

ADMISSIONS POLICIES

ADMISSIONS CRITERIA

The Louisiana Christian University PTA program selects a maximum of 20 students each year to enroll in the **technical education component** of the program. To ensure that the PTA Program enrolls students who reflect its mission and goals, the preferred applicant to the program will give evidence of and/or demonstrate the following:

- **Successful academic record as evidence by a minimum GPA of 2.5 in all college coursework pursued and a grade of “C” or better in all prerequisite courses.** Applicant must submit with the application packet official transcripts from each/every college/university attended. Due to the competitive nature of the application process, a higher overall GPA may be desirable.
- **A record of observational/work experience that reflects a commitment to the profession of physical therapy and acquisition of knowledge related to the roles and responsibilities of the physical therapist and physical therapist assistant-** Minimum of 30 *observation* hours in **two** different settings with **two** different licensed physical therapists (total of 60+ hours of observation). *Again, due to competitive nature of the application process, additional hours may be desirable.* Hours may be paid or volunteer and must be completed *prior* to submission of the application process and documented on **Documentation of Observation Forms** provided in the application packet.
- **Written, oral, and technological communication skills that reflect logic and clarity.** Applicants who meet the minimum criteria (minimum of 2.5 GPA with a “C” or better in all prerequisite coursework and ≥30 hours observational experience in two different physical therapy settings) **at the time of application submission** will be extended an opportunity to engage in the interview process. The Admissions Committee will assess the applicant’s ability to communicate orally and in writing. **Interviews of qualified applicants** will be scheduled with the Program’s Admissions Committee. Candidate’s writing ability will be assessed through a **short, spontaneous narrative** on a topic related to the PTA career.
- **Ability to meet the essential requirements of the program.** Prospective PTA students must demonstrate, with or without appropriate academic adjustments or reasonable modifications to policies and practices (see Disability Accommodations below), the ability to perform at least the functions listed in the **Essential Requirements Form** safely, reliably and efficiently, in compliance with legal and ethical standards while enrolled in the technical phase of the PTA program. The PTA Program at Louisiana College is in agreement with and adheres to the college’s policy noted below on accommodations for individuals with disabilities:

“A student that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and who desires modifications or accommodations should contact the Director of the Program to Assist Student Success (PASS) at 487-7629 for information and guidance.”

All students admitted to the program will be offered the opportunity and encouraged to alert faculty to any limitations which might impact their accessibility and completion of program. Any student who identifies or displays limitations with any of the above mentioned skills, should work with PTA faculty to determine realistic and acceptable accommodations or ways to compensate, so that the student can have potential for success in the program. Accommodations used in the

program will be structured to be consistent with situations the student could expect in the clinical work environment.

- **Personal characteristics necessary to meet the Program goals** as evidenced by **Reference Evaluation Forms** submitted by 3 non-family members.
- **Background Check and Drug Screening-** Changes are taking place within healthcare facilities nationally. These changes directly affect the Louisiana College Physical Therapist Assistant Program. The Joint Commission, which accredits healthcare facilities across the country, enforced background screening September 2004 and has set requirements for students in a healthcare field to complete the same background check as hospital employees. A criminal history may also disqualify one from becoming licensed as a Physical Therapist Assistant in the state of Louisiana.

A background investigation and drug screening must be completed prior to your acceptance into the Louisiana College Physical Therapist Assistant Program. Applicants are responsible for the payment of \$88 dollars to cover the cost of their background investigation and drug screening which must be conducted by **American DataBank®**. Detailed instructions for completing the background investigation and drug screening are available on the PTA program's website. Final program acceptance will be contingent upon background check and drug screening results.

Admission to Louisiana College does not constitute admission to the PTA program's technical education courses. In addition to meeting general college admission requirements (See *Louisiana College Catalog*, pg. 30-39), meeting the admission requirements to the technical education portion of the PTA curriculum is mandatory. Applicants must submit application packet including all items noted above by the 2nd Monday of February in order to be considered for admission.

SELECTION PROCESS

The **goal of the admissions process** is to ensure the selection of students who exhibit both personal and academic readiness for the technical portion of the PTA program and who consistently demonstrate a commitment to physical therapist assisting as their chosen career.

The selection process is outlined below:

1. **Application Review:** Deadline for submission of applications is the 3rd Monday of February each year. Applications are available on the PTA program website. All applications will be reviewed by the Admissions Committee to ensure all minimum requirements have been met and required documentation completed.
2. **Interviews:** Interviews of qualified applicants will be scheduled with the program's Admissions Committee within two weeks of the deadline for submission of applications. **Only** those applicants who meet the minimum criteria related to academic history and observational experience at the time of application submission will be granted an interview. The interview process consists of individual candidate interviews with the Admissions Committee. A candidate's writing ability is assessed through completion of a short, spontaneous narrative on a topic related to a career as a PTA on the day of the interview.
3. **Admissions Selection:** Selection of students for the PTA program by the Admissions committee is based on information obtained in the application process (complete academic history, level of exposure to the PT clinical setting, and oral/written communication skills demonstrated during the

interview process) applied to a rubric in order to derive a *Selection Rating Score* for each applicant. Individuals with the top 20 scores are invited to enroll in the program.

4. **Notification of Committee Decisions:** All applicants are notified in writing of the Admission Committee's decision within two weeks of the completion of the interview process. Two alternate candidates are selected as well. Applicants not accepted into the program are provided an opportunity to meet with the Admissions Committee for advising on ways to improve their potential for acceptance in the future.

