

LOUISIANA COLLEGE PTA PROGRAM ADMISSIONS POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

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 their chosen career as a physical therapist.

Admission to Louisiana College does not constitute admission to the PTA program's technical education courses. PTA utilizes the following policies and procedures to select candidates for the technical phase of the program. The Louisiana College PTA program selects a maximum of 20 students each year to enroll in the **technical education component** of the program.

The selection process occurs in the two phases described below:

Phase 1:

Phase 1 involves the timely submission of an application packet that is complete and accurate.

Applications may be downloaded from the program's website at

<https://lacollege.edu/academics/undergraduate-programs/school-of-nursing-and-allied-health/program-information/>

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 through completion of the application packet:

- **Successful academic record as evidence by a minimum GPA of 2.5 in all college coursework pursued and a grade "C" or better in all prerequisite courses at the time of submission of the application in February.** The courses Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with laboratories (BI 231-234) must be taken within 5 years of applying to the technical portion of the program. **The average GPA in all science courses completed at the time of application will be factored into the overall application score as well.** Applicants must also submit official transcripts from each college/university attended. **Although a minimum cumulative GPA is required for applicants to be considered for admission, a cumulative GPA greater than the minimum required will garner more points on the applicant's Selection Rating Form, thereby increasing potential for acceptance to the technical phase of the program.**
- **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 the competitive nature of the application process, hours over the minimum required will garner more points on the applicant's Selection Rating Form.* Hours may be paid or voluntary and must be completed prior to submission of the application process and documented on **Documentation of Observation Forms** provided in the application packet.

- **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 procedures (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 who has a disability that qualifies under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and who desires modifications or accommodations should contact the Director of the Student Success Center for information and guidance. The telephone number is 487-7629.”

All students admitted to the program will be offered the opportunity and encouraged to alert faculty to any diagnosed/documentated limitations which might impact their accessibility to and completion of the program. Students who identify or display 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 may encounter in the clinical work environment.

- **Personal characteristics necessary to meet the program goals** as evidenced by **Reference Evaluation Forms** completed by 3 non-family members.
- **Background Check and Drug Screening** – The Joint Commission, which accredits healthcare facilities across the country, enforced background screening beginning September 2004 which set requirements for students in 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 Louisiana. A background investigation and drug screening must be completed prior to acceptance into the Louisiana College Physical Therapist Assistant Program. Applicants are responsible for the payment of \$123 to cover the cost of their background investigation and drug screening which must be conducted by **CastleBranch®**. Instructions related to completion of the background check and drug screenings are provided on the program's application and a link to CastleBranch® is provided on the program's webpage at <https://portal.castlebranch.com/LQ23>
- An additional requirement for phase 1 of the program is a **mandatory advising meeting (in person or via telephone) with a program faculty member.**

The deadline for submission of application is scheduled for the second Monday of February each year. Applications are reviewed by program faculty to determine whether the applicant has met the minimum requirements for cumulative GPA and hours of observational experience in 2 physical therapy settings, passed the background check and drug screening, and engaged in an advising meeting with program faculty. Those applicants who have met requirements for phase 1 are allowed to progress to phase 2. A Selection Rating Form is initiated for those applicants allowed to progress to phase 2. The Selection Rating Form is used by faculty to rank the applicants and identify the top 20 applicants who will be invited to enroll in the program. The Selection Rating Form can be found on the program website at <https://lacollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Selection-Rating-Form-Updated-2021-2022.pdf>

During **phase 2**, applicants who successfully progress through phase 1 of the admissions process are interviewed by program faculty in early March. An interview score for each applicant is determined using the program's **Admission Interview Rubric**. A copy of the rubric can be downloaded from the program's website at <https://lacollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/interview-rubric-updated-2020.pdf>

Application scores of qualified applicants determined during phase 2 are utilized to rank the qualified applicants in order to select the strongest candidates for the program. Applicants with the top 20 applicant scores are selected to enroll in the technical portion of the program. Some applicants selected for admission are accepted to the program provisionally if he/she is enrolled in prerequisite courses in the Spring semester. Full acceptance to the program is contingent on completion of those prerequisite courses with a grade of "C" or better. Individuals with the 21st and 22nd highest scores are listed as alternates to the program and will be invited to enroll in the program should any of the applicants in the top 20 who are provisionally accepted fail to meet the minimum academic requirements during the Spring semester prior to matriculation into the program.

All applicants are notified in writing of program faculty's decisions within 2 weeks of the interview process. Applicants not accepted into the program are provided an opportunity to meet with a member of the program faculty for advice on ways to improve their potential for admission in the future.

Anyone with questions concerning the admissions process should contact the program faculty at (318)487-7162 or the Program Director at shaina.goudeau@lacollege.edu

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

Physical Therapist Assistant Program 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 CAPABILITIES

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 elicit 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 patient 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 a 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; to identify cause/effect relationships; to apply reading, lecture and laboratory information to case study preparation, to employ effective teaching, learning and test taking strategies.
- B. Be able to collect, interpret, remember, and utilize data regarding patients in order to appropriately and safely make decisions in the clinical environment.
- C. Adjust the patient's daily treatment within his/her plan of care when necessary and report necessary changes to the supervising therapist.
- D. Follow directions accurately and efficiently, seeking clarification when necessary.

- E. Speak and express clearly in English all information to peers, faculty, patients, their families and other health care providers; to explain conditions and procedures and teach home programs.
- F. Comprehend information and exercise sound judgment in the classroom and clinic.
- G. Exercise appropriate interpersonal skills to work collaboratively; interact professionally, to establish a rapport with patients, colleagues and classmates; to resolve conflicts; with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds; maintain confidentiality in all interactions.

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 socio-economic 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. Cooperate as a team member; develop positive and effective relationships with faculty, clinicians, peers and patients.
- G. 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 deems 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 immunizations:
 - 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
 - Varicella Zoster titer
 - Tetanus (T-dap) within in last 10 years

- Hepatitis C titer (may be required upon individual clinical facility request)
- E. Maintenance of CPR certification throughout duration of program as evidenced by valid CPR card is required (**American Heart Association**).
- 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.
- H. ***Students should familiarize themselves with and commit to the “Principles for Academic Success in the PTA Program” outlined in Appendix A of this handbook. All students must be prepared to invest the time and effort required to progress successfully through the program as well as to pass the National Physical Therapy Examination required for licensure. Prior to enrollment in the program, it is imperative that each student ensure that she or he has the necessary resources (e.g. time, family/friends, transportation, and finances) available in order to meet the requirements 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 non-graduates 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:

“A student who has a disability that qualifies under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and who desires modifications or accommodations should contact the Director of the Student Success Center for information and guidance. The telephone number is 487-7629.”

All students admitted to the program will be offered the opportunity and encouraged to alert faculty to any diagnosed/documented limitations which might impact their accessibility and completion of program. Any student who identifies or displays limitations with any of the program’s required skills listed above, should work with PTA faculty to determine realistic and acceptable accommodations or ways to compensate, so that the student has 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.

(See Appendix B: Request for Accommodations)