

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Saint Joseph's University's Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) is an accredited doctoral program that prepares you for a fulfilling career in physical therapy (PT). PT was named one of the best healthcare professions and best jobs overall by U.S. News & World Report. With an accelerated curriculum focused on experiential learning (<https://www.sju.edu/departments/physical-therapy/experiential-learning/>), our 31-month physical therapy program will teach you evidence-based techniques and empower you to practice collaboratively in diverse healthcare environments. You'll have access to 350+ full-time clinical practice sites in Philadelphia and beyond and gain skills to treat a wide swath of patients in a variety of healthcare settings.

Faculty

Saint Joseph's physical therapy faculty are skilled practitioners, many of whom are ABPTS certified in a variety of practice areas, such as orthopedics, pediatrics, geriatrics, neurology, cardiopulmonary, sports and more. Faculty apply their expertise in the classroom and in collaborative student-faculty research.

Department of Physical Therapy Faculty (<https://www.sju.edu/departments/physical-therapy/faculty/>)

Programs Undergraduate Majors

Health Sciences Direct Entry into DPT (<https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/health-professions/health-sciences/health-science-major/#directentrydpttext>)

Exercise Physiology Direct Entry into DPT (<https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/health-professions/health-sciences/exercise-physiology-major/#directentryphysicaltherapytext>)

Doctoral

Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) (<https://academiccatalog.sju.edu/health-professions/physical-therapy/dpt/>)

Pathways

BS to Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT)

Physical therapy is a thriving area of healthcare and one of its most rewarding and fulfilling careers. Saint Joseph's BS in Exercise Physiology/Health Science to Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) prepares you to develop as a skilled practitioner with a fast path to graduation. The curriculum includes a wealth of clinical experiences, including pro-bono clinics and full-time clinical education rotations. Earn two degrees – a BS in exercise physiology or health science and a Doctor of Physical Therapy – in under six years without having to re-apply by meeting all academic criteria and program requirements.

You can enter this accelerated PT program as an incoming first-year student through our direct-entry admission pathway or as a transfer student.

If you already hold a bachelor's degree or higher and have completed all requisites, you can enter the DPT program as a graduate student.

Courses

DPT 501 Anatomy I (3 credits)

This is the first part of a regional study of the structure, function, and development of the human body with emphasis on the musculoskeletal, vascular and peripheral nervous systems of the lower extremity and back. Select pathologies will be used to explore the clinical relevance of anatomic relationships to human movement and function.

Restrictions: Enrollment limited to students with the University Sciences Legacy attribute.

DPT 501L Anatomy I Lab (0 credits)

DPT 502 Anatomy II (3 credits)

This course is the second part of a regional study of the structure, function, and development of the human body with emphasis on the musculoskeletal, vascular, and peripheral nervous systems of the upper limb, head and neck. Students will explore the viscera of the thorax and abdominopelvic cavities. Select pathologies will be used to explore the clinical relevance of anatomic relationships to human movement and function.

Prerequisites: (DPT 501 and (DPT 511 and (DPT 521 and (DPT 541 and (DPT 531

DPT 502L Anatomy II Lab (0 credits)

DPT 511 Biomechanics/Kinesiology I (2 credits)

This is the first course, in a two-course sequence, studying the principles of kinesiology and biomechanics in relationship to movement disorders of the lumbar spine and lower extremity. Participants will develop the ability to analyze normal and abnormal functional movement, determine pathomechanics of movement dysfunctions, and incorporate kinesiological and biomechanical principles for solving movement dysfunctions.

Restrictions: Enrollment limited to students with the University Sciences Legacy attribute.

DPT 511L Biomechanics/Kinesiology Lab (0 credits)

DPT 512 Biomechanics/Kinesiology II (2 credits)

This is the second course, in a two-course sequence, studying the principles of kinesiology and biomechanics, in relationship to movement disorders of the upper extremity, cervical and thoracic spine. Participants will develop the ability to analyze normal and abnormal functional movement, determine pathomechanics of movement dysfunctions, and incorporate kinesiological and biomechanical principles for solving movement dysfunctions.

