

Freshman Year

Fall Semester

- Meet with your IS freshman advisor and learn about the IS degree requirements and PT pre-requisites. Develop a two-year schedule that includes most of the standard PT school pre-reqs.
- Work on developing and maintaining good study habits. Seek help immediately from your profs and/or the Tech Learning Center if you find yourself struggling in classes.
- Begin participating in a few on-campus extracurricular activities, particularly those that will provide service and volunteer experiences.
- Attend health-related programs sponsored on campus by the IS program and other departments. *Freshman year is not too soon to get involved!*

Spring Semester

- Meet with your IS advisor to fine-tune your sophomore year schedule if necessary.
- Start exploring summer volunteer and/or work activities in medical and health-related fields. Admissions committees look for and expect a commitment to volunteerism. These experiences can also be the basis for the personal statement portion of your PT school application.

Summer

- Volunteer, read about science/physical therapy topics, attend summer school if necessary.
- Start identifying PT programs that interest you. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) website provides links to programs: www.apta.org. Check to see what the programs are looking for in addition to pre-req classes and good grades.
- Start exploring opportunities for “observing” PTs in practice. Most PT programs require observation experience, ranging from 25 – 100+ hours. Start with the PTs in your home town. You’ll want a range of observations—from private clinical practice to hospital and nursing home practice—over the course of two or three years. Observing an athletic trainer is also acceptable to some PT programs.

Sophomore Year

- Meet with your IS advisor to review the freshman year. Fine tune your schedule if needed. Plan out and schedule your junior year classes. Aim to have all basic PT pre-

requisites completed by the end of your junior year: One year of general biology and labs; one year of general chemistry and labs; one year of physics and labs; one year of anatomy/physiology and labs; one semester of statistics; one semester each of general psychology, human development, abnormal behavior.

- Maintain a solid GPA, preferably above a 3.0. Seek help if you fall behind or start to struggle.
- Create a list of physical therapy programs that interest you and review their websites. For PT programs, see the APTA website: www.apta.org.
- Arrange to visit nearby PT programs that interest you. Some schools have a pre-PT day when prospective students are invited to visit with PT professors and students, attend a class or two, and get to know the campus.
- Get to know your Mines professors; these are the people who will be writing letters of recommendation for you. Try to take more than one course from at least one science professor.
- Start accumulating observation hours. Waiting until your senior year is too late! Call PT offices and ask the office manager which PTs will allow observations. Talk with the PTs about both their educational and their clinical experiences. Check PT program websites and the PTCAS website (www.ptcas.org) for information on how to document your observation hours. Documentation requirements vary by school!
- Stay involved in on-campus extracurricular activities and develop leadership skills.
- Attend health-related programs sponsored on campus and in the community.

Summer between Sophomore and Junior Years

- Continue volunteer and/or paid health and medical-related activities.
- Continue to accumulate observation hours

Junior Year

Fall Semester

- Meet with your IS advisor to review the sophomore year. Fine tune your schedule if needed. Plan out and schedule your senior year classes.
- Continue accumulating observation hours.
- Continue participating in on-campus extracurricular activities.
- Attend health-related programs sponsored on campus and in the community.

Spring Semester

- Meet with your IS advisor to discuss PT program applications.
- Identify the application deadlines for the PT programs that may best meet your educational needs and goals. Deadlines vary by school! Keep in mind that some programs have “early” admissions deadlines for students with high GPAs and high GRE scores and “general” admissions deadlines for other applicants. Some schools also have “rolling” admissions: applications are reviewed as they arrive. You will want to submit your application as soon as the programs allow.
- Identify the GRE testing dates and make arrangements for testing if the GRE is required by the schools you are applying to. (Most PT programs do require the GRE.) For info on the GRE, see <http://www.ets.org/gre>.
- Start working on the PTCAS application (www.ptcas.org) for programs that require an online submission through the centralized application service.
- Start working on your personal statement to accompany the applications, for those programs that require a personal statement. Ask for feedback on your statement from professors.
- Request letters of recommendation from professors who know you well and the physical therapists you have worked with. In most cases, these letters will be submitted directly to PTCAS or the PT programs. Be sure your recommenders are aware of the deadlines for submission of their letters; your application will not be reviewed until it is complete, including all LoRs.
- Complete your IS Letter of Intent and pre-PT worksheet. After review by your IS advisor, submit these documents to the IS office no later than April 30.

Summer between Junior and Senior Years

- Take the GRE in late spring/early summer if you have not already done so. Retake if necessary before submitting your applications.
- Submit your applications according to the deadline schedules of the schools you are applying to. Remember that your application will not be reviewed until it is complete—application, transcripts, letters of recommendation, GRE scores.

Senior Year

Fall Semester

- Meet with your IS advisor to review the junior year and to discuss your PT applications. Fine tune your senior year schedule if needed.

- **Schedule interviews as soon as possible following invitations to interview. Entering classes are small and fill quickly, with offers typically extended following each round of interviews.**
- **Maintain your grades during your senior year! If your applications are not successful and you reapply in the months following graduation, these grades will be important. You may also want to retake the GRE if you believe you can improve your scores.**

Spring Semester

- **Once accepted to a physical therapy program, fill out financial aid (FAFSA) forms as soon as possible to secure funding for the start of physical therapy school in the late summer/fall.**
- **If wait-listed, confirm your interest and continue to check back with admissions offices.**
- **Accept an offer by the due date specified by the program; if you received multiple offers, notify any other schools that you will not attend.**
- **Notify the people who wrote letters of recommendation for you; send them formal thank you letters, not text messages or emails.**
- **Notify your advisor, the career placement office, and the alumni office of your success; provide a forwarding address as soon as possible.**
- **Graduate and celebrate your accomplishments! Stay in touch! Let us know how you're doing.**