

CT STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAMS

Information Packet
for
Prospective Applicants

2024-2025 Application cycle

<p align="center">@ NAUGATUCK VALLEY</p> <p align="center">750 Chase Parkway, Founders Hall Waterbury, CT 06078</p> <p align="center">https://ctstate.edu/academics/programs/physical-therapist-assistant/#naugatuck-valley</p>	<p align="center">@ NORWALK</p> <p align="center">188 Richards Avenue Norwalk, CT 06854</p> <p align="center">https://ctstate.edu/academics/programs/physical-therapist-assistant/#norwalk</p>
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<p align="center">For any issues with the online application, please contact: Reuben Cartegena, Selective Admissions Specialist for PTA reuben.cartegena@ctstate.edu or (860) 906-5319</p>	

*Please be sure to thoroughly read this packet of information before contacting staff, faculty, advisors, or secretaries. This information is subject to change at any time. Please consult the program’s webpage/administration for the latest updates.

Version 2024-2025

The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Naugatuck Valley is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), American Physical Therapy Association, 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Norwalk is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), American Physical Therapy Association, 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>.

Program questions should be directed to the appropriate program director and not CAPTE.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a Physical Therapist Assistant?

Physical therapist assistants (PTAs) provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. PTAs help people of all ages who have medical problems, or other health-related conditions that limit their ability to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. Care provided by a PTA may include teaching patients/clients exercise for mobility, strength and coordination, training for activities such as walking with crutches, canes, or walkers, manual therapy, and the use of physical agents and electrotherapy such as ultrasound and electrical stimulation.

What do Physical Therapist Assistants Earn?

The national median income for a physical therapist assistant is \$66,503 depending on position, years of experience, degree of education, geographic location, and practice setting. In Connecticut, PTAs earn a median salary of \$71,403 according to salary.com (accessed: October 2024).

Where do Physical Therapist Assistants work?

Today, PTAs provide health care services to patients of all ages and health conditions in a variety of settings, including:

- Outpatient clinics or offices
- Hospitals and inpatient rehabilitation facilities
- Skilled nursing, extended care, or subacute facilities
- Homes, schools and hospices
- Education or research centers
- Industrial, workplace, or other occupational environments
- Fitness centers and sports training facilities

What are the licensure requirements for becoming a PTA?

The PTAs are licensed or certified in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Licensure or certification is required in each state/jurisdiction in which a PTA works and must be renewed on a regular basis. The state of Connecticut requires PTAs to be licensed after graduating from an accredited PTA program (such as the ones at CT State) and passing the national exam (www.fsbpt.org). Check with the state you plan to work in to find out specific requirements.

What is the employment outlook for Physical Therapy?

According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, PTAs are one of the top ten fastest growing occupations. Employment of physical therapist assistants is expected to grow “much faster than the average” for all occupations through the year 2032. (BLS.gov accessed 7/11/2024)

What type of degree will I receive?

Upon completion of the program, graduates receive an Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant. Earning that degree makes you eligible to sit for the national licensure exam (www.fsbpt.org).

Is this an online or on-ground program?

It is a mix of both. Some courses are completely online. Some courses are hybrid, with an online and an on-ground component. Some courses are completely on-ground. There are no fully online semesters. Each semester will have a mix of online, hybrid, and traditional PTA courses.

Is this a part-time or full-time program?

Although it is preferable to complete the program in a two-year span, it is sometimes difficult to fit a full-time class schedule into an already busy life. You may choose to complete all general education requirements on a part-time basis in the first two years and then progress through the technical education (PTA) classes the next four semesters, for a total of four years (keep in mind the final semester consists of full-time internships). Even if all of the general education courses are completed prior to the technical phase, the PTA program courses are considered full time work given the time commitment, rigor, and psychomotor skills that need to be acquired. There may be multiple lab courses each semester. While not full-time credits, the PTA technical phase is considered a full-time program. Once a student begins the technical education portion of the curriculum (PTA courses), he or she has three years to complete the two-year program.

What is the difference between a PTA and a physical therapist (PT)?

To become a PT, in general you must earn a bachelor's degree, and a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree from an accredited institution. PTs perform patient/client examinations and evaluations, which leads to a diagnosis, prognosis and plan of care. The PTA follows the plan of care working under the direction and supervision of a PT. For more information please visit the website of the American Physical Therapy Association: www.APTA.org.

I want to become a PT, not a PTA. Can you help?

If you wish to become a PT, the best way to proceed is to research PT programs and determine the requirements for those programs. CAPTE has a list of accredited PT and PTA programs (www.capteonline.org). Contact the programs you wish to attend if you have questions about how to apply, or what courses to take. While the CT State PTA staff/faculty can provide general advising about a career in physical therapy, we are unable to provide detailed advice about specific courses required for PT programs outside of CT State.

What is the difference between a physical therapist assistant (PTA) and a physical therapy aide?