Prerequisites: (DPT 501 and (DPT 511 and (DPT 521 and (DPT 541 and (DPT 531

DPT 512L Biomechanics/Kinesiology II Lab (0 credits)

DPT 521 PT Exam/Interventions I (2 credits)

An introduction to basic examination procedures, movement assessment, and intervention techniques in physical therapy of the lower quarter across the lifespan consistent with PT patient management model and International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF).

Restrictions: Enrollment limited to students with the University Sciences Legacy attribute.

DPT 522 PT Exam/Interventions II (2 credits)

An introduction to basic examination procedures, movement assessment, and intervention techniques in physical therapy of the upper quarter across the lifespan consistent with PT patient management model and International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health (ICF).

Prerequisites: (DPT 501 and (DPT 511 and (DPT 521 and (DPT 541 and (DPT 531

DPT 531 Clinical Practice I (2 credits)

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this first course of the series will introduce patient communication and mobility skills.

Restrictions: Enrollment limited to students with the University Sciences Legacy attribute.

DPT 531L Clinical practice I Lab (0 credits)**DPT 532 Clinical practice II (2 credits)**

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this second course of the series will focus on patient history, documentation skills, and patient teaching.

Prerequisites: (DPT 501 and (DPT 511 and (DPT 521 and (DPT 541 and (DPT 531

DPT 532L Clinical Practice II Lab (0 credits)**DPT 533 Clinical Practice III (2 credits)**

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this third course of the series will focus on teamwork as a means to facilitate professional relationships and expand services to meet the needs of patients. Students will also be introduced to health insurance as it relates to access and payment for physical therapy services.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 532 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560

DPT 541 Exercise Physiology (3 credits)

Concepts learned in this class will include the acute and chronic physiological changes that occur with exercise in the healthy population. You will develop an understanding of the scientific basis for aerobic and anaerobic training, exercise testing principles, fundamentals of exercise prescription, nutrition and recognize when appropriate to refer to appropriate health care professionals.

Restrictions: Enrollment limited to students with the University Sciences Legacy attribute.

DPT 541L Exercise Physiology Lab (0 credits)**DPT 542 Functional Neuroscience (3 credits)**

A study of the basic principles and concepts related to the nervous system, including neuroanatomy, neurophysiology, neuropathology and motor learning and control theories. Brain and behavior relationships are explored with an emphasis on how changes in the nervous system and sensorimotor behaviors interact and linked to clinical reasoning for managing individuals with neuropathology.

DPT 542L Functional Neuroscience Lab (0 credits)**DPT 550 Research I (2 credits)**

The course provides an introduction to the research process and its relationship to evidence-based practice. Students will obtain a basic understanding of theory-based research, methodological considerations in the design of quantitative and qualitative research, ways of evaluating practice, and approaches to analyzing data.

DPT 551 Research II (2 credits)

In this course students will use clinical questions/scenarios to explore, critically appraise, and apply findings in the literature to inform and direct physical therapy practice. This course will emphasize the application of evidence-based practice to optimize patient outcomes.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 532 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560

DPT 560 Psychosoc Issues Health/Well (3 credits)

This course provides an in-depth understanding of psychosocial determinants of health. It explores the ways psychological factors interact with social, cultural, economic, and environmental contexts of health. The course will apply relevant theories, concepts and models to understand, modify and promote health and wellness. A variety of topics will be presented through readings, lectures, discussions and experiential activities.

DPT 561 Ethics in Healthcare (2 credits)

This course provides an overview of common ethical frameworks and theories. The focus is on identifying and analyzing ethical issues and dilemmas facing the individual therapist and on the application of ethical principles and the APTA Code of Ethics to these dilemmas. The APTA Core Values will also be explored in the context of professional behavior and in relationship to the APTA Code of Ethics. This course includes aspects of federal, state, and case law as they apply to the individual therapist, as well as how they fit with ethical principles.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 532 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560

DPT 571 Mvmt Science Across Lifespan (2 credits)

This course explores typical age-related changes in human movement across the lifespan, with an emphasis on infants and older adults. Task-specific examples are used as the framework to integrate information from multiple diverse fields such as movement science, gerontology, developmental science, and biomechanics to provide the student with an understanding of the evolution of movement with age.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560 and (DPT 532

