

The Victoria College

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Information/Application Guide

Physical Therapist Assistant –Associate of Applied Science Degree

Job Description

A person licensed by the Texas Physical Therapy Board as a physical therapist assistant who assists and is supervised by a physical therapist in the practice of physical therapy and whose activities require an understanding of physical therapy (Texas Physical Therapy Practice Act, Title 3, Subtitle H, Chapter 453.001, Occupations Code).

Physical therapist assistants (PTAs) provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. PTAs help people of all ages who have medical problems, or other health-related conditions that limit their ability to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTAs work in a variety of settings including hospitals, outpatient clinics, home health, nursing homes, schools, sports facilities, and more. PTAs must complete a 2-year associate's degree and are licensed, certified, or registered in most states. Care provided by a PTA may include teaching patients/clients exercise 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.

Attitudes and Characteristics of the PTA

The successful PTA is:

- interested in the physical and biological sciences; pursues opportunities for life long learning; and possesses a knowledge of the breadth of the profession
- flexible; reliable; versatile; timely
- exhibits manual dexterity, visual and auditory acuity and motor coordination necessary to deliver treatments in a safe and complete manner; able to withstand strenuous physical activity
- patient; emotionally stable; demonstrates sound judgment, tact and self control even when presented with demanding patients or the presence of strong odors and open wounds
- able to work directly with a diverse population of patients of all ages, sizes, genders, cultures, and disabilities
- able to work directly under a Physical Therapist's direction following written and verbal orders accepting responsibility for the results of his/her actions
- a team player who works within the parameters of the PTA job description in an ethical manner and who is able to communicate with health team members, patients, and patients' families
- able to accept constructive criticism and perform self evaluation activities which result in personal and professional growth
- able to apply his/her knowledge base to situations which arise, arriving at a reasonable conclusion which promotes patient progress and safety
- able to meet PTA technical standards (see page 9)

Program Goals and Expected Outcomes:

Goal 1: Graduates will be competent generalist physical therapist assistants who work under the supervision of a physical therapist and will perform their duties within the scope of practice of a PTA.

- a. 90% of graduates will pass the national physical therapist licensure exam at their first attempt.
- b. 90% of students and 100% of graduates will implement a comprehensive physical therapy treatment plan developed by a physical therapist and under the supervision of a physical therapist.
- c. 100% of Graduates will work in a manner consistent with their state practice act and APTA's Code of Ethics and Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant.

- Goal 2: Graduates will engage in lifelong learning for professional growth.
- a. Students/graduates will be able to assess their strengths and weaknesses to promote professional and personal growth.
 - b. Graduates will participate in continuing education programs to update their knowledge and skills.
- Goal 3: Graduates will demonstrate awareness of diversity by cultivating a respectful and collaborative working environment.
- a. Students/ graduates will be able to successfully work collaboratively within a healthcare team.
 - b. Students/graduates will communicate effectively verbally, non-verbally and in writing, with others for the benefit of patients, colleagues and other members of the health care team.
 - c. Students/graduates will demonstrate respect for others and consider others as unique and of value.
- Goal 4: Graduates and the program will meet the human resources needs of the community.
- a. 90% of graduates will be employed in a variety of physical therapy settings and 50% will be employed in South Texas area.
 - b. The Physical Therapist Assistant Program will adjust class size based on community need and available resources.

ACCEPTANCE AND MATRICULATION RATES

In fall of 2017, 37 students had declared majors in PTA and 86% remained matriculated.
<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/Explore/AboutVC/Publications/EndOfYearReports>

GRADUATION RATES and LICENSURE RATES

The average graduation rate for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 classes was 81%. The licensure exam ultimate pass rate average was 100% for 2018-2020.

EMPLOYMENT RATES

100% of PTA graduates in 2018 and 2019 are employed.

The employment outlook for PTA’s is generally good in South Texas and the United States at the present time. The PTA is qualified to seek employment in any setting that offers Physical Therapy such as: hospitals, long term care facilities, rehabilitation facilities, private offices, adult day care centers, schools and homes.

Probable Salary Range for Victoria County

Starting Range: Staff PTA \$45,000-65,000/year

Program Director

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NON-DISCRIMINATION

Victoria College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, gender, pregnancy, age, disability, genetic information, marital status, amnesty, veteran's status, or limited English proficiency. It is our policy to comply, fully, with the nondiscrimination provision of all state and federal rules and regulations.