To become a PTA, one must graduate from a CAPTE-accredited program, pass a national exam, and obtain a license from the state in which one wishes to work. A physical therapy aide is an unlicensed individual who may assist a PT or PTA in providing physical therapy care, but is never, by law, the provider of that care. Norwalk campus has a PTA degree program and a physical therapy aide certificate course. If you are interested in the degree program, this packet provides that information. Please contact the department of Continuing Education for more information about the physical therapy aide certificate course: <https://ctstate.edu/workforce-development/#norwalk>

Can I transfer my PTA credits to a PT program?

PTA credits are earned at the undergraduate level. PT credits are earned at the graduate level. Generally, undergraduate credits do not count toward a graduate degree. PTA credits (Math, English, electives) may count toward undergraduate credits that lead to a bachelor's degree, which is required for entrance into a Doctor of Physical Therapy program.

How much does the program cost?

Information about tuition and fees can be found on the program's websites. Information specific to PTA program costs can be found here:

- Naugatuck: https://ctstate.edu/images/Forms-Documents/Credit-Programs/NVCC_2023-2024-PTA-student-financial-fact-sheet-POSTED.pdf
- Norwalk: <https://ctstate.edu/images/Forms-Documents/Credit-Programs/2024-Financial-Aid-Fact-Sheet.pdf>

Financial aid may be available. Please contact your Guided Pathways Advisor or the Financial Aid Office for details.

Admissions Policies and Procedures

Important Dates

Admissions decisions are made on the following annual cycle (if any of the dates fall on a weekend/holiday, the following business day is used):

Step	Naugatuck Valley	Norwalk*
Program application available	April 1 [^]	October 1
Program application due	August 1 [^]	July 1 [*]
Students notified of admissions decisions	Aug 15 [^]	[^] August 1
Orientation	Wednesday before classes begin	3 rd Tuesday of August
Enrollment begins	Spring semester	Fall semester

[^]The program at the Naugatuck Valley campus has a spring semester start to each cohort. Applications are accepted each year between April 1st and August 1st.

*The program at the Norwalk Campus has a fall semester start to each cohort. Applications are accepted each year between October 1st and July 1st.

Late applications may be considered if open seats remain. As of the 2022-2023 academic year, applications are only accepted online through CRM Recruit.

Important Information

Admission to the program is selective and competitive; a limited number of students are admitted per cohort. Space is limited. Meeting minimum requirements does not guarantee admission into the program.

As of the 2024-2025 academic year (for admission in the fall of 2025), the admissions requirements are as follows:

1. Complete all college admission requirements.
2. Complete the transcript evaluation process **BEFORE** starting a PTA selective admissions application. See the "Transfer credits/courses" section below for instructions. Do not start a PTA program application, until your transfer courses appear on your online CT State transcript. If you skip this step, but decide later that you want your courses transferred, you will have to delete your PTA application and start over.
3. Complete the online PTA Application. Must be submitted by the posted deadline, including supporting materials.
4. Completion of the prerequisite courses:
 - a. BIO 1210: General Biology I with a C+ or better. BIO 1111: Cellular Biology with Organ Systems is also an approved pre-requisite course. Please note: for the 2024-2025 application cycle (for admission in fall 2025), students may take any course that is listed as a pre-requisite course for BIO 2111 (Anatomy & Physiology I). Please contact the appropriate program director for details and a written waiver, which will be due by the application deadline.
 - b. MAT 1200: Statistics I with a C or better. Please note: other math courses need approval by the program director. Please contact the appropriate program director for details and a written waiver, which will be due by the application deadline.
 - c. ENG 1010: English Composition with a C or higher
 - d. PSY 1011: General Psychology with a C or higher
5. Have a minimum admissions GPA of 2.5. The 4 admission requirements listed above are used in the calculation of this GPA.
6. Complete the Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) exam with a minimum score of 60%. There are no exemptions from this entrance exam based on prior education. Students may register for the exam, and

find additional information about the test at www.atitesting.com. For the PTA program, the TEAS test expires after 3 years. Students may take the nursing or allied health version of the test, as the content of both is the same. Students may take either the in-person or online version of the TEAS test. Students may take the TEAS test at any school, in any state; remember to have your TEAS test scores sent to the Admissions Department at Norwalk or Naugatuck Valley in line with where you are applying. If the student takes the test at a location outside of the CT State system, there is a fee to send the score to the college.

7. Volunteer/observational experience totaling at least 20 hours in two different settings, documented on the Observation Log. Download the Observation Log and Instructions in the application portal in the Supplemental Items and Documents section. This file will not be visible until you submit your application. Please see the "Observation Hours" section below for specific requirements.
8. Students must be able to perform common physical therapy functions as defined in the program's Technical Standards.

Candidates will be ranked according to the following formula:

- 20% Science GPA (BIO 1210 General Biology or BIO 1111 Cellular Biology with Organ Systems grade)
- 20% Math GPA (MAT 1200 Statistics grade)
- 40% Admissions GPA (BIO 1210 or BIO 1111, MAT 1200, ENG 1010, PSY 1011)
- 20% TEAS score

College Level Examination Program® (CLEP) and Advanced Placement (AP) Courses

CLEP exams and AP Credit can be used for the application requirements. Scores will be converted as follows:

CLEP: >85 = A, 80 = A-, 75 = B+, 70 = B, 65 = C+, 60 = C

Scores below a 60 are not accepted for credit.

