Physical Therapy
Pre-Professional Advising
907-474-6396

Physical therapists are dedicated to the promotion of health and the prevention of disease. Specifically, they provide assessment, evaluation and rehabilitation of the muscular, skeletal and nervous systems after injury or disease. Physical therapists work in hospital rehabilitation units, in private rehabilitation practices, and in orthopedic and sports medicine clinics. Many also serve as administrators, researchers and educators.

Physical therapy education typically consists of a two-year program leading to a certificate, a bachelor’s or a master’s degree. The current trend across the nation is toward the master’s, which requires completion of a bachelor’s degree before admission. As in most health care professions, the first half of physical therapy training consists of classroom instruction and the second half emphasizes clinical practice. After completion of programs accredited by the American Physical Therapy Program, students are eligible to test for licensure in all 50 states.

Acceptance to physical therapy programs is very competitive and is based on overall academic performance (most require a minimum 3.0 GPA), achievement in foundational sciences, and work experience in health care. Graduate programs usually require the Graduate Record Examination. UAF does not prescribe a specific pre-physical therapy major, but offers a complete series of courses required for admission to most graduate programs. These include general biology (BIOL F115X, F116X), general chemistry (CHEM F105X, F106X), physics (PHYS F103X, F104X), anatomy and physiology (BIOL F111X and F112X), and statistics (STAT F200X). Careful planning is necessary, as course requirements differ among schools.

Students considering a career in physical therapy should contact the Academic Advising Center. An academic advisor will help plan a program of study and explore professional schools and licensing requirements. See www.uaf.edu/advising/degree/preprof/physicaltherapy.html for more information.