Required for Admission:

- **Although prerequisite courses are not required to be admitted into the Program, it is highly recommended that you complete as many of the general education courses in the Program of Study as you can BEFORE you are accepted into the Program (please see degree plan on page 7). The student is given points based on completion of any of the general education courses listed in the PTA Degree Plan (i.e., BIOL 2404, ENGL 1301, etc.); and the amount of points awarded is also based on the grade made in each course (i.e., an "A" in BIOL 2404 = 16 points out of a possible 16 points, a "C" in BIOL 2404 = 8 points out of a possible 16). Completion of the general education courses enhances the student's selection to the Program. To be awarded points, the course(s) MUST BE COMPLETED, with a grade given, by May 15th. *General education courses not completed before Program entry must be completed BEFORE entering the final semester in the PTA Program (Spring II semester).***
- 30 hours of observation, volunteer work, or work experience in the field of physical therapy. These hours must be a combination of at least two different settings in physical therapy (i.e. inpatient, outpatient, rehabilitation clinic, skilled nursing facility, home health, or pediatric). There must be at least 8 hours in one setting. **These hours must be documented in writing on the form provided (see application forms) and signed by a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant or they will not be accepted.**
- Overall GPA of 2.0 or better. A "C" or better in all courses on the degree plan.
- TSI (Texas Success Initiative) complete.
- ACT score of 18 or SAT I score of 860 (SAT taken prior to March 2016). SAT taken after March 5, 2016 must have Reading/Writing score of 480 and Math score of 530. Students who have earned at least 12 hours credit in the Program of Study with a GPA of at least 2.25 may have taken college level English Composition or Math (College Mathematics or Algebra) are exempt.
- Two recommendation letters (forms enclosed in application forms packet): From an academic instructor or from an employer (no personal friends or family members). **Recommendation forms must be sent directly from the person filling out the form. Please do not hand carry the forms to the PTA Program. Please provide a stamped envelope addressed to the VC PTA Program with recommendation form to the person providing the recommendation.**
- The Anatomy/Physiology courses must be taken within five years of application.
- A criminal background check and drug screen will be required after acceptance, prior to entrance to the program. The cost is at the applicant's expense and is approximately \$65. An applicant with an unsatisfactory criminal background check must complete the Criminal History Evaluation Form on the Texas Board Website at <https://www.ptot.texas.gov/page/home>, as mandated by the Legislature to determine if they will be eligible to take the licensing examination after graduation. It will cost the individual with the criminal history \$50 for this review. It is highly recommended this review of a negative background check be completed before entering the program, but **MUST** be completed before starting the first clinical education experience after beginning the program. Students who do not have clear background checks or negative drug tests may not be able to meet all course objectives which will result in unsuccessful completion of the program.
- Prior to enrollment qualified applicants who have been **accepted** into the PTA Program must submit a current CPR Health Care Provider card, a completed physical examination form, and must meet the following immunization requirements:
 - Two-step TB skin test
 - Tetanus-diphtheria-Pertussis (Tdap) within the last 10 years)
 - Measles/Mumps/Rubella vaccinations or serological confirmation of immunity
 - Varicella vaccination or serological confirmation of immunity

- Three-injection hepatitis B vaccination series or serologic confirmation to hepatitis B virus (this series can take up to 6 months to complete).

ALL INTERESTED STUDENTS ARE STONGLY ENCOURAGED TO CALL THE ADVISING SERVICES OFFICE ON THE MAIN CAMPUS FOR ACADEMIC COUNSELING AS SOON AS THE DECISION IS MADE TO APPLY FOR ADMISSION.

Program Information FAQ

1. ***Can I complete the program in less than two years? Are these courses transferable for a PT degree?***

No, the program cannot be completed in less than two years since the technical courses are taught sequentially and require two full years for completion. The courses are not usually transferable to institutions of higher learning as credit towards a degree as a Physical Therapist: this is not a pre-PT curriculum.

2. ***When I receive my A. A.S. degree for the program, what does that mean?***

Graduates of accredited programs are eligible to take the board examination for licensure as a PTA.

The Victoria College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association (1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; phone: (703) 706-3245; accreditation@apta.org).

3. ***While I am in the program, will any malpractice insurance fees be required?***

A nominal fee is assessed the student during the semesters that he/she is participating in the clinical practice courses. The fee enrolls the student in a blanket program of professional liability insurance policy.

4. ***What other program-specific costs are there for me to consider?***

The student will need to pay for a TB skin test (or its equivalent) before beginning the program. The student will be required to pay for a physical exam prior to beginning the program and complete any required immunizations. The student will also need to purchase books, supplies and pay for any lab fees assessed. The student will be responsible for the cost of any transportation needs to and from the College as well as to and from clinical rotation sites. There are no dormitories available at the College or clinical sites. Housing cost needs will be the responsibility of the student. The student is required to have a current Health Care Provider Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) card prior to beginning the program and will be current for the entire two years in the program. Completion of the CPR course is the responsibility of the student and may carry a student fee. Many clinic facilities require background and drug screens before doing clinic hours.

