

## **Frequently Asked Questions: Pre-Physical Therapy**

### ***What are some of the strengths of the Auburn pre-health advising program?***

Students get individual guidance about course selection, choice of major, and the application process to professional schools from the pre-health advisors in the College of Sciences and Mathematics Dean's Office. Students receive advice from professionally trained advisors as well as peer advisors who have successfully participated in the program. Students are provided with opportunities to gain clinical experience in their intended professions and to engage in volunteer and leadership activities. Students can schedule mock interviews with an admissions committee member from the Alabama professional schools to get feedback about their applications and chances for acceptance during the spring semester each year.

### ***Do Auburn advisors participate in the professional advising organizations such as the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP) and the National Academic Advising Association (NACADA)?***

Yes, attending and making presentations at professional meetings sponsored by these organizations allows Auburn advisors to be informed about state and national trends in the health professions.

### ***How can prospective students find out about the quality of Auburn's academic programs?***

Prospective students can talk to current physical therapy students, practicing physical therapists, admissions officers of physical therapy schools and other students who have heard about the excellent programs at Auburn.

### ***Are there any scholarships available for pre-health students?***

Yes, there are a limited number of scholarships available for highly qualified students. [See Scholarship page.](#)

### ***Is there an active pre-health professions club at Auburn?***

Yes, Auburn has a nationally recognized chapter of Alpha Epsilon Delta, a health pre-professional honor society. Meetings are held twice a month on Tuesday evenings, and speakers address a variety of topics related to the health professions. Members also have opportunities to participate in volunteer and leadership activities sponsored by the organization. PTSIG (the Physical Therapy Special Interest Group) is affiliated with AED and has bimonthly meetings on Thursday nights throughout the academic year. Visit the [AED Website](#) for more information.

### ***How competitive is acceptance to physical therapy school?***

Students who fulfill the admissions requirements, including the prerequisite courses, at a university with rigorous academic standards, who maintain above average grades and who perform well on the admissions test have a good chance of being accepted. Auburn students are typically accepted at a rate above the national average.

***What grades and test scores are needed to be accepted?***

Admissions requirements and credentials of accepted students vary from school to school and from year to year. Students should consult the Websites of the schools to which they plan to apply to confirm this information. The Director of Pre-Health Professions Programs in the College of Sciences and Mathematics Dean's Office assists students with the application process.

***Must students have any particular major in college to go to PT school?***

No, but most Auburn students major in a science or Exercise Science. Students should start with a concentration in pre-physical therapy in the College of Sciences and Mathematics (COSAM) and should declare a major during their sophomore year. No particular major is required, and students are encouraged to major in something they would be interested in doing as an alternative career should they not be accepted to a graduate physical therapy program.

***Do pre-physical therapy students need to obtain experience in a physical therapy setting?***

Yes, extensive observation and work in a physical therapy setting are essential in order to receive serious consideration for acceptance and to confirm interest in the profession of physical therapy.

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***When should applicants take the Graduate Record Exam?***

This will vary, but applicants usually need to take the exam about one year prior to the anticipated date of entry into PT school. Information is available at the GRE Website ([www.gre.org](http://www.gre.org)). Students should take several timed, full-length practice tests before taking the actual exam.

***How and when do students apply to physical therapy school?***

In most cases applications are due about nine to twelve months prior to matriculation. There is a great deal of variation in schools and no nationally standardized application process. Thus, the student is encouraged to visit the Websites of the individual PT schools for further information. There are links to all of the schools from the American Physical Therapy Website at [www.apta.org](http://www.apta.org) under the Education link. Students should generally obtain a college degree prior to enrolling in a graduate PT program.

***Where do most Auburn students attend physical therapy school?***

Many are residents of Alabama and thus attend a professional school in Alabama since preferential treatment for admissions is usually accorded to state residents. The PT schools in Alabama are located at Alabama State University, the University of Alabama

at Birmingham, and the University of South Alabama. Some Alabama residents choose to attend PT schools out of state. Students from other states should apply to their home state PT schools, as well as to private schools.

***How well do Auburn students perform in physical therapy schools?***

Auburn students perform at a very high level and are regularly elected to leadership positions.

***What do students do if they don't get accepted to physical therapy school?***

Auburn's advising program is designed to inform students of various opportunities in the health professions. For this reason, students can pursue a variety of careers after graduation. Auburn's pre-physical therapy program prepares the student well academically, which means students have many career options if they are not accepted to physical therapy school or change their career goals.

***How long do physical therapy programs last?***

The professional physical therapy program requires two and one half to three years of study after college. While some master's level programs exist, many programs now award the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree. Graduates of physical therapy programs are eligible to sit for the National Physical Therapy Examination for licensure.