

Physical Therapist Assistant—Associate of Applied Science Degree

*Southern Illinois University Carbondale
College of Applied Sciences and Arts*

□ Introduction

The Field of Physical Therapy

A Model Definition of Physical Therapy, developed by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy, and adopted by the Board of Directors of the American Physical Therapy Association in 1993, defined physical therapy as follows:

Physical therapy means the assessment, evaluation, and treatment and prevention of physical disability, movement dysfunction and pain resulting from injury, disease, disability or other health-related conditions. Physical therapy includes: (1) the performance and interpretation of tests and measurements to assess pathophysiological, pathomechanical, electrophysiologic, ergonomic, and developmental deficits of bodily systems to determine diagnosis, treatment, prognosis and prevention; (2) the planning, administration, and modification of therapeutic interventions that focus on posture, locomotion, strength, endurance, cardiopulmonary function, balance, coordination, joint mobility, flexibility, pain, healing and repair, and functional abilities in daily living skills, including work; and (3) the provision of consultative, educational, research, and other advisory services.

The therapeutic interventions may include, but are not limited to, the use of therapeutic exercise with or without assistive devices, physical agents, electricity, manual procedures such as joint and soft tissue mobilization, neuromuscular reeducation, bronchopulmonary hygiene, and ambulation/gait training.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at SIUC is designed to prepare the individual to provide physical therapy services under the supervision of a physical therapist. These services are specified in the plan of care developed by the physical therapist and may include preparing the patient, treatment area, and/or equipment, implementing the treatment program, and modifying the treatment program as outlined in the plan of care.

□ The Physical Therapist Assistant

Who are PTs and PTAs?

Physical therapists (PTs) are health care professionals who diagnose and treat people of all ages who have medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTs also help prevent conditions associated with loss of mobility through fitness and wellness programs that achieve healthy and active lifestyles. PTs examine individuals and develop plans using treatment techniques that promote the ability to move, reduce pain, restore function, and prevent disability. They provide care in hospitals, clinics, schools, sports facilities, and more. PTs must have a graduate degree from an accredited physical therapy program before taking the national licensure examination. The minimum educational requirement is a master's degree, yet most educational programs now offer the doctor of physical therapy (DPT) degree. Licensure is required in each state in which a physical therapist practices.

Physical Therapist Assistants (PTAs) provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. PTAs help individuals of all ages who are ill, injured or have a health condition that limits their ability to perform daily activities needed for life. PTAs work in variety of settings including hospitals, outpatient centers, home health, schools, work settings, and the sports and fitness arenas. Care provided by a PTA may include teaching patients/clients exercises for mobility, strength and coordination, training for activities such as walking with crutches, canes or walkers, massage, and the use of physical agents and electrotherapy such as ultrasound and electrical stimulation. PTAs must complete a 2-year associate's degree and are licensed, certified, or registered in most states.

The Physical Therapist Assistant

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at SIUC was the third Program in the nation to be developed and receive accreditation.

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Accreditation and Licensure

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at SIUC is accredited. Graduating students meet the requirements for licensing in Illinois and other states which require physical therapist assistants to be licensed.

The program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Graduates of the program are qualified to take the licensing examination in Illinois and other states which require physical therapist assistants to be licensed.

Faculty

The faculty in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at SIUC are dedicated and qualified.

Faculty are involved in local, state, and national professional organizations. They provide expertise in a variety of physical therapy work settings and educational preparation programs.

Admission

Interested students must apply for entry into the PTA Program.

Students interested in the PTA Program should complete the general admissions process for entry into Southern Illinois University Carbondale at the Undergraduate Admissions Office at Woody Hall. The applicant must also complete the PTA Program Application which can be printed from this website at: <http://www.siu.edu/~sah/PTA/ptaapp.pdf>. This application should be returned to the Admissions Clerk at the School of Allied Health. Student selection begins in February for Fall semester entry.

To receive an application for admission to Southern Illinois University contact Undergraduate Admissions at (618) 536-4405 or link to : www.siu.edu

Clinical Experiences

Students receive hands-on physical therapy experience in the on-campus Physical Therapy Department and in regional hospitals and clinics. .

Clinical rotations include experiences in hospitals and clinics of differing sizes and care delivery throughout southern Illinois, and portions of Indiana, Missouri, Kentucky, and Tennessee.

Student Profile

Characteristics of students enrolled in the Physical Therapist Assistant program at SIUC are diverse.

Both male and female students choose this career path. Although the majority of individuals are younger due to the physical demands of this career, there can be a wide age range within any given class. At Southern Illinois University Carbondale we are proud of our wide ethnic diversity which can be seen throughout the campus. The most common trait of the PTA student is the desire to help others by providing a needed and beneficial service.

Expenses

Students accepted into the Physical Therapist Assistant program will have expenses in addition to University tuition, fees, and books.

These include the cost of uniforms, appropriate health tests, drug tests, vaccines, criminal background checks, and travel to distant clinical internship sites

Scholarships

Scholarship award opportunities are available to Physical Therapist Assistant students who choose to apply.

Physical therapist assistant students have the opportunity to apply for scholarship awards from the Elk's Club and numerous college and university organizations. These awards are based upon scholarly achievement and the active support of the professional association. Many scholarships are available from the College of Applied Sciences and Arts and Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Counseling for financial assistance may be obtained at the Office of Financial Aid, Woody Hall, (618) 453-4334. For further information, visit their World Wide Web site at:
<http://www.siu.edu/%7Efa0/scholarships/index.htm>

Professional Association

Opportunities are available for involvement in professional societies through student category memberships.

Students are encouraged to take part in a variety of activities through membership in the student organization, Southern Illinois Physical Therapist Assistants. Students also have the opportunity to join the American Physical Therapy Association and to attend district and state meetings.

Placement and Job Opportunities

In 2008-2009 according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics the middle 50% of PTA's earned \$46,200

Physical therapist assistants are employed in settings such as hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, out-patient clinics, public schools, and extended care facilities. They are also employed in industrial settings, home health agencies, and sports medicine clinics.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program assists graduates in finding employment through maintaining a job file, providing addresses to potential employers, and working with the Career Planning and Placement Office.

For More Information:

Visit the Web: <http://siu.edu/~sah/PTA/pta.html>

Write or Call

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<p><u>First Semester (Fall)</u> Physiology Anatomy Introduction to Psychology Medical Terminology *Physical Agents I *Introduction to Physical Therapy</p> <p><u>Third Semester (Fall)</u> Interpersonal communication Excercise Physiology *Therapeutic Exercise *Pathology *Physical Agents II</p>	<p><u>Second Semester (Spring)</u> Biology English Composition Biomechanics *Physical Rehabilitative Techniques *Practicum I</p> <p><u>Fourth Semester (Spring)</u> First Aid and CPR Developmental Psychology *Physical Therapy Science *Therapeutic Exercise Neuro *Therapeutic Exercise Ortho *Practicum II</p> <p><u>Fifth Semester (Summer)</u> *Internship I *Internship II *Clinical Seminar</p>
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***This information material is subject to change. Contact the school for the latest information.**

Specific information on this major and on Southern Illinois University Carbondale can be found in the SIUC Undergraduate Catalog.