AP: 5 = A, 4 = B, 3 = C+. Scores below a 3 are not accepted for credit.

This is a competitive admissions program. Not all who apply will be offered admission. Typically, more students apply than the program has available seats. The students with the top scores will be offered enrollment into the PTA program. In the event of a tie, the PTA program advisory board will be given the candidates' information excluding their names and hold a vote to break the tie. The remaining candidates will be placed on a waiting list in ranked order. If accepted candidates decide not to enroll in the program, then candidates on the waiting list are notified of the opening starting with the highest ranked candidate.

Observation Hours

Understanding and appreciating the field of physical therapy as you are preparing to apply to the PTA Program is very important. If you are accepted into the program, it is imperative that you are certain that this is the career path you want to pursue. In addition to applying to the PTA Program, you are required to have a minimum of 20 hours of observational experience in physical therapy. You will need to have at least 10 hours in an in-patient setting and 10 hours in an out-patient setting.

This experience can be through shadowing a PT or PTA (observation) for both in- patient and out-patient settings. Volunteering in a PT setting may also meet the requirements. Documentation will be submitted on observation hours log found on the website or on company letterhead from a facility that has been verified by a PT or PTA at each facility. The documentation (for either criterion) should be submitted with your application to the PTA Program.

In-patient settings may include acute care hospitals, rehabilitation facilities, skilled nursing homes/facilities, "sub-acute care" facilities, or home care agencies.

Out-patient settings may include private practices, out-patient services provided by hospitals or skilled-nursing facilities, PT services in orthopedic surgeon's offices, school systems, American Heart Association cardiac rehabilitation programs, and aquatic physical therapy services. Experiences in athletic training settings, exercise physiology settings, or chiropractic offices will not fulfill this requirement.

The PTA Program is not able to facilitate these experiences for the students and it is the student's responsibility to complete this pre-admission requirement. Documentation of the observation experience is due by the application deadline.

Transfer credits/courses

If you think any of your previous college courses will count toward the PTA degree, have your transcripts evaluated by the CT State transcript evaluation team. The PTA staff/faculty cannot make the determination about whether courses from other schools will transfer. We can better serve you if you complete this step first (i.e., we can't tell you which courses to take until we know which courses you have). This process is not automatically triggered by sending one's transcripts to CT State. Students must fill out a Transcript Evaluation Form and follow the directions on that form. You will know the process has been completed when the transferred courses appear in your online CT State transcript. Check your online transcript at <https://My.CTState.edu>.

For information about this process, please visit:

- <https://ctstate.edu/accepted-students>
- <https://ctstate.edu/transfer-students>

For the transfer credit evaluation form, please visit: <https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/Enrollment-Services/Registration-Forms/Continuing-Student-Transfer-Credit-Evaluation-Request-Form.pdf>

Re-Application in Subsequent Years

If a student is not accepted to the program (either initially or from the wait list) in a given year, he or she may reapply the following year. A student's previous application will have no bearing on future applications. All students begin each year with zero admissions points.

Special Requirements and Information:

- Students are required to access, understand, and abide by the policies and procedures of CT State. It will be available online (<https://www.ct.edu/curriculum>).
- Students are required to access, understand, and abide by the policies and procedures of the PTA Program Student Handbook. Contact the respective program director for this information.
- Only those students accepted into the program may declare the PTA major.
- Students must earn a C or better in all technical education/PTA courses. If the student earns a C- or below in a PTA course, that course must be repeated before the student can move forward in the program. Courses may only be repeated one time for a passing grade.
- Once you enroll in the first PTA program semester, you have three years to complete the two-year program.
- A grade of C or better must be achieved for all general education courses before or during the program (ENG 1010, ENGX, Math (Statistics), PSY 1011, AHRX). Students must earn a C+ or better in BIO 1210, BIO 2111 and BIO 2112. General education courses must be satisfactorily completed before or during the semester in which they are scheduled in the curriculum. Students who fail to successfully complete required general education courses as delineated will not be able to progress in the program. For example, in order to progress to the third semester of the program, you must complete BIO 2112. It is highly recommended that if you have not yet completed both BIO 2111 and BIO 2112 (Anatomy & Physiology I & II) prior to applying to the program, that you attempt to complete one or both courses prior to starting the program.

