

# Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service PTCAS

## OVERVIEW

In an effort to simplify the application process for prospective physical therapist (PT) students and to facilitate the admissions process for professional PT educational programs, APTA will launch the Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS) on August 1, 2008. PTCAS will allow PT applicants to use a single Web-based application and one set of materials to apply to multiple PT programs. PTCAS is a service of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) and will be administered by Liaison International (LI), an education information technology company located in Watertown, Massachusetts.

Applicants who apply through PTCAS will submit a completed web-based application comprised of biographical data, colleges and universities attended, academic course history, physical therapy observation hours, list of reference providers, work experience, extracurricular activities, honors, professional licenses, and a personal essay. It is the applicant's responsibility to read and follow all PTCAS and program-specific instructions.

## ROLE OF PTCAS

The purpose of PTCAS is to facilitate the PT admissions process for applicants and programs, promote the physical therapist profession and educational programs to a broad spectrum of applicants, and provide rich applicant data for institutional, regional, and national analysis. PTCAS will not determine whether an applicant has met the PT program requirements or is eligible for admission.

## APPLICATION CYCLE

The 2008-09 PTCAS admissions cycle begins on August 1, 2008. Applicants may start and submit the PTCAS application as soon as it is available. The first regular application deadline date is October 1, 2008 and the last regular application deadline is June 1, 2009. The 2008-09 PTCAS application cycle will officially close on June 29, 2009, unless otherwise announced. [Northwestern University's will accept applications submitted to PTCAS by 10/15/08.](#)

## PROGRAM ELIGIBILITY

All professional physical therapist (PT) education programs recognized by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) have been invited to participate in the Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service (PTCAS). Because PTHMS is participating we are required by PTCAS to have all applicants to the professional (entry-level) PT program apply through the Service.

## PTCAS PROCESSING OVERVIEW

PTCAS will consider an application ready for transcript verification once the following items are received:

## Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service PTCAS

- Complete PTCAS application
- Official transcripts from every college and university attended
- Correct PTCAS application fee

PTCAS will also accept up to four (4) letters of reference, TOEFL scores, and foreign transcript evaluation reports, as required by participating PT programs. Northwestern University will require only 3 recommendations:

- One from an academic advisor or college professor
- One from a physical therapist, and
- One from an employer

### VERIFICATION

Once an application is deemed complete by PTCAS, the Service will verify the accuracy of the application materials, compare original transcripts to the self-reported course information on the application, calculate multiple types of GPAs, and submit the verified application file to the applicant's designated PT institutions. PTCAS processing may take up to five weeks once all required materials (application, transcripts, and fee) are received.

### FILES SHIPMENTS TO PT PROGRAMS

PTCAS will begin to forward verified applications to PT programs beginning in September 2008. PTCAS will ship newly completed and revised application files to programs on at least a weekly basis during the cycle. PT programs may contact applicants directly about their application within a few weeks after receiving the verified application from PTCAS or only after the PT program deadline has passed, depending on PT program policy. Northwestern University anticipates notifying applicants of their admission status by the end of December.

### ROLE OF PT PROGRAMS

PT programs will determine whether an applicant is eligible for admission and will notify applicants directly regarding all admission decisions. PT programs may not take all PTCAS application fields into consideration in the admission decision process. Admission policies and prerequisites vary significantly by program.

### SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

PT programs may also require applicants to send additional materials directly to the institution, known as supplemental materials. PT programs will not consider an applicant's file

Physical Therapist Centralized Application Service  
PTCAS

or offer acceptance until all required materials are received. Supplemental materials may include a graduate school applications, official GRE scores, signed PT observation forms, etc. Failure to submit all required PTCAS and supplemental materials by the program's deadline may jeopardize an applicant's eligibility for admission consideration. Northwestern University will require applicants to send official GRE scores to us.