

FREED-HARDEMAN UNIVERSITY



PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

Fall 2025 Application Cycle

Graduation from a physical therapist education program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030. Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; phone: 703-706-3245; accreditation@apta.org is necessary for eligibility to sit for the licensure examination, which is required in all states.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Freed-Hardeman University is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030. Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; phone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <https://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 731.989.6097 or email aprentice@fhu.edu.

Dear PTA Program Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in Freed-Hardeman University's Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program. Included in this packet you will find information regarding the PTA program and the physical therapy profession. Please read this document carefully for the program's admission requirements and supporting documents.

FHU's PTA program matriculates a new cohort each August. Following the 3 semesters of the technical phase of the program, graduation will occur in December of the year following matriculation into the program (i.e., if you are accepted for August 2025, you will be on track to graduate in December 2026). Successful completion of the program will lead to an Associates of Applied Science degree in Physical Therapist Assistant. Graduates of the program will be qualified to sit for the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE), which is required for licensure in all 50 states.

PTA applications will open on December 1, 2024, for the August 2025 cohort. The application deadline is March 31, 2025. The PTA Program accepts a maximum of 18 students each application cycle. Complete applications received after the application deadline will be considered by the admissions committee as space is available. It is the responsibility of the student to see that all application materials have been received. Failure to submit application materials in a timely manner may impact a student's eligibility to be accepted into the PTA program.

Effective November 2023, the Freed-Hardeman University PTA program has been granted accreditation status by the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), which allows students the ability to sit for the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) upon graduation. A student must obtain licensure in order to practice physical therapy in a healthcare setting.

We hope that this information packet will provide you with the adequate information needed to help guide your decision in applying for the PTA program. If any further questions arise, we are happy to address any concerns you have. Please send an email (aprentice@fhu.edu) once you have uploaded your online application so that we may contact you regarding next steps in the process. We look forward to getting to know you and working with you on your journey to becoming a physical therapist assistant.

With best regards,

Ashley M. Prentice, PT, DPT, M.Ed.
Program Director

Brian Vaughn, PT, M.Ed.
Director of Clinical Education

PTA Job Description: The physical therapist assistant (PTA) is a licensed clinician who works under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist to apply interventions designed to restore optimal function of those individuals impaired by disease or injury. Common interventions include therapeutic exercise, patient education, physical agents, and functional training. Becoming a PTA does not increase the likelihood of transition to becoming a physical therapist (PT) or enrolling in a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program.

Program Sequence: Freed-Hardeman University's PTA Program follows a "1+1" curriculum plan resulting in an Associate of Applied Science degree. Prerequisite and general education coursework must be completed in their entirety prior to beginning the technical core of the PTA program. Students will be required to complete both didactic and clinical education coursework once in the technical phase of the program.

Admissions Process: Admission into Freed-Hardeman University's PTA program is selective and competitive. The maximum cohort size is 18 students admitted annually. Minimum required college GPA for admission into the program is 2.8 in both science and non-science prerequisite courses. A cumulative GPA of 3.2 or higher is considered competitive.

Students must have a grade of "C" or higher in prerequisite coursework for admission. A course may only be re-taken once (for a total of 2 times) to count towards the application; an average of the two scores will be taken (ex: if a C is made the first time, and an A the second time, the student will be scored as having received a "B"). Students must have completed 12 of the 16 hours of prerequisite coursework at the time of application; Human Anatomy and Physiology I must constitute 4 of the 12 hours.

All applications will be reviewed and entered into an Admissions Criteria Checklist and ranked according to the points accumulated. Admissions interviews will be by invitation only. Invitations to interview with the admissions committee will be sent out via email. A waitlist will be formed if/once the cohort of 18 is filled, and the top 5 individuals on the waitlist will be offered admission to the cohort once matriculation occurs.

Location: All PTA didactic coursework will be offered in-person at Freed-Hardeman University's main campus in Henderson, TN. University housing will be offered to students accepted to the PTA program. Clinical placements will be offered across the United States within NC-SARA participating states (nc-sara.org); it is not guaranteed that a student will receive clinical placement in their state of residence. Students will be responsible for their own transportation and housing while on clinical education experiences.

PTA 2.5-YEAR PLAN

The PTA curriculum is highly structured; therefore, the sequencing of courses may not be modified for any reason. It is understood that some individuals may have taken coursework several years prior to application. Applicants will be required to submit all post-secondary transcripts for review. Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with lab must be taken within 5 years of application since these are two of the most fundamental courses leading to the knowledge expanded upon in the PTA program.