DPT 581 Medical Management I (3 credits)

This is the first part of a two-course sequence that will present an overview of the pathophysiology and medical management of disorders frequently encountered by physical therapists, pain science, and the application of therapeutic modalities. Specific pathologies covered include diseases of the immune, endocrine, and musculoskeletal systems as well as other major clinical medicine disorders. Medical management includes modalities and basic pharmacologic and radiologic principles, relevant to physical therapists. A problem-solving approach with a focus on clinical decision making will be emphasized for the selection and application of appropriate procedures to manage pain, edema, limitations in motion, muscle weakness, and wound healing.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 532 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560

DPT 601 Musculoskeletal Rehab I (5 credits)

This is the first course within a two-course sequence. This course will introduce the student to physical therapy examination and intervention for musculoskeletal dysfunction of the lower quarter from disease, disuse, trauma, surgery, and the aging process. The course will use musculoskeletal conditions with primarily inflammatory, degenerative, traumatic, and post-surgical etiologies as the basis for formulating a fundamental musculoskeletal exam and treatment plan. Students will develop skills and decision making to recognize when physical therapy is indicated, contraindicated, and when a referral to other health care personnel is needed.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 532 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560

DPT 601L Musculoskeletal Rehab I Lab (0 credits)**DPT 602 Musculoskeletal Rehab II (4 credits)**

This is the second course within a two-course sequence. This course will introduce the student to physical therapy examination and intervention for musculoskeletal dysfunction of the upper quarter from disease, disuse, trauma, surgery, and the aging process. The course will use musculoskeletal conditions with primarily inflammatory, degenerative, traumatic, and post-surgical etiologies as the basis for formulating a fundamental musculoskeletal exam and treatment plan. Students will develop skills and decision making to recognize when physical therapy is indicated, contraindicated, and when a referral to other health care personnel is needed.

Prerequisites: (DPT 551 and (DPT 561 and (DPT 571 and (DPT 581 and (DPT 601 and (DPT 611

DPT 602L Musculoskeletal Rehab II Lab (0 credits)**DPT 611 Cardiovascular Rehabilitation (2 credits)**

This course will examine the impact of cardiovascular diseases on the movement system. Students will develop clinical skills inclusive of decision making for the physical therapy management of those with primary and secondary cardiovascular disorders across the lifespan in order to optimize movement, promote health and wellness, to mitigate the progression of impairments, and to prevent the development of, or the progression of, disability.

Prerequisites: (DPT 502 and (DPT 512 and (DPT 522 and (DPT 532 and (DPT 542 and (DPT 550 and (DPT 560

DPT 611L Cardiovascular Rehab Lab (0 credits)**DPT 612 Pulmonary Rehabilitation (2 credits)**

This course will examine the impact of pulmonary diseases on the movement system. Students will develop skills and decision making for the physical therapy management of those with primary and secondary pulmonary disorders across the lifespan in order to optimize movement, promote health and wellness, to mitigate the progression of impairments, and to prevent the development of, or the progression of, disability.

Prerequisites: (DPT 551 and (DPT 561 and (DPT 601 and (DPT 611 and (DPT 571 and (DPT 581

DPT 612L Pulmonary Rehabilitation Lab (0 credits)**DPT 620 Leadership (2 credits)**

This course will explore the concept of leadership and the traits, values, and actions of effective leaders. Students will analyze the implementation and effectiveness of different leadership styles and management principles within the context of current health care systems, practices, and other professional arenas. Students will formulate a plan for their own continued professional growth as they create a portfolio of evidence of leadership activities.

Prerequisites: (DPT 673

DPT 621 Neurorehabilitation I (4 credits)

This is the first course within a two-course series which focus on identifying and performing optimal examination and treatment techniques with individuals with neuromuscular dysfunction using valid and reliable outcome measures to comprehensively understand the impact of deficits on all levels of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health model. Students will begin to develop clinical decision making skills utilizing evidence based practice to manage individuals with neuromuscular pathology from the start of care and through the continuum of care. Students will begin to develop competence in performing examination and treatment of individuals with neurologic dysfunction across the lifespan with a focus on those with acquired brain injury.

