



# PHYSICAL THERAPY

## JOB DESCRIPTION

- Physical therapists work to improve mobility, relieve pain, and prevent or limit permanent disability of patients suffering from injuries or disease. Their patients include accident victims or handicapped individuals with conditions such as multiple sclerosis, cerebral palsy, nerve injuries, amputations, head injuries, fractures, low back pain, arthritis, and heart disease. Patients range in age from newborn to elderly.

Treatments given by physical therapists include exercises for increasing strength, endurance, coordination and range of motion; the use of heat, cold, electricity, sound, and water to relieve pain and stimulate motor activity; and instruction in activities of daily living and the use of assistive devices.

## CAREER PROFILE

- The physical therapist is legally and ethically responsible for evaluating, planning, and implementing a physical therapy program. This responsibility often includes instructing patients and their families and supervising the physical therapist assistants, physical therapy aides, students, and other health workers in carrying out the program.

In planning rehabilitation programs for each patient, the physical therapist reviews the medical records and evaluates the patient to identify the patient's problem(s). Physical therapists perform tests and evaluations that provide information about joint motion, strength and endurance of muscles, appearance and stability of walking, need and use of braces and artificial limbs, function of the heart and lungs, and the performance of activities required in daily living. The physical therapist consults and works closely with the patient's physician and other health practitioners in establishing treatment objectives that are realistic and consistent with the patient's needs.

## EMPLOYMENT

- Physical therapists work in hospitals, nursing homes, schools for handicapped children, private offices, rehabilitation centers, community health centers, research centers, industry, and as athletic trainers and educators in colleges and universities offering programs in physical therapy.

Opportunities for advancement are plentiful. Most health care facilities offer opportunities to progress to senior therapist or department supervisor. Physical therapists can advance in administration as coordinator of rehabilitation services or as administrator of a facility. They may work as consultants to public schools and community and government agencies or open private offices.

## CAREER OUTLOOK

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, annual salaries vary depending on geographic area, specialty, responsibility, and experience. The median annual wage for physical therapists was \$99,710 in 2023. Employment of physical therapists is expected to grow 15 percent by 2032.

## ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE IN ALLIED HEALTH PRE-PHYSICAL THERAPY

The Pre-Physical Therapy program at Southern Adventist University is the first step to becoming a physical therapist. Most schools of physical therapy currently offer doctoral degrees, which require four years of study at a liberal arts college in order to meet entrance requirements. Andrews University allows just three years of study at Southern before a student can apply to their three-year Doctorate of Physical Therapy program.

The program detailed on this page meets Andrews University's 2019-2020 admission requirements, as well as the general education requirements for an associate degree at Southern. Finishing a bachelor's degree at Southern prepares you for entrance into almost any physical therapy program across the United States.

For further information on this or other Allied Health associate degrees offered by Southern Adventist University, contact:

Randy Bishop, adviser  
Allied Health Programs  
423.236.2922  
randybishop@southern.edu

Southern Adventist University  
P.O. Box 370  
Collegedale, TN 37315

◆ Select HLED (Health Education) PETH (Physical Education Theory) Electives from courses numbered 300-400 (3 credits).

**Grade Requirements:** "C" is the lowest acceptable grade for all transferrable prerequisites. Andrews University requires a minimum science and core GPA of 3.4 to be eligible for admission and a 3.5 to be a competitive applicant.

**Observation Hours:** Students must complete a minimum of 80 observation hours supervised by a licensed physical therapist in at least three different settings; at least 20 hours must be in an inpatient acute care or hospital setting. Please note that sub-acute, rehab, skilled nursing home, and extended care facilities do not qualify as a hospital or acute care setting. See [ptcas.org](http://ptcas.org) for instructions on submitting observation hours as part of your application.

## SUGGESTED SEQUENCE OF COURSES

YEAR 1		SEMESTER:		1	2
BIOL 101-102	Anatomy and Physiology	4	4		
ENGL 101-102	Critical Thinking in Ac Rd/Wt	3	3		
PSYC 122	General Psychology	3			
NOND 101	Southern Connections	1			
ALHT 111	Intro to Health Professions	1			
COMM 135	Comm and Public Speaking				3
PEAC 125	Fitness for Collegiate Life	1			
AREA R-1	RELB 125 or RELT 177				3
AREA IN-6	Historical Perspectives			3	
HLNT 135	Nutrition				3
				16	16

YEAR 2		SEMESTER:		1	2
CHEM 151-152	General Chemistry	4	4		
MATH 215	Statistics				3
PETH 315	Physiology of Exercise				4
PSYC 128	Developmental Psychology	3			
CPTC 100	Computer Concepts	1			
AREA R-2 or R-3	Religion	3			
PETH 314	Biomechanics	3			
HLED 210	Medical Terminology				1
ELECTIVES	Electives	1	3		
				15	15

YEAR 3		SEMESTER:		1	2
PHYS 211 & 213	General Physics I & Lab	4			
PHYS 212 & 214	General Physics II & Lab				4
BIOL 416	Human Anatomy				3
PETH 326	Personal Trainer				3
AREA R-4	Religion	3			
HLED 470	Current Issues in Health				2
HLNT 325	Sports Nutrition	3			
HLED/PETH	Upper Division Elective ◆	3			
HLED 491	Wellness Capstone				2
ELECTIVES	Electives	2	1		
				15	15

### TOTAL OF 92 HOURS

#### Additional Christian Service Requirements:

One Community Service Activity (of at least three hours)  
One Level 2 or One Level 3 Service-Learning Experience