- The student has two opportunities to complete the PTA program within the Connecticut State Community College system. A student may re-apply to either PTA program (Norwalk or Naugatuck Valley) one time. For example, if a student separates from the Norwalk campus program, the student may re-apply to the Norwalk campus or Naugatuck Valley campus program once more (final time).
- Courses taken at Cortiva Institute, formerly Connecticut Center for Massage Therapy, (i.e., anatomy, kinesiology) do not transfer into the CT State College system because Cortiva Institute is not accredited by a regional accrediting body recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (i.e., NECHE).
- For students of Southern Connecticut State University's (SCSU) Exercise Science programs: EXS 281 (Anatomy & Physiology I) and EXS 282 (Anatomy & Physiology II) are 3-credit, non-lab courses, and as such, are **not** equivalent to BIO 2111 (Anatomy & Physiology I) and BIO 2112 (Anatomy & Physiology II) at CT State, which are 4-credit courses with a lab component. SCSU's BIO 200 and BIO 201 (Human Anatomy & Physiology I & II) are 4-credit courses with a lab and are equivalent to BIO 2111 and BIO 2112 at CT State.
- The PTA Program at either campus does not accept transfer students or credits toward PTA courses from other U.S. or international programs, including PT, OT, PTA, OTA, or any other similar program. There is extensive variability between programs across the country and around the world. It is nearly impossible to determine, by looking at international or domestic course descriptions and/or syllabi, whether a student has adequately covered concepts at another institution, and in what timeframe, and then match this to our curriculum to determine which courses a student must complete and which can be waived. Therefore, all students wishing to graduate from the PTA program at a specific campus must complete the entire technical portion of the program at that campus. This does not exclude individuals from completing general education (non-PTA) courses at another institution.
- If you receive information from someone about the PTA program (especially someone not directly connected with the PTA program, i.e., individuals in the Counseling Center, Admissions, and/or faculty who teach in other programs/departments), and that information appears to conflict with the information found in this document, please follow the information in this document, and contact a PTA program advisor if you need to clarify the information.
- Graduation from CT State Norwalk or CT State Naugatuck Valley with an Associate of Science (major in PTA) does not guarantee licensure to practice as a PTA. You must meet all requirements of the state you plan to practice in prior to licensure. The state of Connecticut requires successful completion of the National Physical Therapy Examination for PTAs administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (www.fsbpt.org) prior to application for licensure.
- Student membership with the American Physical Therapy Association (www.apta.org) is required during the program. Currently, annual dues are approximately \$90 for student members.
- Student membership with PhysioU.com is required during the program. Please visit physiou.health for information about membership rates.
- The college requires that students show proof of high school graduation or GED completion, and immunization against measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella to comply with state law.
- In addition to the vaccinations required by the college, the PTA program requires that all students have a current (annual) physical examination and show proof of additional vaccines (such as Hepatitis B and COVID-19) or tests (such as tuberculosis). Costs associated with these tests and medical examinations are the responsibility of the student. The PTA program uses an independent compliance organization to monitor student health records, at a cost to the student. If a student refuses to complete health requirements (i.e., flu or COVID-19 vaccination), he or she may not be able to complete any or all of the PTA internship courses required for graduation. Clinical facilities are under no obligation to accept all students, and may deny an internship slot based on findings in a student's health records. The PTA program will contact at least, but no more than, three internship sites for each clinical education course (PTA 2694, PTA 2794 & PTA 2894), to attempt to place the student in each internship. However, if no internship is available due to the student's health history, the program is under no obligation to contact more than three clinical internship sites for each internship. At this time, all clinical facilities require full vaccination against COVID-19.

- Certain clinical facilities may require uniforms, and other related equipment. Costs associated with these items are the responsibility of the student.
- On the PTA licensure application for the state of Connecticut Department of Public Health (DPH), graduates will be asked about prior and pending disciplinary actions, dismissals, suspensions, terminations, fines, reprimands, complaints, charges, investigations and convictions with regard to professional organizations, insurance providers, healthcare providers, schools and government agencies. For more information about this application, students should contact the state of Connecticut DPH.
- If a student has prior convictions for one or more misdemeanors or felonies, he or she may not be able to complete any or all of the PTA internship courses required for graduation. Clinical facilities are under no obligation to accept all students and may deny an internship slot based on findings in a student's background check. The PTA program will contact at least, but no more than, three internship sites for each clinical education course (PTA 2694, PTA 2794 & PTA 2894), to attempt to place the student in each internship. However, if no internship is available due to the student's history of convictions, the program is under no obligation to contact more than three clinical internship sites for each internship.
- All PTA students are required to be covered by Professional Liability Insurance while enrolled in internship courses (PTA 2694, PTA 2794 & PTA 2894), because the PTA student intern is practicing hands-on interventions with the patient, providing actual physical therapy care under the direction and supervision of the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant. This insurance must be in force for the duration of any and all internships and proof must be on file with the Clinical Education Coordinator. The college will provide such liability insurance for all students. Students are encouraged to obtain their own private liability insurance in addition to the school policy.
- In general, the PTA (non-internship) courses take place during daytime hours, Monday through Friday. The PTA courses are not offered in evenings or on weekends. For an idea of when PTA courses are scheduled, please visit the course search page (<https://reg-prod.ec.ct.edu/StudentRegistrationSsb/ssb/term/termSelection?mode=search>) and search for PTA courses. Historically, we have tended to keep the same schedule year after year, but we do not guarantee that the schedule will be the same in future semesters.
- The clinical internship schedule is at the discretion of the program coordinator and the supervising PT/PTA at the clinical education site and may include evenings and weekends. The third semester of the program includes a one-day-per-week internship. The final semester of the program consists of two, seven-week, full-time internships. Students are expected to arrange work and personal priorities around the internship schedule.
- In addition to college tuition, lab fees, clinical fees, and textbooks, students may be required to arrange and pay for parking at and transportation to clinical internships, as well as required uniforms/attire. Every attempt will be made to place students in an area that is within a reasonable driving distance from campus or the student's home, however students may be required to attend clinical internships or learning experiences outside those areas.
- Given the intense workload associated with the program, students are strongly advised to consider reducing work and personal commitments to a manageable level prior to beginning the program. Classroom and clinical expectations and schedules will not be altered to accommodate student employment or other commitments. These recommendations are made to ensure the success of the student:
 - In most cases, it is advantageous to complete all general education courses before applying to the PTA program. This allows the student to be able to concentrate solely on the PTA courses during the program.
 - The student can expect to commit to spending a minimum of 2-3 hours of study time/academic preparation for every hour spent in class. Some of these hours will need to be spent on campus, in the PTA laboratory to facilitate familiarity with various learning models and equipment.
 - Students should be aware that the PTA laboratory is open for limited hours during the week. It is important to plan your schedule to maximize the ability to study in the PTA lab as needed. Please contact the specific program directly for more information.