MINIMUM PHYSICAL, INTELLECTUAL/COMMUNICATION, AND BEHAVIORAL/EMOTIONAL STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

Physical Therapist Assistant students must demonstrate, with or without appropriate academic adjustments or reasonable modifications to policies and practices (see Disability Accommodations policy above), the ability to perform at least the functions listed below safely, reliably and efficiently, in compliance with legal and ethical standards while enrolled in the technical phase of the PTA program.

I. PHYSICAL ABILITIES

Students seeking to participate in the PTA program must:

- A. Be able to safely bend, lift, twist, push, pull, and transfer up to 200 lbs to assist in moving a patient from one surface to another using proper transfer techniques.
- B. Be able to move quickly in an emergency situation to protect the patient.
- C. Be able to stand for prolonged periods during didactic work (2-10 hours).
- D. Have the physical and emotional capacity to work a 40 hour week while on clinical rotations.
- E. Be able to safely and effectively resist, guide, facilitate or inhibit movement of another person's body part(s) to illicit a desired outcome.
- F. Possess the ability to occasionally push, pull, hold, manipulate, extend, rotate, kneel and stoop in a manner necessary to safely and effectively engage in patient care activities.
- G. Have the manual dexterity to safely grasp and manipulate small objects.
- H. Be able to push and pull at least 50 pounds and manually adjust equipment found in a clinical setting.
- I. Possess the visual acuity necessary to see notes written on a whiteboard, videos and slide show/overhead presentations, set and read dials or displays on modality equipment, and view/observe a pt 20-30 feet away.
- J. Gather visual information from patients regarding movement, posture, body mechanics and gait to compare to normal standards as well as gather visual cues from the patient regarding tolerance of interventions.

- K. Demonstrate auditory acuity necessary to respond quickly to an auditory timer or verbal patient responses.
- L. Possess the ability to detect changes in patient's muscle tone, skin quality, joint play, temperature and kinesthesia.

II. INTELLECTUAL AND COMMUNICATION ABILITIES

Students seeking to participate in the PTA program must:

- A. Possess the ability to think critically in order to identify and solve problems and engage in various aspects of program assessment.
- B. Be able to collect, interpret, remember and utilize data regarding patients to appropriately and safely make decisions in the clinical environment.
- C. Adjust the patient's daily treatment within their plan of care when necessary and report necessary changes to the supervising therapist.
- D. Comprehend information and exercise sound judgment in the classroom and clinic.

III. BEHAVIORAL AND EMOTIONAL STANDARDS

Students seeking to participate in the PTA program must:

- A. Be flexible to adjust to a constantly changing and rigorous full-time schedule.
- B. Possess the ability to manage stress appropriately.
- C. Be able to show compassion to patients and their families regardless of their race, ethnic, or socioeconomic background and to place the patient's need above his/her own.
- D. Be able to accept and positively utilize constructive criticism.
- E. Maintain good health and appropriate hygiene.
- F. Be willing to participate in laboratory activities including but not limited to serving as simulated patient while dressed in lab attire which allows for visualization and palpation of anatomical landmarks, joints, muscles, etc.

IV. ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS UPON ACCEPTANCE INTO THE TECHNICAL PHASE OF THE PTA PROGRAM:

- A. Students may be required to complete one or more clinical rotations at an out-of-town site. Transportation and housing will be the responsibility of the student.
- B. Student will be required to submit to random drug screenings if program faculty deem necessary secondary to suspicious student behavior.
- C. Students must have a history and physical completed by a physician or nurse practitioner. History and physicals are offered free of charge on the Louisiana College campus and can be scheduled through the Health Services office at 487-7750.
- D. In addition to the immunizations required for admission to Louisiana College (MMR, varicella, tetanus), student enrolled in the PTA program are required to complete the following immunization:
 - Hepatitis B Series with titer 3 months following last injection
 - Hepatitis B titer if series completed in the past; if low must repeat the series
 - TB skin test (Annually)
 - Rubella titer

- Tetanus within in last 10 years
- E. Maintenance of CPR certification throughout duration of program as evidenced by valid CPR card is required.
- F. Successfully complete all coursework in the technical portion of the program with a grade of “C” or higher as well as comply with all other progression policies.
- G. Maintain health and professional liability insurance throughout the duration of the program.

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

The PTA Program at Louisiana College is in agreement **with and adheres to the college’s policy noted below on non-discrimination in regard to its admissions process.**

“Louisiana College accepts applications for admission from students of accredited secondary schools and students transferring from accredited colleges without regard to race, sex, color, handicap, age, creed or national origin. Also, special criteria have been established to receive applications from students from unaccredited high schools and nongraduates of high school.”

DISABILITY ACCOMMODATIONS

The PTA Program at Louisiana College is in agreement with *and* adheres to the college’s policy noted below on accommodations for individuals with disabilities:

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All students admitted to the program will be offered the opportunity and encouraged to alert faculty to any limitations which might impact their accessibility and completion of programs. Any student who identifies or displays limitations with any of the program’s required skills listed below, should work with PTA faculty to determine realistic and acceptable accommodations or ways to compensate, so that the student can have potential for success in the program. Accommodations used in the program will be structured to be consistent with situations the student could expect in the clinical work environment.