PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSISTANT
Pre-Professional Program
2016-2017

General Areas of Service: Physical therapy assistants work under the direct supervision of physical therapists. They are employed by hospitals, nursing homes, rehabilitation centers, and medical offices. Most of their work includes working to rehabilitate people with muscle, nerve, joint, and bone diseases or injuries. Physical therapy assistants train patients to do exercises and activities that will aid their daily living. They also observe, report, and assist in treatment programs that utilize heat, sound, water, electrical, and infrared techniques. In addition, they help patients learn to use artificial limbs, braces, crutches, walkers, and wheelchairs.

Professional Training: An associate's degree from an accredited physical therapy program is required as well as supervised clinical experience. Many states require physical therapist assistants to be licensed by the state. Loma Linda University is the only denominational school that offers this training program.

Job Outlook: According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), “[e]mployment of physical therapist assistants is projected to grow 40 percent from 2014 to 2024, much faster than the average for all occupations.” The BLS states that “[d]emand for physical therapy services is expected to increase in response to the health needs of an aging population,” and “[p]hysical therapists are expected to increasingly use physical therapist assistants in order to reduce the cost of physical therapy services.” (See www.bls.gov.)

Earnings: In their May 2015 salary survey, the Bureau of Labor Statistics reports the median annual wage for physical therapist assistants as $55,170, with the lowest 10 percent earning $32,640 and the highest 10 percent earning $76,940. (See www.bls.gov.)

Walla Walla University does not offer the clinical portion of this degree.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Websites
Walla Walla University
University Bulletin
Pre-Profession: Physical Therapy Assistant

Faculty
Advisers
Steven Lee

Contact Information
Pre-Profession: Physical Therapy Assistant
Rigby Hall
(509) 527-2041

Professional Organizations
American Physical Therapy Association
www.apta.org

Additional Sources
Loma Linda School of Allied Health Professions
LLU: Physical Therapy
For admission into a physical therapy assistant program, pre-professional students are required to complete a minimum number of credits and required courses. The requirements vary by school. The courses listed below fulfill admission requirements for the PT assistant program at Loma Linda University. Although it is theoretically possible to complete this program in three quarters, changes in course offerings, closed classes, deficiencies, and personal academic loads may prevent some students from completing all requirements within that amount of time.

The right columns list number of credits and quarters (X) those courses are offered. Sequential class credits are listed as a credit total. Classes that are offered with multiple sections or concurrently with other classes are separated by commas (XX). Core classes are listed in standard script and cognates are listed in italics. See the Undergraduate Bulletin for complete requirements.

**FRESHMAN YEAR**

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<th>Course</th>
<th>Credits</th>
<th>AUT</th>
<th>WIN</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anatomy and Physiology &amp; Lab (BIOL 121, 122, 123)</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>* Developmental Psychology (PSYC 215)</td>
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<td>Fundamentals of Speech Communication (SPCH 101)</td>
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* Loma Linda University School of Allied Health Professions accepts PSYC 492 in place of PSYC 215.
** Select from: ART 251; MUHL 124; PHIL 205; HIST 121, 122, 221, 222; ENGL 204, 210, 211, 212; any foreign language

**Work Experience:** A documented minimum of 80 hours of work or observation experience (20 hours must be in an in-patient setting) in a physical therapy department is required.

**Electives:** Electives are needed to meet the minimum total requirements of 48 quarter units.

C- grades will not be accepted for transfer credit at LLU. Admission is competitive and a GPA greater than 2.5 is required.