Special Admissions Process

The Special Admissions process has been instituted as a means of providing an orderly annual admission of up to 18 students in the summer semester.

1. Application to The Victoria College should be submitted online at www.applytexas.org.
2. Complete the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Application Packet and submit to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Office by May 15th prior to the desired summer admittance. We suggest you submit your application as soon as possible even before the spring semester is completed. If courses that could be counted toward points on your application are in the spring semester the points will be added to your score once transcripts arrive no later than May 15th.

Completed Application Packet to include:

- Completed application dated within the last current year. The PTA application may be found on the college website at www.victoriacollege.edu/physicaltherapistassistant or obtained from the PTA Program Office or the Advising Services Office.
- ACT score of 18 or SAT I score of 860 (SAT taken prior to March 2016). SAT taken after March 5, 2016 must have Reading/Writing score of 480 and Math score of 530. Students who have earned at least 12 hours credit in the Program of Study with a GPA of at least 2.25 may have taken college level English Composition or Math (College Mathematics or Algebra) are **exempt**. The Victoria College Testing Center offers ACT and SAT testing several times throughout the academic year (<http://www.victoriacollege.edu/testingcenter>).
- TSI (Texas Success Initiative) satisfied. (Contact Advising Services for further explanation if necessary).
- **Official College Transcripts on file in Admission and Records Office from all colleges and universities. It is recommended but NOT required to also send a copy of outside college/university official transcripts to the PTA Program Office as well. Please make sure they are your most up to date transcripts. *All courses must be verified with official transcripts indicating the course has been completed with a grade of "C" or better.* Victoria College transcripts **should not** be sent in with PTA Application as the PTA Program can access those directly.**
- Completion of two of the Observation Hours Assessment Form located in the application forms packet and both should be signed by a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant.
- Completion of two recommendation forms from an employer OR college instructor (no personal friends or family members) found in the application forms packet.
- Completion of the Technical Standard form and Application Confirmation Checklist in the application forms packet.
- The application forms packet can be located on the PTA website at: www.victoriacollege.edu/physicaltherapistassistant

INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL NOT BE CONSIDERED FOR ENTRANCE INTO THE PROGRAM

Movement on the Qualified Applicant's List:

- Once the completed application and its supportive documentation have been received, the applicant's name will be placed on a list according to the date and time when all official documents have been received. A ranking of the applications based on specific criteria using a point system will occur.
- The top 16-18 applicants will be offered acceptance.
- The applicant on the list is responsible for maintaining a current mailing address so as to be able to receive letters requesting confirmation of continued interest in admission into the program sent during the year. The applicant must return each letter by the stipulated date to maintain the admission status.
- If a candidate does not respond by the deadline date on the notification of acceptance into the program they will be removed from the acceptance list. Also, the candidate's name will be withdrawn from the list if the applicant cannot be reached for notification of admission.
- Any candidate wishing to withdraw or cancel their application or postpone admission must provide immediate written communication to the Physical Therapist Program Office.
- If a candidate is not accepted for the coming summer session and wishes to remain in the applicant pool for the following year they must submit this request in writing to the PTA office. The candidate **MUST** also re-submit the application forms by the May

15th deadline. Observation forms and Recommendation letters **DO NOT** have to be resubmitted. The candidate's application will be ranked the following year with all other applications.

- A candidate that is not selected can make an appointment with the Program Director to review their application and discuss methods to improve their application score for the future.
- Applicants who are accepted, alternates and not qualified will be notified via phone or mail by approximately June 1st.

SPECIFIC PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS: (must be completed with a grade of "C" or better):

APPLIED ASSOCIATE DEGREE REQUIREMENTS:

Although the following courses are not required to be admitted into the Program, it is highly recommended that you complete as many of these courses as you can BEFORE you are accepted into the Program. The student is given points based on completion of any of the general education courses listed in the PTA Degree Plan (i.e., BIOL 2404, ENGL 1301, etc.); and the amount of points awarded is also based on the grade made in each course (i.e., an "A" in BIOL 2404 = 16 points out of a possible 16 points, a "C" in BIOL 2404 = 8 points out of a possible 16). Completion of the general education courses enhances the student's selection to the Program. To be awarded points, the course(s) MUST BE COMPLETED, with a grade given, by May 15th. *General education courses not completed before Program entry must be completed BEFORE entering the final semester in the PTA Program (Spring II semester).*

BIOL 2404 – Introduction Human Anatomy/Physiology

ENGL 1301 – Composition I

MATH 1314 – College Algebra OR MATH 1332 – College Mathematics

PSYC 2301 – General Psychology

PSYC 2314 – Human Growth and Development

SPCH 1318 – Interpersonal Communication

ENGL 2311 – Technical Writing

Humanities/Visual and Performing Arts Elective (3 credit hours)

PTHA 1301 – Profession of Physical Therapy – This course is a PTA Program technical course, however, may be taken before acceptance to the PTA Program which is **highly recommended**.

