

# Physical Therapist Assistant

● CAREER DEGREE    M MIDDLETOWN CAMPUS

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at SUNY Orange is accredited by:  
 The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE)  
 303 Potomac Avenue, Suite 100  
 Alexandria, VA 22305-3085  
 telephone: 703-706-3245 | email: [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org) | website: [www.capteonline.org](http://www.capteonline.org)

## Program Description

The Associate in Applied Science degree program in Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) is designed to provide students with both the academic knowledge and clinical skills to become certified/licensed PTAs. The field of Physical Therapy is demanding. Graduates are required to meet all program requirements which are guided by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Many states, including New York, also require that students pass the national licensing examination as part of the certification/licensure process.

The PTA works with, and under the direction and supervision of the physical therapist who plans the patient care program; the PTA then helps to carry out this program. Duties of the PTA include monitoring of vital signs, lifting of patients and equipment, training of patients in therapeutic exercises and activities of daily living, wound care, use of whirlpool and electrical stimulation during treatment procedures, application of heat and cold modalities, patient and family education, wheelchair activities, use of walkers and crutches, assisting the physical therapist in performing patient assessments and complex treatment procedures. The PTA also monitors the patient's responses to treatment, documents relevant aspects of patient care and maintains ongoing communication with the patient, family, supervising physical therapist and other health care professionals.

The primary focus of the curriculum is to develop a strong clinician who possesses critical thinking and problem-solving skills. To accomplish this, the program provides the clinical training as well as a broad general education background. Courses include both core classes and non-core classes (general education courses). The core Physical Therapist Assistant courses are offered once each year beginning in the Fall semester.

All program requirements must be completed within six consecutive semesters from the time of enrollment in the first PTA course. These courses must be taken in the sequence in which they are offered. The curriculum includes classroom instruction, laboratory time and clinical experiences. However, general education courses may be taken on a part-time basis during the day or evening, and may be completed over a longer period of time than the four semesters. But they must be completed no later than the semester in which they fall into sequence with the core courses.

A minimum grade of C is required in all PTA courses and a minimum grade of C is required in each of the following courses: Anatomy and Physiology 1, Anatomy and Physiology 2, and Basic Exercise Physiology.

## Program Outcomes

Students will:

- possess entry-level skills as determined by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
- be able to work under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist in an ethical, legal, safe, and effective manner becoming an integral member of the healthcare team
- demonstrate appropriate critical thinking and problem-solving skills in their role as a Physical Therapist Assistant
- demonstrate an understanding of the New York State Education Law as it relates to the provision of Physical Therapy services
- successfully complete the National Physical Therapy Exam for PTAs
- develop the skills necessary to pursue lifelong learning needed for personal and professional growth
- be aware of their responsibility to promote the profession through membership in the APTA, attending local and national meetings and conferences, and participation in community events

## Admission Criteria

Academic Requirements:

- high school diploma or high school equivalency (HSE) diploma
- eligible to take ENG 101 (Freshman English I)
- eligible to take MAT 102 (Intermediate Algebra) or equivalent with a 2.0 or higher or have completed MAT 101 (Elementary Algebra)
- completed High School AP Biology (score of 3, 4, or 5) or a passing grade in the Biology CLEP examination; or Introduction to Biology or Anatomy and Physiology 1 with a grade of 2.0 or better (within 5 years of program entry); or a passing grade on the Introduction to Biology challenge test.
- minimum cumulative GPA of 2.0

## Department-Specific Requirements:

- submit Physical Therapy practitioner observation form with essay (48 hour min. with documentation)
- view the Pre-Admission Orientation Power Point located on the program website and complete the survey. Once completed, you must print the completed survey and submit it to the Admissions Office.
- most qualified candidates will be invited to attend a program interview
- if invited, schedule and attend an interview with the Department Chair

*Note: Admission to this program is selective. In addition to an application to the College, students must apply for acceptance into this program through the Admissions Office. Consideration for admission is based on the completion of all mandatory academic and departmental-specific requirements, highest combination of program credits completed and cumulative GPA towards the degree, Orange County residency and seat availability. All requirements must be completed and an eligibility form must be submitted to the Admissions Office before February 1 in order for a student to be considered for acceptance into this program for the Fall semester. If seats remain available after February 1, students will be assessed as they apply.*

## Transfer Options

The A.A.S. degree is primarily intended to prepare students for immediate employment. However, transfer opportunities exist in some areas. Students who plan to pursue a Physical Therapy doctorate program should see the department chair or a faculty advisor as soon as possible.

## Your Career Coach

Career opportunities exist in the following areas:

- hospitals, nursing homes
- private offices
- rehabilitation centers
- schools
- fitness centers
- home care settings

[Explore careers with Career Coach](#)

## Physical Therapist Assistant Gateway Courses:

*Course sequences for Physical Therapist Assistant have been thoughtfully developed to include all necessary gateway courses and key electives, and to meet all accrediting standards.*

### First Semester

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
ENG 101	Freshman English 1	P	3
BIO 111	Anatomy and Physiology 1	P	4
PTA 101	PTA 1	C, P/C	4
PTA 103	Introduction to Physical Therapy	C, P/C	2
PTA 105	Medical Conditions for the PTA	C, P/C	3
	Total Semester Credits		16

### Milestones

During this semester, students should:

- Provide clinical choice preferences

### Second Semester

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
ENG 102	Freshman English 2	P	3
BIO 112	Anatomy and Physiology 2	P	4
PTA 102	PTA 2	P, C, P/C	4
PTA 104	Kinesiology	P, C, P/C	4
PED 224	Introduction to Exercise Principles		2
	Total Semester Credits		17

### Milestones

During this semester, students should:

- Register to take CPR over the summer

**Third Semester**

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
PSY 111	Introduction to Psychology		3
PED 202	Basic Exercise Physiology	C	3
PTA 201	PTA 3	P, C, P/C	4
PTA 205	Clinical Education 1	P, C, P/C	3
PTA 207	Tests and Measurement Skills for the PTA	P, C, P/C	4
	Total Semester Credits		17

**Milestones**

During this semester, students should:

- See advisor and register for classes

**Fourth Semester**

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
PSY 220	Developmental Psychology	P	3
PTA 202	PTA 4	P, C, P/C	4
PTA 206	Clinical Education 2	P, C, P/C	3
PTA 208	Contemp. Practice for the PTA	P, C, P/C	3
	Total Semester Credits		13

**Milestones**

During this semester, students should:

- Complete and present Capstone clinical case study
- Attend pinning ceremony
- Apply for graduation

**Summer Clinical Semester**

Course #	Course Name	P, C, P/C	Cr
PTA 220	Clinical Education 3	P	3

**Milestones**

During this semester, students should:

- Apply for graduation (if you have not already done so)

**TOTAL DEGREE CREDITS: 66**