

Physical Therapist Assistant

The Physical Therapist Assistant program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. It is designed to prepare the graduate to work under the supervision of a physical therapist to treat disabilities resulting from birth, disease, or injury. Physical therapy helps the patient to develop strength, mobility, coordination, and skills needed to manage pain. Physical Therapist Assistant is a licensed profession. In order to meet licensure requirements, the student must graduate from an accredited program and successfully pass a National Examination for licensure in the state in which they will practice. Successful completion of the program provides graduates with the educational requirements necessary to take the national licensing examinations for physical therapist assistants.

Students are provided hands-on experience in exercise, physical agents, and other therapeutic techniques in actual practice at local hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, skilled care facilities, and outpatient clinics. They will work with physical therapists and physical therapist assistants performing therapeutic techniques and carrying out the patient's physical therapy plan of care. While the regular semesters will utilize classroom, laboratory and clinical education experiences, the final summer semester requires two full-time, six-week internships at two separate facilities away from the University campus. In accordance with Federal and State guidelines, the clinical sites will require proof of the following: vaccination for measles, mumps, and rubella, varicella, tetanus, TB, and Hepatitis B, covid vaccine, flu vaccine, current CPR card, and proof of completion of HIPAA and blood borne pathogens training as well as a criminal background check and drug screening. Students may be required to purchase and develop an account within a clinical management system for clinical placement.

A minimum grade of C for all physical therapist assistant courses is required to maintain enrollment in the Physical Therapist Assistant program. Physical Therapist Assistant courses are taught one time in an academic year. A student who fails a course (or drops out of the physical therapist assistant sequence) must reapply to the Physical Therapist Assistant program. Students will be required to complete the Practice Exam & Assessment Tool (PEAT) at the conclusion of all curriculum requirements. A minimum score of 600 is required for program graduation.

The program is served by an advisory committee made up of practicing physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, students and educators who provide expertise to assure a curriculum which will prepare graduates to meet the physical therapy needs of the public.

Increasing numbers of elderly and chronically ill persons and the rapid expansion of health care programs in both urban and rural areas have created a demand for physical therapy personnel. Employment opportunities are available in hospitals, rehabilitation centers, extended care facilities, outpatient clinics and schools. Physical therapy provides a unique service and requires a close interpersonal relationship with the patient.

To be considered for enrollment into the Physical Therapist Assistant program, prospective students must first obtain admission into the University. The competitive admission application is accessed by selecting the Physical Therapist Assistant major. Current SIU Carbondale students may complete the competitive admission application directly from the Physical Therapist Assistant webpage at sah.siu.edu/undergraduate/physical-therapist-assistant/. Classes are admitted only in the fall semester.

The Physical Therapist Assistant program has Linkage Agreements with Southeastern Illinois College, Rend Lake College, John A. Logan College, Frontier College, Lake Land College, Southeast Missouri State University, Olney College, Wabash Valley College, and Shawnee Community College. If you have questions about a linkage agreement, please contact the appropriate Community College advisor or SIU Carbondale's School of Health Sciences at 618-453-7172.

Associate in Applied Science (A.A.S.) in Physical Therapist Assistant Degree Requirements

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
Requirements for Major in Physical Therapist Assistant	

Degree Requirements	Credit Hours
ZOOL 115, AH 241 or PHSL 201 and PHSL 208	7
PSYC 102	3
ENGL 101	3
CMST 101	3
AH 105	2
PH 334 or KIN 324 ¹	3
PTH 215 or KIN 320 and PTH 209 or KIN 321 ²	6
PSYC 301 or PSYC 303 or PSYC 304 or PSYC 305	3
PTH 107, PTH 123A*, PTH 123B*, PTH 203, PTH 204, PTH 205, PTH 207, PTH 210A*, PTH 210B*, PTH 212A*, PTH 212B*, PTH 220A*, PTH 220B*, PTH 230A*, PTH 230B*, PTH 233A*, PTH 233B*, PTH 234, PTH 321A#, PTH 321B#, PTH 322 ³	43
Total	73

¹ PH 334 may substitute for KIN 324

² A minimum grade of C is required for KIN 320 and KIN 321

³ A minimum of C/Pass is required in all PTH courses. * A and B are co-requisites. They must be taken together and completed with a minimum grade of C/Pass. # A is a prerequisite to B. A must be successfully completed with a minimum grade of C before the student can progress to the B sequence internship.

AH 241: may substitute PHSL 201/PHSL 208.

PSYC 301: may substitute PSYC 303, PSYC 304, or PSYC 305.

PTH 207 must be taken before KIN 321 or PTH 209.

PTH 203 and PTH 205 can be moved up a year.

AH 241 must be taken before KIN 320 or PTH 215.

C or better in all PTH classes.

Residency Requirement: 15 semester hours.

A.A.S. Degree: 60 semester hours required.

Last updated: 07/30/2025