Please Note: A minimum of 12 hours of prerequisite coursework must be completed and reported on official transcripts before an application for admission will be considered, which includes Human Anatomy & Physiology I as one of the required completed courses. All prerequisite courses must be completed prior to the start of the technical phase of the program with a grade of "C" or higher and a cumulative GPA of 2.8 or above. If a student is transferring credits into Freed-Hardeman, transcripts must be sent to the Freed-Hardeman Registrar's Office at least one week prior to the start of the program for evaluation and confirmation of successful completion.

Prerequisite Courses:

BIO211: Human Anatomy and Physiology I*

BIO212: Human Anatomy and Physiology II*

BIO115: Medical Terminology

MAT101: College Algebra (or higher)

PSY210: General Psychology

*Must have been taken within the last 5 years or currently enrolled.

3-Year Plan of Study

Fall: Semester I, General Education/Cognates	Semester credits	Lecture/Lab/OTJ
BIB121: Life of Christ	2 hrs	2/0/0
ENG101: English Composition I	3 hrs	3/0/0
BIO211: Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4 hrs	3/1/0
PSY210: General Psychology	3 hrs	3/0/0
COM140: Speech Communications	3 hrs	3/0/0
Elective hours for non-residential students	<u>2 hrs</u>	
	15-17 hrs	

Spring: Semester II, General Education/Cognates	Semester credits	Lecture/Lab/OTJ
BIB122: Acts of the Apostles	2 hrs	2/0/0
ENG102: English Composition II	3 hrs	3/0/0
BIO212: Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4 hrs	3/1/0
BIO115: Medical Terminology	2 hrs	2/0/0
MAT101: College Algebra (or higher)	3 hrs	3/0/0
HIS Gen Ed	<u>3 hrs</u>	3/0/0
	17 hrs	

Fall: Semester III, PTA Core	Semester credits	Lecture/Lab/OTJ
PTA101: Introduction to PT Concepts	2 hrs	2/0/0
PTA102: Pathophysiology for the PTA	3 hrs	3/0/0
PTA103: PTA Procedures	4 hrs	2/2/0
PTA104: Clinical Anatomy and Kinesiology	3 hrs	2/1/0
PTA105: Therapeutic Exercise	4 hrs	2/2/0
Approved BIB Course for residential students	<u>2 hrs</u>	
	18 hrs	

Spring: Semester IV, PTA Core	Semester credits	Lecture/Lab/OTJ
PTA201: Musculoskeletal Conditions and Treatments for PTA	2 hrs	2/0/0
PTA202: Neurological Conditions and Treatments for PTA	4 hrs	2/2/0
PTA203: Physical Agents and Modalities	4 hrs	2/2/0
PTA204: PTA Ethics and Issues	2 hrs	2/0/0
PTA206: Integrated Clinical Education	<u>4 hrs</u>	0/0/4
	16 hrs	

Fall: Semester III, PTA Core	Semester credits	Lecture/Lab/OTJ
PTA205: Special Populations for the PTA	4 hrs	2/2/0
PTA207: Terminal Clinical Education I	5 hrs	0/0/5
PTA208: Terminal Clinical Education II	5 hrs	0/0/5
PTA209: PTA Seminar	<u>2 hrs</u>	2/0/0
	16 hrs	

Application Planning Checklist

- _____ Admission to Freed-Hardeman University
- _____ Minimum cumulative college GPA of 2.8
- _____ All Freed-Hardeman University general education requirements completed
- _____ PTA Prerequisite courses completed with a grade of “C” or higher (Must have 12 hours completed)—One course must not be taken more than 2 times.
 - _____ Anatomy and Physiology I
 - _____ Anatomy and Physiology II
 - _____ Medical Terminology
 - _____ General Psychology
 - _____ College Algebra (MAT101) or higher
- _____ Three Letters of Recommendation by non-family members
 - _____ Letter 1
 - _____ Letter 2
 - _____ Letter 3
- _____ Attendance of PTA Informational Session within 1 year of Application

Admissions Requirements/Application Information

Please read the following information carefully. The following criteria must be met for admission to Freed-Hardeman University's Physical Therapist Assistant program. Meeting these requirements **does not guarantee** acceptance into the program.

1. Acceptance into Freed-Hardeman University

Prior to completing the Freed-Hardeman University PTA Application Form, all applicants must first apply for admission to Freed-Hardeman University, submit all required admissions documents and transcripts, and be admitted to the university.

