



Physical Therapy Timeline and Checklist

1st Year

- Attend Periodic Ponderings, Campus Visits, and other Pre-Health programming
- Make an appointment with the Pre-Health advisor to discuss how to sequence classes, experiences that will help you prepare for PT school, and the different resources on campus.
- Investigate career information to identify what it means to be a physical therapist and the admission requirements for physical therapy.
- Start taking the core courses that need to be completed before applying to the PTCAS. Focus on academic coursework and how to be a successful college student.
- Look for meaningful opportunities to become involved in research, volunteering, clubs, and mentoring.
- Start to job shadow physical therapist in a variety of settings (hospital, inpatient, nursing homes, etc.)
- Start to develop relationships with faculty, staff advisors and PTs
- **SUMMER: Work, volunteer, research, or intern in the health field.**
- **SUMMER: Take summer courses if desired or necessary.**

2nd Year

- Continue attending Pre-Health programming
- Meet with the Pre-Health advisor to make sure you're progressing through your requirements.
- Continue taking the core courses that are required by the PT programs. Focus on coursework and achieving a high GPA.
- Continue to investigate the career information to identify the admission requirements for PT program.
- Look for opportunities to be involved in meaningful activities (volunteering, research, etc.) that will strengthen your application.
- Attend graduate fairs, UTC events focusing on graduate healthcare programs, and other events
- Apply for research opportunities that you can participate in over the school year or summer.
- **SUMMER: Work or volunteer in the health field.**
- **SUMMER: Participate in summer enrichment, research, or internship program.**
- **SUMMER: Learn more about the GRE and research GRE prep. Familiarize yourself with the Physical Therapy Centralized Application System (PTCAS)**

3rd Year (or the year prior to applying)

- Meet with Pre-Health advisor to make sure all coursework is on track.
- Begin compiling a list of specific PT programs that will meet your professional objectives.
- Complete pre-physical therapy coursework that will be covered on the GRE and required by PT programs.
- Make sure you have established well maintained relationships with your staff advisors, professors, and PTs and healthcare professionals. Start to consider from whom you can receive letters of recommendations.
- Look for opportunities to continue to be involved (volunteering, shadowing, etc.) that will strengthen your application.
- Attend Periodic Ponderings personal statement writing workshops and begin writing your statement early.
- If you are prepared and ready, register for the Graduate Record Examination (GRE).
- Take the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). It is recommended applicants complete the GRE in January of their Junior (3rd year)
- Prepare a “plan b” if you are not admitted to the schools of your choice.
- **SUMMER: If you are intending to start your chosen program immediately following graduation, you should begin the application process, including requesting letters of recommendation from your professors. The PTCAS will open up early July.**
- **SUMMER: Double check dates and deadlines and review, edit, and submit PTCAS application early**
 - **If taking a summer courses that are prerequisites/factored into the GPA, do not submit the PTCAS until they have been completed**
- **SUMMER: Submit transcripts, complete supplemental applications, and contact those who will be submitting LORs for you to check on progress.**

4th Year

- Prepare for interviews by participating in a mock interviews with Periodic Ponderings
- Continue to maintain a strong GPA
- If admitted, make final decisions about your choice of school and notify schools you will not be attending.
- If admitted to PT schools, apply for financial aid (FAFSA) by March 1st
- If admitted, pay seat deposit for the institution of your choice
- Let the Pre-Health advisor know what schools you were admitted to and which school you will matriculate.

Physical Therapy Checklist

____ 1. **RESEARCH** the Physical Therapy Schools you are interested in. The first step for preparing for PT school is finding out what programs you are interested in. A good place to start is the Physical Therapy Centralized Application Service (PTCAS). The PTCAS provides you with information on due dates, application requirements, prerequisites for each school, and other useful information. [PTCAS Directory](#)

___2. **PREREQUISITES:** each school requires different prerequisites. Research each school carefully to make sure you have met all the requirements for the application. Review the [UTC Pre-Health website](#) for schools in the Tennessee, Georgia, and Alabama region

___3. **GPA:** The higher the GPA, the more competitive you will be. Here is a guideline for applying to PT school.

3.8 or higher: apply to 4-5 programs

3.5 or higher: apply to 6-7 programs

3.3 or higher: apply to 8-9 programs

3.0 or higher: apply to 10 programs or more

___5. **KNOW** the application start date and deadline along with all the prerequisites you will need for each school you are interested in. The PTCAS opens up in early July.

___6. **EXPERIENCE:** Start shadowing a Physical Therapist early and often. Physical Therapy schools can require anywhere from 25-200 hours of observation. Double check prerequisites on PTCAS.org to make sure you are getting the amount of observation hours you need.

___7. **BE INVOLVED:** The better-rounded your academic career the more competitive you will be. Become in activities and involvement that is meaningful and unique.

___8. **RECOMMENDATION:** Most Physical Therapy schools do not require a committee recommendation. Therefore, line up 3-5 recommendations. The PTCAS will tell you which types of recommendations they require and accept. If unsure contact the schools you are applying to, to determine what types of references they prefer. Recommendations through PTCAS are electronic.

___9. **GRE:** Register for the GRE 2-3 months prior to taking it and take the GRE 6-8 weeks prior to the application start date. Start studying 3 months prior to taking the GRE. A score in the 50th percentile is Verbal 151, and Quantitative: 150, and Analytical: 4.0.

___10. **COMPOSE:** Start to write your personal essay prior to the application in a word document. Each specific school may have a supplemental essay as well. Once you have completed your essay make sure you edit it carefully and have other edit it as well.

___11. **REQUEST** official transcripts to be sent to you to aid you in filling out the coursework one month prior to your application open date.

___12. **DOUBLE CHECK/APPLY/SUBMIT:** A lot of PT schools are on the PTCAS program directory but not all of them. The earlier you apply the better. Some schools have rolling admissions. Get all your application material ready a month prior to the application open date, fill out the application, double/triple check for errors, and then submit!