- Students should be aware that retakes of competencies and lab practicals take place outside of class time. Students should be prepared to adjust their personal schedules to ensure compliance with retake policies and procedures.
- For the first three semesters, the study time commitment for PTA courses equates to approximately 24 hours per week of study time. During the final semester, when the student is participating in full time internships and completing a 3-credit capstone course, there will be an expectation that the student will spend time outside of the internship hours researching/studying clinical concepts, or other obligations as assigned by the clinical instructor.
- PTA program applicants should be aware that a mandatory orientation takes place each year. Students who are not able to attend this orientation will forfeit their seat in the program.
 - Naugatuck Valley campus: Wednesday before first semester PTA courses begin
 - Norwalk campus: third Tuesday in August
- Students are responsible for their own learning. The PTA program requires a higher degree of self-directed learning than your previous college courses likely did. PTA students are expected to learn concepts and content using skills such as research, reading, and working in groups outside of class/lab, to fulfill the mission and vision of the program, which is to graduate lifelong learners, with self-study skills. The instructor provides learning materials and direction, but does not provide all information needed within lectures, or unlimited tutoring to students outside of class/lab time.
 - Students are expected to utilize self-study skills, as well as PTA program tutors and designated workshops to obtain faculty assistance outside of class/lab time as a first step to learning information and clarifying concepts. Students are also expected to work with fellow classmates outside of class/lab time to achieve the objectives and student learning outcomes listed on the syllabus prior to contacting the instructor for assistance outside of class/lab time.
 - Students are expected to participate in self-directed, online learning modules, which may take the place of lectures. Lecturing does not equal learning, and lecture is not necessary for learning. Students are responsible for formulating questions and discussion items to explore during class time, when prompted, and/or during tutoring/workshop sessions.
 - Students are responsible for obtaining information missed during an absence from class by contacting a fellow student. The instructor is not responsible for providing information missed during an absence (excused or unexcused) from class.
- Students should avoid delegating their responsibilities related to the PTA program to parents, spouses, or others during the pre-PTA/application process. This includes, but is not limited to advising, the submission of documents, and non-emergency communication with program personnel. During the program, especially in the internship environment, and while employed as a PTA, students and graduates will be expected to perform responsibilities independently, without the assistance of parents, spouses, or others. If the student cannot demonstrate the skill of independent functioning, then the student cannot meet the outcomes and goals of the program, and thus, in accordance with accreditation standards, may not graduate.

Technical Standards

Preface

Decisions made by the candidate to enter this educational program for physical therapist assistants should be made with consideration of the following technical standards. The physical therapist assistant (PTA) is a licensed health care professional in physical therapy, providing physical therapy interventions after a physical therapist has evaluated the patient and established a treatment plan. The following standards reflect reasonable expectations of the PTA student for the performance of common physical therapy functions. These standards do not reflect what may be required for employment of the graduate PTA.

Physical therapy education and practice requires technical standards to manage patients/clients safely, appropriately, and effectively. In adopting these standards, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is mindful of the patient's right to safe and quality health care by our students and graduates. The PTA student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a broad variety of clinical situations while providing the spectrum of physical therapy treatments. Each candidate in this Associate in Science degree program must have the ability to learn and perform the following competencies and skills.

Critical Thinking Skills

Student must possess sufficient abilities in the areas of critical problem solving, reasoning, and decision-making in a timely and safe manner.

Student must be able to prioritize, organize, and attend to tasks and responsibilities efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to the:

- Ability to collect, interpret, and analyze written, verbal, and observed data.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information, and make decisions.
- Ability to apply knowledge of the principles, indications, contraindications, and application of physical therapy interventions in the physical therapy plan of care.
- Ability to act safely, legally, and ethically-
- Ability to analyze physical, biomechanical, pathological, behavioral, and environmental factors in a timely manner.