Below is a **suggested** schedule to complete the A.A.S. Degree in 2 calendar years:

Summer Session I

Course	Lecture/Lab/Ext	Credit Hours
PTHA 1301 – Profession of Physical Therapy	3/0/0	3
*BIOL 2404 Introductory Anatomy/Physiology	3/3/0	4
*SDEV 0301 – Strategies for Success	3/0/0	0

Summer Session II

Course	Lecture/Lab/Ext	Credit Hours
PTHA 1321 – Pathophysiology for PTA	3/0/0	3
*ENGL 1301- Composition I	3/0/0	3

Fall I

Course	Lecture/Lab per week	Credit Hours
*SPCH 1318 – Interpersonal Communication	3/0/0	3
*ENGL 2311 – Technical Writing	3/0/0	3
PTHA 1413 - Functional Anatomy	3/3/0	4
PTHA 1305 - Basic Patient Care Skills	3/3/0	3
PTHA 2201 - Essentials of Data Collection	1 /4/0	2

Spring I

Course	Lecture/Lab/Ext	Credit Hours
PTHA 1431 - Physical Agents	2/6/0	4
PTHA 2409 - Therapeutic Exercise	2/6/0	4
*PSYC 2301- General Psychology	3/0/0	3
*Math 1314- College Algebra or Math 1332 – College Mathematics	3/0/0	3

Summer

Course	Lecture/Lab/Ext	Credit Hours
PTHA 1266 – Practicum I-PTA	0/0/30	2

Fall II

Course	Lecture/Lab/Ext	Credit Hours
PTHA 2531-Management of Neurological Disorders	3/5/0	5
*Humanities/Visual or Performing Arts Elective	3/0/0	3
*PSYC 2314 – Human Growth and Development	3/0/0	3
PTHA 2435 - Rehabilitation Techniques	2/4/0	4

Spring II

Course	Lecture/Lab/Ext	Credit Hours
PTHA 2366 – Practicum II - PTA	0/0/30	3
PTHA 2339 - Professional Issues	3/0/0	3

Total Credit Hours: 65

**General Education Courses required for AAS Degree in Physical Therapist Assistant*

TRANSFER CREDIT: The general education courses identified with an asterisk* (non PTA Program technical courses) may be transferable to another community college or four year university. Verification of transferability to another college/university is the responsibility of the student. The PTA Program technical courses (PTHA) are **NOT** transferable to another community college, PTA Program, or four year university.

Tuition and Fees: All tuition and fee rates are subject to change without notice. All tuition and fees must be paid before attending class. The PTA Program adheres to the established College refund policies and procedures.

- Course tuition: For 66 credit hours approximately - \$9,869 (in-county total), \$10,955 (out-of-county total), \$20,592 (Texas non-resident or foreign)
- Liability Insurance: Approximately \$36.00 total for the program
- Laboratory Fees: Approximately \$144.00 total for the program (not including prerequisite and support courses)
- Course Fees: Approximately \$175.00 total for the program (not including prerequisite and support courses)
- Uniform (scrubs, polo shirts): Approximately \$100.00
- Books and supplies: Approximately \$1000.00 total for the program (not including prerequisite and support courses)
- Immunizations: Approximately \$225.00 (if students have not had childhood immunizations or requires boosters or titers)

Financial Aid: A variety of state and federal funds are available to assist eligible students. An enrollment of at least half-time status (six or more credit hours) is recommended for students to be eligible for most programs. Please contact the Financial Aid Office at (361) 572-6414 or <http://www.victoriacollege.edu/financialaid>

Scholarships

A wide variety of scholarships is available at The Victoria College and includes those awarded and administered by The Victoria College, as well as those awarded by community and civic organizations.

Institutional scholarships are awarded for various programs of study and for academic merit. The criteria for receiving scholarships vary according to standards set by scholarship donors and by the Scholarship Committee. Most scholarships are awarded based on a combination of academic merit and financial need. Some scholarships require that an application be submitted directly to the donor. For more information about the scholarships available and the application process please contact:

The Victoria College Advancement Office at 361.582.2421, e-mail cynthia.vivian@victoriacollege.edu.

Students are also advised to seek possible scholarship opportunities from professional organizations. The American Physical Therapy Association offers a [Minority Scholarship Award for Academic Excellence](#). Specific criteria are found at www.apta.org following the link to Membership & Leadership.