

# Physical Therapy

## The Field of Physical Therapy

Physical therapists, or PTs, are health care professionals who evaluate and treat people with health problems resulting from injury, disease, or biomechanical dysfunction. Physical therapists are integral members of the primary care team and are involved in prevention of disability and promotion of positive health. They are also acting consultants in restorative care.

Physical therapy includes

1. Examining and evaluating patients with health-related conditions, impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities in order to determine diagnosis, prognosis, and intervention
2. Alleviating impairments and functional limitations by designing, implementing, and modifying therapeutic interventions
3. Preventing injury, impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities while promoting and maintaining fitness, health, and quality of life in all age populations
4. Engaging in consultation, education, and research.

## Career Opportunities

Physical therapists practice in acute or sub-acute care hospitals, private physical therapy offices, community health centers, industrial health centers, sports facilities, rehabilitation centers, nursing homes, home

health agencies, and schools or pediatric centers. Others work in research institutions or teach in colleges and universities.

## Our Faculty

The Physical Therapy faculty members are diverse in their interests and areas of academic preparation. Students regularly interact with faculty in the classroom and in individual and group efforts. Such efforts involve research projects, career development, professional activities, community service, and other forms of professional socialization. As active practitioners, faculty offer students outstanding direction in the integration of principles and theory in the process of learning to become effective clinical decision-makers. Participation by adjunct clinical faculty who teach courses provides students with the opportunity to learn advanced concepts alongside established clinicians.

## Physical Therapy Education

The entry-level DPT Program in Physical Therapy at California State University, Fresno (Fresno State), is a three-year (eight semesters) course of study. Completion of graduate-level course of study leads to the granting of the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree. This new education standard for physical therapy prepares graduates to practice autonomously in preparation for direct access. The DPT is the required degree to become a licensed physical therapist as of 2015. The DPT program focuses on critical

thinking strategies that promote effective analysis and interpretation of data in the formulation of treatment alternatives that can achieve predictable functional outcomes in patient management.

## DPT Curriculum

Our curriculum focuses on concepts of decision analysis, integration of clinical sciences with patient case study, integration of coursework with concomitant clinical experiences, evidence-based practice, applied research, and concepts of health care delivery and administration of services. The department places strong emphasis on independent study, problem solving, evidence based practice, applied research, sensitivity to diverse sociocultural values, and commitment to lifelong professional development. Student involvement in campus and professional organizations is a program expectation.

Clinical education is a major component of the degree program. A total of 30 full-time weeks of clinical experience is integrated with the didactic course of study. In addition, students participate in two on-campus clinic settings. The Gait, Balance, and Mobility Research and Education Center was developed to provide services for persons with gait/balance disorders and for teaching innovative interventions using state-of-the-art equipment. The Musculoskeletal Care Clinic is in the Student Health Center and was developed to provide physical therapy

California State  
University, Fresno

Department of  
Physical Therapy

559.278.2625

Doctor of  
Physical Therapy  
(D.P.T.)

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# Physical Therapy

services to students on campus. Through these experiences the student has multiple opportunities to apply classroom knowledge in the clinical setting.

Students are required to pass a qualifying exam at the end of the second year. The exam is an oral presentation of a case report. In lieu of a final examination, the culmination for the DPT will be a Doctoral Project involving an in-depth, evidence-based practice project in which students must demonstrate a thorough synthesis of evidence related to a defined clinical question pertinent to the profession of physical therapy.

## Admissions to the Entry-level Doctor of Physical Therapy Graduate Program

Students are only admitted for the fall semester. Applicants must possess a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university and submit two completed applications (PTCAS and CSUMentor), application fees, official transcripts, official GRE scores, letter of recommendation, evidence of physical therapy observation hours under a licensed physical therapist, and a personal statement.

### Prerequisite Course Requirements

#### Human Physiology

*Fresno State:* BIOL 65

*Transfer:* Human physiology with lab

#### Human Anatomy

*Fresno State:* BIOL 64

*Transfer:* Human anatomy with lab

#### Chemistry

*Fresno State:* CHEM 1A and CHEM 1B or 3A and CHEM 3B, CHEM 3BL (with labs)

*Transfer:* General chemistry or inorganic and organic or biochemistry with labs

#### Psychology (lower-division)

*Fresno State:* PSYCH 10

*Transfer:* General psychology, developmental psychology or life span psychology

#### Physics

*Fresno State:* PHYS 2A, 2B

*Transfer:* Physics with lab, including mechanics, heat, light, sound, and electricity

#### Statistics

*Fresno State:* PH 92 or MATH 11

*Transfer:* Introduction to basic statistics

#### Psychology (upper-division)

*Fresno State:* PSYCH 66 or 169

*Transfer:* Upper-division psychological aspects of aging or abnormal psychology preferred

All science courses must include laboratories and cannot be at an introductory level. Human Anatomy and Physiology must be taken from the Anatomy, Physiology, Anatomy and Physiology, Biology or Zoology department. Combined Human Anatomy and Physiology courses will be considered only if a combined course sequence (two semesters or two quarters) is completed.

A minimum of 7/9 of the specified prerequisite courses must be completed or be currently enrolled by the applicant at time of application. No more than one science (if semester-based course; two if the course is quarter-based) and one non-science prerequisite course can be in progress after the fall term prior to matriculation.

No course may be repeated more than one (1) time and no more than three (3) prerequisite courses may be repeated. AP credit, *CR/NC* grades, correspondence courses, or independent study courses cannot be used for prerequisite requirements.

Coursework older than seven years is not accepted.

### FOR MORE INFORMATION

For additional application requirements and application deadlines, please visit our website at [www.fresnostate.edu/physicaltherapy](http://www.fresnostate.edu/physicaltherapy)

**For additional information, write**

**California State University, Fresno Department of Physical Therapy**

2345 East San Ramon  
M/S MH29  
Fresno, California  
93740-8031

**Visit or call**

**Department of Physical Therapy**

McLane Hall,  
Room 186A  
559.278.2625  
559.278.6579

*Visit our website at*  
[www.fresnostate.edu/physicaltherapy](http://www.fresnostate.edu/physicaltherapy)

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**PLEASE NOTE:** This document is for general informational purposes only. The information is subject to change; consult the appropriate department or an academic adviser. Entering freshmen must follow the revised General Education program effective fall 1999 and thereafter. The university catalog and schedule of courses are available online at [www.fresnostate.edu/ClassSchedule](http://www.fresnostate.edu/ClassSchedule) and [www.fresnostate.edu/catalog](http://www.fresnostate.edu/catalog).

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