Communication Skills

Student must be able to utilize effective and efficient communications with peers, faculty, patients and their families, and other health care providers, and others in the English language. This includes, but is not limited to the:

- Ability to read and write at a competency level that allows one to safely carry out the essential functions in both academic and clinical settings and assignments (examples: handwritten chart data, printed equipment operations manuals).
- Ability to effectively communicate (interpret and express) information regarding the status, safety, and rehabilitation of patients.
- Ability to effectively communicate (verbally and in writing) with patients/families, health care professionals and others within the community, and with third party payers.
- Document in the medical record within a specific time frame, reflective of industry standards and formats.
- Ability to communicate and document effectively via electronic device.
- Ability to recognize, to interpret, and respond to nonverbal behavior of self and others.
- Ability to initiate conversations with peers, faculty, patients and their families, and others medical professionals.

Motor Skills

Student must have sufficient motor capabilities to execute the movements and skills required to provide safe and effective physical therapy interventions patient/client management. These include, but are not limited to:

- Coordination, speed, and agility to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising, or performing other rehabilitation activities.
- Ability to adjust and position equipment and patients, which involves bending or stooping freely to floor level and reaching above the head.
- Ability to move, transfer, or position patients and equipment, which involves lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, and guiding weight.
- Ability to continuously guide, resist, and assist patients, or to provide emergency care, which involves the activities of standing, kneeling, sitting, walking, or crawling, for up to 90 minutes.

- Ability to perform, with safe and proper body mechanics, transfer and gait training techniques, and positioning and mobilization procedures used during physical therapy interventions with patients.
- Ability and dexterity to manipulate the devices used in physical therapy, which involves adjusting gauges, dials, small nuts/bolts, equipment settings, etc.
- Manipulate common tools used for screening tests of nerves, joints, and muscles which would include sensation, range of motion, and muscle testing procedures.
- Ability to legibly record/document all records required for academic and clinical coursework
- Ability to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation and First Aid without assistance.
- Ability to elicit information from patients through manual techniques, palpation, auscultation, and percussion for data collection procedures.
- Ability to apply manual therapy techniques.

Sensory Skills

Student must possess the ability to observe demonstrations and participate in laboratory and clinical activities, observe and participate in demonstrations, and observe physical measures applied to patients. This includes the ability to obtain information in classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings through observation, auscultation, palpation, and other measures, including but not limited to:

- Visual ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language, identify normal and abnormal patterns of movement, to read or set parameters on physical therapy equipment, to discriminate color changes, and to interpret and assess the environment.
- Auditory ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and respond to soft voices, auditory timers, equipment alarms, call bells, and to effectively use devices for auscultation measurement of blood pressure and breath sounds.
- Tactile ability to palpate a pulse and to detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin temperature, body segment contour, muscle tone, and joint movement.
- Sufficient position, movement, and balance sensations to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising, or performing other rehabilitation activities.

Behavioral Skills

Student must be capable of professional behaviors required for the successful conduct of physical therapy in all environments. Student must be able to exercise good judgment, develop empathetic and therapeutic relationships with patients and others, and tolerate close and direct physical contact with a broad and very diverse population of peers and patients. This will include people of all ages, races, genders, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, ethnic backgrounds, as well as individuals with varied physical, medical, or mental health problems. This also includes, but is not limited to:

- Ability to work with multiple patients/families and colleagues at the same time.
- Ability to work with faculty, staff, clinical instructors, classmates, patients, families, healthcare providers, and others. under stressful conditions, including but not limited to medically or emotionally unstable individuals, situations requiring rapid adaptations, the provision of CPR, or other emergency interventions.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information, and make decisions in a timely manner.
- Ability to foster cooperative and collegial relationships with faculty, staff, clinical instructors, classmates, patients, families, other health care providers, and others.
- Ability to follow college, program, and clinical procedures in a professional and timely manner.
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills necessary for productive classroom discussion and respectful interaction with classmates, faculty, staff, and others.
- Maintain general good health, self-care, and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with which one interacts.

Capstone

The capstone experience of this educational program occurs during the final semester, with the student providing physical therapy interventions services in clinic settings under the direction and supervision of physical therapist. The student must have the capacity to work varying schedules for an average of 35 hours per week, to participate in clinical education experiences, for a full semester. Outside of scheduled hours, the student must also have the ability to independently prepare for activities in the clinical environment, for example, reviewing information related to the following day's activities. The clinical education experience provides for a truly integrative measure of the student's capabilities and requires that the student consistently demonstrates entry-level performance of the abilities of the physical therapist assistant.