Prerequisites: (DPT 551 and (DPT 561 and (DPT 571 and (DPT 581 and (DPT 601 and (DPT 611

DPT 621L Neurorehabilitation I Lab (0 credits)**DPT 622 Neurorehabilitation II (5 credits)**

This is the second course within a two-course sequence which focuses on the human movement system and the development of proficiency in the examination and treatment of individuals with neuromuscular dysfunction using valid and reliable outcome measures to comprehensively understand the impact of deficits on all levels of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health model. In this course students will develop clinical decision making skills utilizing evidence based practice to manage individuals with neuromuscular pathology from the start of care and through the continuum of care with attention to contextual, personal, environmental factors, and psychosocial issues surrounding patients and their support system. Students will develop competence in performing examination and treatment of individuals with neurologic dysfunction across the lifespan with a focus on those with acquired and progressive conditions.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 622L Neurorehabilitation II Lab (0 credits)**DPT 631 Clinical Practice IV (1 credit)**

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this fourth course of the series will focus on clinical reasoning and focused exam procedures.

Prerequisites: (DPT 551 and (DPT 561 and (DPT 571 and (DPT 581 and (DPT 601 and (DPT 611

DPT 632 Clinical Practice V (2 credits)

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this fifth course of the series will focus on billing and financial considerations as well as interprofessional education.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 632L Clinical Practice V Lab (0 credits)**DPT 633 Clinical Practice VI (1 credit)**

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this sixth course of the series will focus on mentorship and peer teaching.

Prerequisites: (DPT 622 and (DPT 641 and (DPT 661 and (DPT 671 and (DPT 681 and (DPT 651

DPT 634 Clinical Practice VII (1 credit)

The Clinical Practice course series gives students a variety of exposures to clinical situations and experiences to integrate classroom learning with real and simulated patient encounters from the first- through the third-professional year. These encounters are designed in stepwise fashion to guide the development of interpersonal, communication, and decision-making skills while affording the student an opportunity to practice select clinical skills. Didactic sessions in this seventh and final course of the series will focus on coordination of care and complex decision making.

Prerequisites: (DPT 652 and (DPT 672

DPT 641 Integumentary PT (3 credits)

This course will examine the impact of the integument and its related disorders on the movement system. Students will develop skills and decision making for the physical therapy management of those with primary and secondary integumentary disorders in order to optimize movement, promote health and wellness, to mitigate the progression of impairments, and to prevent the development of, or the progression of, disability.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 650 Research III (1 credit)

The student will participate in the development and implementation of a research related capstone project. The student will gain insights into working with peers while engaging in faculty mentored capstone project. This capstone practicum is intended to provide a learning opportunity for the student(s) to integrate didactic knowledge and clinical experience into critical inquiry related to administration, clinical practice, research or teaching.

Prerequisites: (DPT 551 and (DPT 561 and (DPT 571 and (DPT 581 and (DPT 601 and (DPT 611

DPT 651 Research IV (1 credit)

The student will continue to implement and progress in a research related capstone project while engaging with peers and faculty mentors. The capstone project provides opportunity for students to integrate their didactic and experiential education into a capstone project within the context of administration, clinical practice, research or teaching.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 652 Research V (1 credit)

This course is the final research related capstone course in the DPT curriculum, which provides opportunity for students to integrate their didactic and experiential education into a capstone critical inquiry project within the context of administration, clinical practice, research or teaching. The students complete the capstone critical inquiry process by developing several avenues of disseminating project results and analyses.

Prerequisites: (DPT 622 and (DPT 641 and (DPT 661 and (DPT 671 and (DPT 681 and (DPT 651

DPT 661 Acute Care PT (2 credits)

In this course students will further develop clinical decision-making skills for the management of a person in the acute care setting across the lifespan. Students will develop and refine technical and professional behavior skills for the physical therapy management of patients in the acute care setting. This course will focus on diagnoses commonly seen, as well as contraindications and precautions needed to competently evaluate and treat in this setting. Students will be able to interpret commonly used diagnostic tools including radiology, lab values, vital sign response, and medications to modify their physical therapy interventions. Students will learn to work collaboratively with the interprofessional team to communicate patient needs and determine appropriate discharge disposition.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 671 Rehab across the lifespan (2 credits)

