

**THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH ALABAMA**  
**PRE-HEALTH ADVISING**  
**ACADEMIC ADVISI**

increments. The Analytical Writing section is scored on a 0-6 scale in half-point increments. The Belmont DPT will super score if multiple GREs are taken.

### **PHYSICAL THERAPIST CENTRALIZED APPLICATION SERVICE**

All applicants must apply to the Physical Therapist Centralized Application Services (PTCAS). Applications are available each July. Students must enter all coursework and observation hours into PTCAS for verification. Students must also send all transcripts and GRE scores to PTCAS. Students are encouraged to begin the process early. Applications are not complete unless they are verified by PTCAS by the deadline.

### **LETTERS OF RECOMMENDATION**

Students must submit two letters of recommendation to PTCAS. One of the two recommendations must be from a licensed physical therapist.

### **SELECTION PROCESS**

Acceptance to the Belmont DPT is based on academic ability and aptitude for a career as a physical therapist. GPA and GRE scores are used in a calculation to rank students. A limited number of applicants are invited to interview with the physical therapy faculty.

### **PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM**

Pre-Health Advising is dedicated to supporting the success of students working toward a graduate education in physical therapy. Pre-health advisors are available to help students craft a workable plan by providing structure, guidance, and information about University and Pre-Physical Therapy resources.

### **CHOOSING A MAJOR**

There is no perfect “pre-physical therapy” major at the University of South Alabama. A student can major in any subject area and apply to physical therapy school. If the desired career path changes, students need to be in a major that will allow them opportunities for success. Academic and Pre-Health advisors work together to help students with the coordination of courses for both the major and physical therapy school.

### **IMPORTANCE OF GPA**

Physical therapy schools will require students to provide their academic GPA which includes all grades earned at any institute of higher learning and dual enrollment. In addition, a second GPA will be calculated which includes only those required courses in biology, chemistry, and physics (mean science GPA).

### **SHADOWING ACTIVITIES**

Physical therapy schools desire students with diverse backgrounds and experiences, strong GPAs (especially in math and sciences), sustained volunteer activities, leadership skills and shadowing or experience in the health profession of interest. The Belmont DPT requires a minimum of 50 hours of work or observation experience under the supervision of a licensed Physical Therapist. Students are encouraged to gain observation experience in a variety of physical therapy settings.

Pre-physical therapy students are entering fields with very strong and well established service orientations. Students need to get involved in service at the start of their college career. There are volunteer activities that students can participate in during the semester, as well as during the summer break. Physical therapists will be part of a team as a health professional, and one way to learn how to be part of a team is to get involved and develop leadership skills.

Students also need to be culturally aware and actively pursue experiences that allow them to learn about themselves and others. It is important for pre-physical therapy students to choose experiences that will allow them to stand out, demonstrate their value, and enable them to work with diverse populations at home and abroad. For instance, if a student studies abroad at some point during the academic career, the student will learn the issues affecting the health and well-being of populations in other countries.

### **PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY CLUB**

The Pre-Physical Therapy (Pre-PT) Club is an undergraduate student-run organization affiliated with the University of South Alabama Department of Physical Therapy. Students are strongly encouraged to become an active member of the club. Membership in the Pre-PT Club provides students opportunities to meet other students who are interested in physical therapy and to learn more about the physical therapy profession. Members also have the opportunity to participate in mock interviews. This is an active group involved in community service, improving academics, and the development of a network of like-minded people.

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

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American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)  
<https://www.apta.org/>