Helpful Resources

- The programs' website has other helpful information and is available at:
 - <https://ctstate.edu/academics/programs/physical-therapist-assistant>
- This packet is updated annually in the summer. Copies of this packet are available at:
 - <https://ctstate.edu/academics/programs/physical-therapist-assistant>
- American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) www.apta.org.
- PTA licensure in the state of Connecticut: <https://portal.ct.gov/dph>
- PTA licensure outside the state of Connecticut: www.fsbpt.org
- National Physical Therapist Assistant Licensure Examination: www.fsbpt.org

Internationally-Trained Physical Therapists Seeking U.S. Licensure

The PTA programs at CT State are not able to assist individuals with an international physical therapy degree in applying for state licensure. Individuals should seek information from the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (<https://www.fsbpt.org/>), the Board of Physical Therapy Examiners for the state in which you plan to practice, and/or the Foreign Credentialing Commission on Physical Therapy (<http://www.fccpt.org/>).

Curriculum Sequence

General education courses must be satisfactorily completed before or during the semester in which they are scheduled in the curriculum. PTA courses must be completed in the sequence indicated below. Students may not “combine” semesters to complete the PTA degree in under two years, regardless of academic/professional background. PTA courses are only offered in the semesters indicated below (i.e., PTA 1200 offered in fall only at CT State Norwalk). Students must complete all technical education (PTA) courses in three years or less at the same college campus (Norwalk or Naugatuck Valley). A grade of C or better must be earned in all courses unless noted otherwise.

Pre-requisites	Course Title	Credits
BIO 1210*^	General Biology I (or BIO 1111 Cell Biology w/organ systems)	4
ENG 1010	Composition	3
MAT 1200*	Statistics I	3
PSY 1011	General Psychology	3
CCS 1001	College and Career Success (waived if transferring 24+ credits)	3
Total:		16
Semester 1	<i>Norwalk: fall; Naugatuck Valley: spring</i>	
PTA 1200	Introduction to Physical Therapy	3
PTA 1250	Foundational Skills in Physical Therapy	4
PTA 1300	Clinical Anatomy & Kinesiology	3
BIO 2111^	Anatomy & Physiology I	4
Total:		14
Semester 2	<i>Norwalk: spring; Naugatuck Valley: fall</i>	
PTA 1450	Physical Agents in Physical Therapy	3
PTA 1500	Physical Therapy Interventions in Orthopedics	4
PTA 1550	Pathology for the PTA I	3
BIO 2112^	Anatomy & Physiology II	4
Total:		14
Summer	<i>Norwalk: summer; Naugatuck Valley: spring (Semester 3)</i>	
PTA 2580	PTA in the Healthcare Arena	1
Total:		1
Semester 3	<i>Norwalk: fall; Naugatuck Valley: spring</i>	
PTA 2500	Physical Therapy Interventions in Special Populations	3
PTA 2550	Pathology for the PTA II	3
PTA 2694	PTA Part Time Clinical Experience I	1
ARTX	Arts & Humanities (must meet diversity requirement)	3
WRIX	Written Communication II elective	3
Total:		13
Semester 4	<i>Norwalk: spring; Naugatuck Valley: fall</i>	
PTA 2794	PTA Full Time Clinical Experience I	3
PTA 2894	PTA Full Time Clinical Experience II	3
PTA 2990	Physical Therapy Seminar	3
Total:		9
Degree total:		67

*Course must be taken within 5 years of program entry.

^Course must be completed with a C+ or higher.

Course Descriptions

PTA 1200: Introduction to Physical Therapy

3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Acceptance into PTA Major

Course description: Learning opportunities in this course assist the student to recognize the roles of physical therapy within various practice settings. Students differentiate functions of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants as members of the health care team through study of the history of physical therapy, documentation, ethical & legal principles, evidence-based practice, and medical terminology important to the provision of services. Learning also includes development of knowledge and abilities within the domains of professional conduct, interpersonal and professional communication, and sensitivity to individual and cultural differences.

PTA 1250: Foundational Skills in Physical Therapy

4 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week; lab: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Acceptance into PTA Major

Course description: This lecture and lab-based course provides the student with introductory concepts and techniques regarding physical therapy interventions for function and mobility. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the students' problem-solving abilities and comprehension of the physical therapist assistant's role in delivering the plan of care. The importance of modification of physical therapy interventions within the plan of care developed by the supervising physical therapist is highlighted. The laboratory section of this course allows the student to develop psychomotor skills, critical thinking, and affective skills through simulated patient scenarios.

PTA 1300: Clinical Anatomy and Kinesiology

3 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week, lab: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Acceptance into PTA Major

Course description: This course is designed to enable students to identify the structure and function of the human body including the spine, upper, and lower extremities through computer simulation and application. The course includes the study of skeletal, muscular, connective tissue, nervous, and circulatory structures involved in human movement. Students will understand movement control and elements of movement dysfunction. The student will also gain an understanding of biomechanical forces, neuromuscular control, and pathological influences through analysis of biomechanical forces on the body.

PTA 1450: Physical Agents in Physical Therapy

3 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week; lab: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1200, 1250, and 1300

Course description: This course is designed to enable students to identify the structure and function of the human body including the spine, upper, and lower extremities through computer simulation and application. The course includes the study of skeletal, muscular, connective tissue, nervous, and circulatory structures involved in human movement. Students will understand movement control and elements of movement dysfunction. The student will also gain an understanding of biomechanical forces, neuromuscular control, and pathological influences through analysis of biomechanical forces on the body.

