore the specific requirements of the schools you are interested in attending. Student must have a minimum grade of C on all prerequisites.

- One year of General Biology courses with 2 semesters of labs.
- One year of General Chemistry with 2 semesters of labs.
- One year of Physics courses with 2 semesters of labs.
- One year of Human Anatomy and Physiology courses with 2 semesters of labs.
- One semester of introductory statistics.
- Advanced coursework related to biology.
- Coursework in psychology that includes Introduction to Psychology, Human Growth and Development, and Abnormal Psychology.
- Multiple letters of recommendation with at least one of the letters completed by a veterinarian.
- A recent (<5 years old) GRE exam score with the exam completed early in the fall of the year of application.
- A strong GPA that is at least 3.0 or higher.
- Shadowing experience under direct supervision of a physical therapist.

TYPICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ADMISSION TO DPT PROGRAMS:

Admission to DPT programs is competitive and may require more than the minimum requirements. Listed below are additional recommendations encouraged by many DPT programs for students applying to their programs.

- Additional hours of physical therapy experiences (shadowing) that exceeds the minimum hours for application. Experience with multiple physical therapists in different settings preferred.
- Coursework or minors that may be helpful in a healthcare setting, such as foreign language and/or business.
- Research experience as an undergraduate.
- Experiences that show leadership potential and community involvement.
- Demonstrated written and verbal communication skills.



YOU CAN GO ANYWHERE FROM HERE

MAPPING YOUR JOURNEY FROM BIOLOGY TO PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAMS

Freshman (1st) Year

Recommended Courses:

BIOL 1107 Introductory Biology I
BIOL 1108 Introductory Biology II
CHEM 1211 General Chemistry I
CHEM 1212 General Chemistry II
PSYC 1102 Introduction to Psychology

Summer: Begin collecting relevant experience related to physical therapy. This can include shadowing physical therapists, and summer internships and fellowships. Gaining experience early on is important for leveraging this experience to gain additional opportunities later.

Junior (3rd) Year

Recommended Courses:

BIOL 3101 Genetics
BIOL 3102 Cell Biology
BIOL 1121 Human Anatomy and Physiology I
BIOL 1122 Human Anatomy and Physiology II
PSYC 3010 Abnormal Psychology
Additional BIOL coursework as offered¹

Spring: Complete GRE exam in spring prior to submission of application. Apply to summer internship/fellowship programs. Begin completing the application for admission to physical therapy schools. Solicit letters of recommendations from faculty and physical therapists.

Summer: Complete physical therapy school application for submission in the fall. Students continue shadowing to gain experience, perhaps shadowing different physical therapists in different areas to diversify their experience.

¹Many BIOL 3000+ courses are offered once every two years. Students should enroll in any relevant course when offered during the junior and senior years.

Sophomore (2nd) Year

Recommended Courses:

CHEM 2211 Organic Chemistry I
CHEM 2212 Organic Chemistry II
PHYS 1111 College Physics I
PHYS 1112 College Physics II
MATH 2000 Elementary Statistics
PSYC 2001 Human Growth and Development

Spring: Apply to summer internship/fellowship programs. Deadlines are often in January and February, and applications often require a letter of recommendation from a faculty member.

Summer: Participate in a summer internship or fellowship or continue shadowing and volunteering.

Senior (4th) Year

Recommended Courses:

BIOL 4980 Independent Research
BIOL 4990 Senior Research Capstone
Additional BIOL coursework as offered¹

Fall: Submit application to physical therapy programs. Conduct independent research project with a faculty member.

Spring: Begin planning for a possible gap year before admission. Apply to internships and fellowships that seek graduating seniors. Apply to graduate schools to further your education. Set up shadowing to gain further experiences.

Summer: If necessary, collect additional experience through shadowing, volunteering at hospitals and clinics, internships, lab assistant positions, etc. Reapply to DPT programs according to application deadlines.

The Biology Department at YHC offers 3 B.S. programs in biology, environmental science, and environmental education and leadership. Graduates have pursued careers in medicine, nursing, physical therapy, veterinary sciences, physicians assistant, wildlife biology, ecology, zoology, environmental health and more. For more information, contact the department chair, Dr. Johnathan Davis (jgdavis@yhc.edu).