2. Complete Prerequisite Coursework

A minimum of 12 hours of prerequisite coursework must be completed and reported on official transcripts before an application for admission will be considered; Human Anatomy and Physiology I must constitute 4 of the 12 hours. It is understood that some individuals may have taken coursework several years prior to application. Applicants will be required to submit all post-secondary transcripts for review. Human Anatomy and Physiology I and II with lab must be taken within 5 years of admission to the program since these are two of the most fundamental courses leading to the knowledge expanded upon in the PTA program.

3. Letters of Recommendation (minimum of 3)

4. Attendance of a PTA information meeting within 1 year of application.

Transfer Students

Only prerequisite courses may be transferred for credit as part of the PTA application process. Due to the nature and sequencing of the technical PTA core, no PTA courses may be transferred to Freed-Hardeman University. It is highly recommended that all transcripts for transfer credit are submitted to the FHU Registrar before the application deadline.

Attend a PTA Information Session

The PTA faculty will host an informational session a minimum of two times each semester. Both in-person and virtual sessions will be held. All individuals applying to the PTA program must attend an informational session within the academic year of application.

After Acceptance and Prior to Enrollment:

- 1. CPR for Healthcare Provider:** You must present a valid CPR card for Healthcare Provider offered through the American Heart Association prior to the beginning of the program. Card must be valid for the duration of the program, including during the clinical education experience.
- 2. Health Clearance:** Applicants must present evidence of physical fitness and ability to perform tasks required of a physical therapist assistant. Physical exam and immunization records must be cleared and verified after acceptance into the program. Students are expected to be able to perform all the Technical Standards/Essential Functions throughout the program.
- 3. Criminal Background Check:** Clinical placements are a mandatory component of the curriculum and will require clearance of a criminal background check. Students who do not clear agency requirements are not eligible for clinical placement, and will, consequently, be ineligible to continue in the program.
- 4. Drug Screen:** A drug screen is required prior to beginning the program, prior to beginning the first clinical experience, and may be required prior to any clinical education experience depending on the clinical site requirements.
5. Finish any remaining pre-requisite coursework with a grade of “C” or higher.

If admitted to the program, failure to present the required documents described above by the deadline may result in reversal of acceptance or dismissal from the program.

Non-discriminatory Policy as to Students

Freed-Hardeman University admits qualified students of any race, age, sex, religion, disability, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Freed-Hardeman does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, religion, disability, race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Based upon this commitment, FHU follows the principle of non-discrimination and operates within applicable federal and state laws. As a recipient of federal financial assistance, FHU is required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended, not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its admission policies, treatment of students, employment practice or educational programs, except as required by religious tenets of the churches of Christ.

Essential Functions for Physical Therapist Assistant Students

There are several important factors for you to consider when you are determining your future career directions. To be successful in the PTA classroom and in your job following graduation, you should be able to meet all of the following expectations.

1. Attend class approximately 10-25 hours per week.
2. Complete all assignments on time.
3. Participate in classroom discussions.
4. Perform or instruct others in the following procedures (learned in class) in a timely manner:
 - a. Transfers
 - b. Gait Training
 - c. Physical agents
 - d. Activities of daily living
 - e. Therapeutic exercises or activities
 - f. Data collection procedures
5. Use sound judgment and safety precautions; exposure to bloodborne pathogens and/or infectious disease may occur as part of the educational experience. Students are trained in safety/infection control and are expected to follow these guidelines to avoid contracting or transmitting disease.
6. Meet class standards for successful course completion.
7. Use critical thinking when making decisions.
8. Follow standards stated in PTA Student Handbook and the PTA Program Clinical Education Handbook.
9. Address problems or questions to the appropriate person at the appropriate time.
10. Maintain classroom work area, equipment, supplies, personal appearance and hygiene conducive to professional setting as appropriate
11. Behave in a competent, professional manner

Physical Requirements for the PTA Program include the need to occasionally, frequently, or continually:

1. Sit 2-5 hours per day with lecture blocks up to 3 hours.
2. Stand 1-6 hours with lab time blocks up to 3 hours.
3. Lift up to 60 pounds
4. Push/Pull up to 50 pounds of force exerted at waist level
5. Squat or stoop
6. Use auditory, tactile, and visual senses to assess physiological status of an individual
7. Demonstrate good standing and unsupported sitting balance
8. Demonstrate good finger dexterity.
9. Coordinate verbal and manual instructions.
10. Communicate effectively with a variety of people through written and verbal methods
11. Use hands repetitively
12. Shift weight in standing or sitting

13. Use a firm grasp
14. Reach above shoulder level
15. Kneel, kneel-stand, and half-kneel
16. Use equipment that emits electrical, ultrasonic, and thermal energy
17. Physically move and transfer patients

Prior to matriculation into the program, students will be required to sign a form stating his or her ability to perform all essential functions.