PTA 1500: Physical Therapy Interventions in Orthopedics

4 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week; lab: 6 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1200, 1250, and 1300

Course description: This course uses a case study approach to enhance problem solving skills and provide integration of various patient examination, goal setting, and intervention techniques within the scope of physical therapist assistant practice. Topics covered include foundational PT skills of goniometric and muscle strength assessment and exercise prescription. The student will achieve competency in the following patient care techniques: data collection skills, exercise prescription, communication and documentation skills including appropriate billing, and patient safety. Manual muscle testing and goniometric measurement of joint range of motion will be incorporated into laboratory exercises. Professionalism, verbal and written communication skills, and ethics are considered throughout.

PTA 1550: Pathology for the Physical Therapist Assistant I

3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1200, 1250, and 1300

Course description: This is the first course of a two-course pathology sequence designed to provide the physical therapist assistant student with the knowledge of human pathology of selected body systems including implications for patient management and the effects of exercise. Topics covered include inflammation, lab tests & values, and the immune, lymphatic, cardiovascular, respiratory, integumentary, and musculoskeletal systems. This foundational course promotes an understanding of the disease processes and guides the student in application and analysis of medical pathology to evidence-based patient care. Emphasis is placed on the relationship of medical presentation signs/symptoms/treatment and its implication on physical therapy treatment.

PTA 2500: Physical Therapy Interventions in Special Populations

3 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week; lab: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, and 1550

Course description: This course uses a case study approach to enhance problem solving skills and provide integration of various patient intervention techniques within the scope of physical therapy practice. Topics covered include interventions for special populations such as status post amputation, neurological diagnoses, and pediatric conditions. The student will achieve competency in advanced patient care techniques and will expand on knowledge from previous courses. Emphasis will be placed on appropriate application of advanced treatment techniques, critical thinking, and progression in order to facilitate patient recovery with the goal of improving functional outcomes.

PTA 2550: Pathology for the Physical Therapist Assistant II

3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, and 1550

Course description: This is the second course of a two-course pathology sequence designed to provide the physical therapist assistant student with knowledge of human pathology of selected body systems including implications for patient management and the effects of exercise. Topics covered include disorders of the nervous system, the hepatic, pancreatic and biliary systems, the endocrine and gastrointestinal systems, the male and female reproductive systems, as well as amputation, oncology, and hematology. This foundational course promotes an understanding of the disease processes and guides the student in application and analysis of medical pathology to evidence-based patient care. Emphasis is placed on the relationship of medical presentation signs/symptoms/treatments and its implication on physical therapy treatment.

PTA 2580: PTA in the Healthcare Arena

1 credit: lecture (Norwalk campus: 3 hours per week for 5 weeks; Naugatuck Valley campus: 1 hour per week for 15 weeks)

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, and 1550

Course description: This course is an introduction and preparation to clinical education experience for the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) student. Students will learn about the different types of Physical Therapy settings and become oriented with the clinical education process. Students will learn about legal and professional standard practices, PTA reporting responsibilities, responses to ethical situations, effective communication as healthcare providers, accurate and timely billing, and professional development opportunities to remain current in the Physical Therapy field.

PTA 2694: PTA Part Time Clinical Experience

1 credit: Approximately 8 hours per week of clinical experience

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, 1550, and 2580.

Course description: This course is an integrated part-time clinical experience. Students will apply principles of the curriculum and physical therapy services as a Student Physical Therapist Assistant (SPTA). Students will implement general skills, data collection, and interventions in a physical therapy clinical setting under the direction and supervision of a licensed Physical Therapist.

PTA 2794: PTA Full Time Clinical Experience I

3 credits: Approximately 40 hours per week of clinical experience

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) of PTA 2500, PTA 2550, PTA 2580, and 'C or better' or 'Pass' in PTA 2694.

Course description: This course is an advanced clinical experience designed for students to integrate and apply physical therapy concepts to effectively perform interventions and data collection as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will develop daily organizational and management skills of a patient caseload and effectively contribute to the health care team. This course is a full-time clinical experience (approximately 40 hours per week) in the first half of the semester.

PTA 2894: PTA Full Time Clinical Experience II

3 credits: Approximately 40 hours per week of clinical experience

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better or 'Pass') in PTA 2794

Course description: This course is the final clinical experience designed for students to integrate and apply physical therapy concepts to effectively perform interventions and data collection as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will develop daily organizational and management skills of a patient caseload and effectively contribute to the health care team consistent with entry-level performance. This course is a full-time clinical experience (approximately 40 hours per week) in the second half of the semester.

PTA 2990: Physical Therapy Seminar

3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week

Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) of PTA 2500, PTA 2550, PTA 2580, and 'C or better' or 'Pass' in PTA 2694.

Course description: This course will provide the physical therapist assistant student with the necessary knowledge for understanding the healthcare processes of the clinical setting as well as facility standards and design. Research based decision-making will also be covered. Other topics such as licensure, continuing education, data collection, and problem-oriented management will be discussed.