This course is designed to provide the student with an understanding of the biological, pathological, psychological and social aspects of development and aging from birth through end of life. Examination and intervention techniques will be presented focusing on the overall management of pediatric and geriatric patients/clients. Discussion will emphasize the use of current literature to promote evidence-based practice.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 671L Rehab Across the Life Lab (0 credits)**DPT 672 Integrative Management I (2 credits)**

This is the first of two case-based courses designed to give students the skills to make advanced clinical decisions, identifying needs across multiple body systems and integrating these with the resources and challenges patients encounter in the healthcare system and within their own social support systems. In this first course, students will draw and expand on their knowledge of select pediatric conditions to create comprehensive treatment plans that are relevant to settings across the continuum of care. Lab sessions will give students practice adapting evidence-based exam and intervention skills to younger populations.

Prerequisites: (DPT 622 and (DPT 641 and (DPT 661 and (DPT 671 and (DPT 681 and (DPT 651

DPT 673 Integrative Management II (3 credits)

This is the second of two case-based courses designed to give students the skills to make advanced clinical decisions, identifying needs across multiple body systems and integrating these with the resources and challenges patients encounter in the healthcare system and within their own social support systems. In this second course, students will draw and expand on their knowledge of select geriatric conditions to create comprehensive treatment plans that are relevant to settings across the continuum of care. Lab sessions will give students practice adapting evidence-based exam and intervention skills to older populations.

Prerequisites: (DPT 652 and (DPT 672

DPT 681 Medical Management II (2 credits)

Medical Management II is the second of a two-course sequence that will present an overview of the pathophysiology of disorders frequently encountered by physical therapists, particularly those affecting the gastrointestinal, integumentary, and neuromuscular systems, as well as other major clinical medicine disorders such as infectious disease. Disease processes across the life span are presented. Basic pharmacological intervention is discussed. The course will emphasize the relationships of pathological processes to patient symptoms and function throughout the lifespan.

Prerequisites: (DPT 602 and (DPT 612 and (DPT 621 and (DPT 650

DPT 690 Clinical Educa. Experience I (12 credits)

This course is the first full-time clinical education experience occurring under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist. The purpose of this experience is to practice technical and professional behavior skills, and develop efficiency in the areas of patient examination, evaluation, clinical reasoning, goal setting, program planning, and intervention implementation. Through interactions with patients and other healthcare disciplines, students will have the opportunity to integrate academic coursework into this patient setting. This rotation may be completed in an acute care hospital, post-acute rehabilitation unit, outpatient center, early intervention/school setting, home care, specialty care, or combination of above.

Prerequisites: (DPT 622 and (DPT 641 and (DPT 651 and (DPT 661 and (DPT 671 and (DPT 681

DPT 691 Clinical Educ. Experience II (12 credits)

This course is the first of two terminal full-time clinical education experiences occurring under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist. The purpose of this experience is to refine professional behavior, as well as skill and efficiency in the areas of patient examination, evaluation, goal setting, program planning, intervention implementation, and clinical decision-making in a setting that will meet the educational needs of each student individually. Through interactions with patients and other healthcare disciplines, students will have the opportunity to integrate academic coursework into a variety of patient settings. This rotation may be completed in an acute care hospital, post-acute rehabilitation unit, skilled nursing facility, outpatient center, early intervention/school setting, home care, specialty care, or a combination of above.

Prerequisites: (DPT 652 and (DPT 672

DPT 692 Clinical Educ. Experience III (12 credits)

This course is the second of two terminal full-time clinical education experiences occurring under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist. The purpose of this experience is to promote professional behavior, as well as independence and proficiency in the areas of patient examination, evaluation, goal setting, program planning, intervention implementation, and clinical decision-making in a setting that will meet the educational needs of each student individually. Through interactions with patients and other healthcare disciplines, students will have the opportunity to integrate academic coursework into a variety of patient settings. This rotation may be completed in an acute care hospital, post-acute rehabilitation unit, skilled nursing facility, outpatient center, early intervention/school setting, home care, specialty care, or a combination of above.

Prerequisites: (DPT 673