Students who have concerns about the ability to perform any of these functions should contact the PTA Program Director at (731) 989-6097. Individuals with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations or information by calling (731) 989-6029.

Non-discriminatory Policy as to Students Freed-Hardeman University admits qualified students of any race, age, sex, religion, disability, color, national or ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. Freed-Hardeman does not discriminate on the basis of age, sex, religion, disability, race, color, national or ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs. Based upon this commitment, FHU follows the principle of non-discrimination and operates within applicable federal and state laws. As a recipient of federal financial assistance, FHU is required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, as amended, not to discriminate on the basis of sex in its admission policies, treatment of students, employment practice or educational programs, except as required by religious tenets of the churches of Christ.

**Freed-Hardeman University Physical Therapist Assistant Program
Essential Functions Verification**

The Essential Functions Student Signature Page **must** be completed before program entry.

___Yes ___No I have read and I understand the Essential Functions relative to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

___Yes ___No I am able to meet the Physical Requirements of the PTA Program as specified and do not require any reasonable accommodation to meet these requirements at this time.

___Yes ___No By signing this form, I understand that the program will share any pertinent information regarding my personal Essential Functions Verification with a clinical instructor.

I require the following reasonable accommodation(s) to meet the Physical Requirement standard as specified:

Printed Name of Student: _____

Signature of Student: _____

Date: _____

**Freed-Hardeman University Physical Therapist Assistant Program
Admissions Rubric**

Applicant Name: _____

Application Submission Date: _____

Application Score _____/45

1. Overall College GPA (based on Minimum GPA of 15 hours)

4.00-3.75	15	3.24-3.00	8
3.74-3.50	12	2.99-2.75	6
3.49-3.25	10	2.74-2.50	4

2. Prerequisite Coursework A=3 B=2 C=1

Anatomy and Physiology I	3	2	1
Anatomy and Physiology II	3	2	1
College Algebra or higher	3	2	1
General Psychology	3	2	1
Medical Terminology	3	2	1

3. All Prerequisite Coursework Taken on First Attempt Received A or B 2

4. Letters of Recommendation

Strongly recommended	4	Letter 1 _____
Recommend with Reservation	2	Letter 2 _____
Do not Recommend	0	Letter 3 _____

5. Previous Physical Therapy Work Experience (6 months or more) 1

**Freed-Hardeman University
Physical Therapist Assistant Program
Interview Score Sheet**

Applicant Name: _____

Application Submission Date: _____

Interview Score _____/20

****Score is to be the average of all interview committee scores/applicant**

Appearance/Hygiene

- Poor grooming or hygiene/carelessly dressed 0
- Appears clean, but too casual for interview 1
- Nice street attire, overall good hygiene 2
- Profession attire, good hygiene 3

Knowledge of Profession

Sample questions:

Describe the difference in function/role of the PT vs. PTA

Why do you want to work in the field of PT?

Why do you think you will be well suited for the role of a PTA?

- No familiarity with the field 0
- Vague familiarity with field 1
- Awareness of job skills, qualities, settings 2
- Understands difference, education, roles 3

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving

Sample questions:

What are your goals for the next 5 years?

What is a problem you have had to deal with recently? What did you learn?

- Appears to be unclear in thinking process, unsure 0
- Appears to have minimal reasoning/processing skills 1
- Shows organized thought process 2
- Has evidence of clear thinking and planning 3

Interpersonal Relationships

Sample questions:

What types of groups/organizations have you been involved with?

What role do you tend to play in social groups? (Leader, support, team player)

Who do you consider your mentor/role model?

What do you do for fun?

- Sees no benefit in social activities, “loner”, doesn’t like to work with others 0
- Willing to work with others, but uncomfortable 1
- Gives examples of participation in social activities, enjoys working on team 2
- Demonstrates strong understanding of interpersonal skills 3

Professional Ethics

Sample questions

How do you evaluate success?

What would you do if you knowingly saw someone in class cheating on an exam?

- Unethical behavior is ok if no repercussions 0
- Doesn’t like to cause drama, follows orders regardless of personal belief 1
- Refers to legal standards to define right v. wrong, respects authority 2
- Goes beyond minimum standard, strong personal values 3

Communication

- No eye contact, poor body language, poor grammar 0
- Answers not related to questions, rambling, poor eye/body language 1
- Average use of words, good eye contact, appropriate confidence 2
- Thoughtful responses, fluent, articulate 3

Promptness

- Student was not on time for interview 0
- Student was on time for interview 2

General Notes: