Physical Therapy FAQs

Q: What should I major in?
A: Honestly, it doesn’t matter. You should major in whatever subject interests you. There is no general, pre-physical therapy major offered at Texas A&M. Majors like Health, Nutrition, and Kinesiology are the most common for applicants because many of the prerequisite courses are included in your degree plan. A non-science major does not put you at a disadvantage. You will have to work with your academic advisor to incorporate some of the prerequisite classes into your schedule, but a non-science major can make you look unique. No one major looks more competitive than another major. Know that your GPA in the prerequisite and science courses is particularly important as that is what schools will use to compare between applicants of all majors. PT schools put a large emphasis on the last 60 hours of a student’s academic career. This means you want to pick a major that you like because schools pay particular attention to your upper level classes.

Q: Can I take a course at a community college?
A: It is not recommended to take a prerequisite course at community college. Any non-science course is okay (History, Political Science, English, etc). Use caution when taking any science course at community college. Know that while the grade earned at a community college does not count on your TAMU transcript, the grade earned will be calculated into your GPA when you apply. So any course you take at community college will count towards your GPA. Use this to your advantage and get A’s in any courses you take at community college to help raise your GPA. You want to take as many of your sciences as you can at TAMU because TAMU has an excellent reputation for the rigor of academic courses. Taking a class at TAMU is more impressive than taking the same class at community college. If you are particularly worried about your success in a class at TAMU, consider registering for the course during the summertime when classes are smaller and tutoring services are less crowded. It is highly recommended that you do not take any of your science classes online.

Q: I made a 3/4/5 on my AP test. Should I accept the credit?
A: Accepting AP credit can be beneficial. Talk to your academic advisor before accepting any AP credit. You want to make sure the credit you are accepting counts towards your degree. Note that once you accept AP credit, you cannot un-accept it so make sure you meet with your academic advisor and fully discuss this. Accepting AP credit will not detract from a PT school application.

Q: I used freshman grade exclusion to exclude a grade on my TAMU transcript. Will the professional schools that I apply to be able to see it?
A: While freshman grade exclusion can help your TAMU GPA, the class is still recorded on your transcript, which means that the professional schools will be able to see it. While the class will not affect your TAMU GPA, professional schools consider all classes taken when looking at your grades, meaning they will calculate in the excluded grade. If this grade is in a science course, this could be particularly important. Note that freshman grade exclusion does not affect students who entered TAMU after fall 2013.

Q: When should I take the GRE?
A: Students should take the GRE the summer that they apply to physical therapy school. For students looking to begin their professional program immediately after graduation from TAMU, this would be the summer between junior and senior year. You can test here on campus at the MARS Center in the General Services Complex, offered multiple times a week. Visit this website for more information on the GRE.

Q: What factors do physical therapy school application committees consider other than my GPA?
A: Besides GPA and GRE scores, the most important aspect of your application is PT experience. PT schools often require a minimum of 80 PT shadowing hours, but for a competitive application you should aim to have approximately 250 hours. Community service is another important part of your
application. A long term history of volunteerism strengthens an application. A competitive resume will include work history, leadership skills demonstrated through on and off campus involvement, community service and involvement, and academic achievements and awards. Your application should paint a picture of you as an individual, highlighting your professional, academic, and personal qualities.

**Q: How do I get shadowing hours?**
A: Volunteer programs at hospitals are a common way to get shadowing hours. This is a good way to work in shadowing hours over a semester. Hospitals commonly ask you to commit 4 hours per week for a whole semester. Privately owned physical therapy clinics are another source to look at for shadowing opportunities as are nursing homes and home healthcare agencies. Contact an establishment directly with your interest in shadowing and ask if they have a process set up for shadows or volunteers. Seek opportunities over the summer to shadow a PT from your hometown. It is often easier to get hours this way due to the large number of students pursuing limited spots in College Station.

**Q: What scholarship opportunities are available for pre-PT students at Texas A&M?**
Click [here](#) for the PSA scholarship page.