

PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY

MINOR

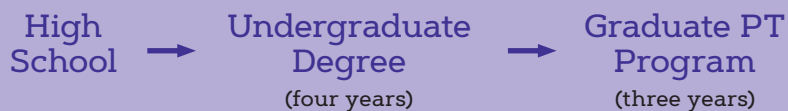


A Physical Therapist is an expert in all aspects of movement and function. PTs help patients improve strength, range of motion, relieve pain and prevent or limit physical impairment.

PTs must have empathy as well as strong interpersonal skills. They need to be knowledgeable and creative problem-solvers so as to develop treatment plans based on sound logic and evidence.

PTs work in many different environments including hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, outpatient clinics, schools and in patients' homes.

To practice as a PT, a student must graduate from an accredited physical therapy program with the Doctor of Physical Therapy degree and then pass the licensure exam.



No specific major is required. The profession will be stronger and more enriched by being made up of people with a wide variety of backgrounds. As long as you successfully complete the prerequisite courses you can compete for admission, regardless of your major. Allow yourself to explore a wide range of different interests early in your college career. When you find something you enjoy, chances are you will do well in it. Let your own curiosity be your guide.



Perks of the Profession

EXCELLENT INCOME

The Bureau of Labor Statistics reports a median annual income of \$95,620 (2021 data).

GREAT JOB OUTLOOK

Employment of PTs is projected to grow 17% from 2021-2031 which is much faster than the average for all occupations.

FLEXIBILITY AND MOBILITY IN THE JOB

Given that PTs are employed in so many different settings and are generally in high demand, it is relatively easy to find new employment after a move or other life-changing event. In many cases the ability to move between full-time and part-time work is possible.

SPECIALIZATION

For those who wish to specialize within PT, the American Physical Therapy Association offers board certification in 10 specialty areas including pediatrics, neurology, sports medicine, orthopedics and geriatrics.

PT Programs in Virginia

- Emory & Henry College
- Hampton University
- Mary Baldwin University
- Marymount University
- Old Dominion University
- Radford University
- Shenandoah University
- University of Lynchburg
- Virginia Commonwealth University



Students in the Pre-PT minor must take courses in:

- Anatomy (1)
- Physiology (1)
- Chemistry (2)
- Physics (2)
- Biology (2)
- Statistics (1)
- Psychology (2)
- Exercise Physiology (1)
- Medical Terminology (1)
- Writing (1)
- Literature (1)

Contact Information

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OTHER LINKS

American Physical Therapy Association:
www.apta.org

Explore Health Careers:
www.explorehealthcareers.org

JMU Pre-PT Minor



JMU students who are interested in becoming a physical therapist can choose to enroll in the pre-PT minor. The minor includes courses required for admission to graduate PT programs.

As long as the student successfully completes the prerequisite courses they can compete for admission, regardless of their major. At JMU the greatest number of pre-PT students are in the Kinesiology major, followed closely by those in the Health Sciences major. But there are also students who major in Psychology, Biology and others who go on to graduate PT programs.

Admission to PT programs is very competitive. In addition to the prerequisite course work, students will most likely need to

- Shadow (observe) a physical therapist and show exposure to a variety of PT settings.
- Complete the GRE exam, a standardized test assessing communication and quantitative skills.
- Maintain a prerequisite GPA and a cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 grading scale). To be a competitive applicant, students generally need a much higher GPA.
- Demonstrate experience with diverse individuals—from children to elderly, including able-bodied as well as physically or cognitively challenged and those that are economically disadvantaged.
- Obtain letters of recommendation. At least one must be from a PT.

At JMU, pre-professional health advisors are available to guide students in course selection and in the other activities required for a PT applicant to be competitive.

For the 2022 entry year, 78 JMU students applied to DPT programs. Sixty-seven matriculated to 33 different programs.