

PREPARATION FOR THE STUDY OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

Important general information

Students interested in the pre-physical therapy advising track must obtain a bachelor's degree and complete the necessary prerequisites for the physical therapy doctoral program. Students interested in physical therapy should consult with a pre-professional health adviser to learn about requirements that are specific to the program and/or school to which they hope to apply.

Declaration of the pre-physical therapy advising track through the Office of Pre-Professional Health Advising does not constitute admission to the VCU physical therapy doctoral program in the College of Health Professions. Students must apply separately to the physical therapy program/school of their choice at the appropriate time.

Students with an interest in preparing for the physical therapy doctoral program must declare an academic major and should declare and maintain their pre-physical therapy advising track. Students do not earn a pre-physical therapy degree. Those unsure of their academic majors initially should clarify their academic interests through regular conversations with their advisers. Students in the pre-physical therapy advising track are encouraged to major in fields of greatest interest to them. To declare a pre-physical therapy advising track, please see the [pre-professional health advising blog](#).

Prerequisites for the VCU physical therapy doctoral program

Students intending to pursue the physical therapy doctoral program must complete a bachelor's degree before entering. It is recommended that applicants select a challenging course load of science and math courses each semester to ensure adequate preparation for the academic rigor of the physical therapy program.

Students need to complete their bachelor's degrees, the required science prerequisite courses and the Graduate Record Exam before becoming eligible to start the physical therapy program in the College of Health Professions at VCU.

Science and non-science courses required for the VCU physical therapy doctoral program

Students must complete 12 semester hours in the biological sciences, including anatomy and physiology, as well as eight hours of chemistry and eight hours of physics for the VCU physical therapy doctoral program.

Precalculus mathematics, statistics, introduction to psychology and one upper-level psychology (abnormal or developmental is preferred) are non-science prerequisites for the physical therapy program.

Although not required, students are strongly urged to complete a cell biology course and a vertebrate histology course.

Additional information for the VCU physical therapy doctoral program

The following prerequisite courses must be completed prior to admission for students entering in the fall semester. If VCU has awarded college credits for Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate exams

and they are listed on the student's transcript, those credits will be accepted.

Prerequisites for the VCU physical therapy doctoral program

Course	Title	Hours
VCU courses		
BIOL 151 & BIOZ 151	Introduction to Biological Sciences I and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory I	4
BIOL 205	Basic Human Anatomy (includes lab)	4
CHEM 101 & CHEZ 101	General Chemistry I and General Chemistry Laboratory I	4
CHEM 102 & CHEZ 102	General Chemistry II and General Chemistry Laboratory II	4
MATH 151	Precalculus Mathematics	4
PHIS 206 & PHIZ 206	Human Physiology and Human Physiology Laboratory	4
PHYS 201 or PHYS 207	General Physics I ¹ University Physics I	4-5
PHYS 202 or PHYS 208	General Physics II ² University Physics II	4-5
PSYC 101 Play course video for Introduction to Psychology	Introduction to Psychology	4
PSYC 304 or PSYC 407	Life Span Developmental Psychology Psychology of the Abnormal	3
STAT 210	Basic Practice of Statistics	3
Total Hours		42-44

1

MATH 200 is a prerequisite for PHYS 207.

2

MATH 201 is a prerequisite for PHYS 208.

Additional recommended prerequisites for physical therapy programs nationwide

Physical therapy schools across the U.S. have different prerequisites for admission. The list below shows courses required by various schools beyond the courses listed above for the VCU physical therapy doctoral program. Students should discuss career plans with their pre-professional health adviser for additional guidance.

Course	Title	Hours
BIOL 152 & BIOZ 152	Introduction to Biological Sciences II and Introduction to Biological Science Laboratory II	4
HPEX 372	Survey of Kinesiology and Physiology of Exercise	3
HPEX 250	Medical Terminology	1
PHIL 201	Critical Thinking About Moral Problems	3
SPCH 121	Effective Speech	3

or SPCH 321 Speech for Business and the Professions

Additional humanities electives

Students should also consult with their pre-professional health advisers to discuss an individual plan of study in parallel with their academic majors.