CENTRAL CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Health Sciences

Program Planning Guide

Pre-Physical Therapist Assistant Program (A55280PT)

The Pre-Physical Therapist Assistant (Pre-PTA) program is designed to build the academic and professional foundation students need to be successful in a Physical Therapist Assistant associate degree program and in their future careers as PTAs. The program focuses on developing the core knowledge, skills, and habits used daily in physical therapy settings to support safe, effective, and patient-centered care. Through coursework in anatomy and physiology and psychology, students gain a solid understanding of how the human body moves and functions, how injuries and conditions affect physical performance, and how psychological and behavioral factors influence recovery, motivation, and patient outcomes. These courses help students begin thinking like healthcare professionals by applying scientific concepts, observation, and clinical reasoning to real-world patient care scenarios.

Communication, critical thinking, and academic readiness are key components of the Pre-PTA curriculum. Courses in writing, communication, math, and the humanities strengthen students' ability to communicate clearly with patients and healthcare teams, document accurately, interpret measurements, and solve practical problems encountered in clinical environments. Additional coursework supports study skills, time management, and career planning, helping students clarify their goals within the physical therapy profession and prepare for the demands of a limited-enrollment PTA program. Together, these courses prepare students to enter a Physical Therapist Assistant program with confidence and to build the foundational competencies needed for success in coursework, clinical education, and ultimately on the National Physical Therapy Examination for Physical Therapist Assistants (NPTE-PTA), which is required for licensure.

The pre-PTA program is designed as a preparation track and does not lead to a degree. Students who decide not to pursue this profession will need to work with their Education Navigator to transition into a different degree pathway.

Pre-PTA Program General Education Classes:

Required Program Courses		Class	Lab	Credits	Notes:
ACA 122	Transfer & Career Success	0	2	1	Seated or online
BIO 168	Anatomy and Physiology I	3	3	4	Seated
BIO 169	Anatomy and Physiology II	3	3	4	Seated
ENG 111	Writing and Inquiry	3	0	3	Seated or online
Elective	Communications	3	0	3	Seated or online
Elective	Humanities/Fine Arts	3	0	3	Seated or online
PHY 110	Conceptual Physics	3	0	3	Seated or online
PHY 110A	Conceptual Physics Lab	0	2	1	Seated or online
PSY 150	General Psychology	3	0	3	Seated or online

A minimum grade of B must be earned in all science and English classes (BIO 168, BIO 169, and ENG 111). A minimum grade of C must be earned in all other pre-program classes.

Communication Elective Options: **COM 110***, COM 120, COM 231, ENG 112, ENG 114

Effective Term: 2026FA

Health Sciences

Humanities/Fine Arts Elective Options: ART 111, ART 114, ART 115, DRA 111, ENG 231, ENG 232, ENG 241, ENG 242, HUM 110, HUM 115, HUM 120, HUM 122, HUM 150, MUS 110, MUS 112, **PHI 240***, REL 211, REL 212

*Recommended for PTA students

Pre-PTA Suggested Course Schedule:

		Class	Lab	Clinical	Credits	Notes:
1st Semester (fall)						
ACA 122	Transfer & Career Success	0	2	0	1	Seated or online
BIO 168	Anatomy and Physiology I	3	3	0	4	Seated
ENG 111	Writing and Inquiry	3	0	0	3	Seated or online
Elective	Communications Elective	3	0	0	3	Seated or online
Elective	Humanities/Fine Arts Elective	3	0	0	3	Seated or online
	Total Semester Hours	**12**	**5**	**0**	**14**	
2nd Semester (spring)						
BIO 169	Anatomy and Physiology II	3	3	0	4	Seated
PHY 110	Conceptual Physics	3	0	0	3	Seated or online
PHY 110A	Conceptual Physics Lab	0	2	0	1	Seated or online
PSY 150	General Psychology	3	0	0	3	Seated or online
	Total Semester Hours	**9**	**5**	**0**	**11**	

Health Sciences

Planning for Your Future as a Physical Therapist Assistant:

Earning a bachelor's degree builds on the clinical knowledge and hands-on experience you gain as a Physical Therapist Assistant and prepares you for expanded roles within today's healthcare system. Bachelor's programs designed for PTA graduates emphasize advanced concepts in healthcare delivery, leadership, wellness and prevention, research, public health, and healthcare systems, while further developing critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving skills. Students learn to interpret and apply research, understand healthcare policy and compliance, and recognize how physical, psychological, and social factors influence rehabilitation outcomes across diverse patient populations.

At the bachelor's level, students gain a broader understanding of how therapy services are organized and managed and how PTAs contribute to efficiency, safety, and quality across the continuum of care. This expanded perspective supports roles in quality improvement, patient education, program coordination, and team leadership within rehabilitation settings. A bachelor's degree also opens the door to supervisory, administrative, and educational opportunities and provides preparation for graduate study, including Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) programs, allowing PTAs to take on greater responsibility and long-term impact within the profession.

After completing the required courses for admission to the PTA program, students who plan to earn a bachelor's degree in the future may take the following recommended courses while waiting to begin the program or while enrolled in the program. These courses are commonly transferable to universities and may apply toward bachelor's degree requirements, depending on the receiving institution. Please see the college catalog for course descriptions.

Recommended Courses **(Take one class from each row)**		**Class**	**Lab**	**Credits**	**Notes:**
HIS 131 HIS 132	American History I American History II	3	0	3	Seated or online
GEL 111	Geology	3	2	4	Online
HEA 110	Personal Health/Wellness	3	0	3	Seated or online
MAT 152 MAT 171	Statistical Methods I Precalculus Algebra	3	2	4	Seated or online
ECO 251	Prin of Microeconomics	3	0	3	Seated or online
PSY 241 PSY 281 SOC 210	Social Psychology Abnormal Psychology Introduction to Sociology	3	0	3	Online
SPA 111	Elementary Spanish I (see note below)	3	0	3	Seated or online
SPA 112	Elementary Spanish II	3	0	3	Seated or online
SPA 211	Intermediate Spanish I	3	0	3	Seated or online
SPA 212	Intermediate Spanish II	3	0	3	Seated or online

A minimum grade of C must be earned in all classes that transfer to a university for a bachelor's degree.

For students interested in continuing their education and expanding career opportunities, bachelor's degree pathways are available that build on the knowledge and skills gained in the physical therapist assistant program.

South College - Bachelor of Science in Health Science (Post PTA)
The South College Bachelor of Science in Health Science (Post-Physical Therapist Assistant) program is a focused degree-completion pathway for PTA students who want to expand their career options beyond entry-level clinical practice. Designed specifically for graduates of accredited PTA associate degree programs, the program builds on existing clinical knowledge and applies PTA transfer credit toward a bachelor's degree while introducing advanced coursework in healthcare administration, leadership, research, public health, and human resources. Offered in flexible online and hybrid formats, the program is well-suited for working PTAs seeking leadership or administrative roles, broader healthcare career mobility, or preparation for future graduate study, such as a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program.

St. Catherine University - Bachelor of Science - Physical Therapist Assistant
The St. Catherine University Bachelor's Degree in Physical Therapist Assistant is a natural next step for PTA students who want to expand their professional opportunities beyond entry-level clinical practice. Designed specifically as a degree-completion program for graduates of accredited PTA associate degree programs, it builds on existing clinical knowledge while emphasizing advanced concepts in wellness, prevention, leadership, and professional practice. The curriculum supports career growth into roles such as clinical leadership, education, program coordination, and health promotion, while also strengthening preparation for graduate study. Offered in a flexible, primarily online format, the program is well-suited for working PTAs seeking to advance their education without stepping away from the profession.

Appalachian State University - Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management
The Appalachian State University Bachelor of Science in Health Care Management is a strong next step for Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) students who want to expand their career opportunities beyond direct clinical practice. The program builds on existing healthcare and rehabilitation experience and prepares graduates for leadership, supervisory, and administrative roles through coursework in healthcare systems, management, finance, quality improvement, and policy. Offered in a flexible, distance-based format, it is well-suited for working PTAs and transfer students who want to advance into management, coordination, or leadership positions within rehabilitation and healthcare organizations.

Foreign Language Requirement

Spanish is not required for all bachelor's programs, but it is strongly recommended for pre-health students because it significantly improves communication with a large and growing Spanish-speaking patient population. Being able to speak Spanish builds trust, reduces misunderstandings, and helps prevent errors in patient care. Employers in healthcare provide stipends to bilingual employees, making Spanish a powerful advantage for anyone preparing for a health science career. The following Spanish courses are available for pre-health students, but are not always part of a transfer agreement: SPA 111, SPA 112, SPA 211, SPA 212

Students who have questions about the pre-PTA program should contact their Education Navigator.