Application Process and Instructions

Application to the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program is a separate process from application to St. Philip’s College. Applications for the PTA Program are accepted during the spring semester only (January 1 – March 31). Applications received outside this window (i.e., postmarked before January 1 or after March 31) will not be considered.

Applications are reviewed and processed at the end of the spring semester. Completion of the application criteria does not guarantee program selection or admission. Notification of selection/non-selection should occur by the end of June. The program admits one cohort of 26 students per academic year, and those students selected in the spring application period begin classes in the fall.

If any of the below instructions for program application are unclear, please attend an information session or contact the Selection Committee Chair, Ms. Kris Aguilar, via e-mail (preferred) at kaguilar19@alamo.edu or phone at (210) 486-2010 for clarification.

* * * Information Sessions * * *

If you need further assistance with or more information about the application process, please attend one of the program’s information sessions. These sessions are typically held on the first or second Tuesday of each month (except April, May, and December) from 5:00 to 6:30 PM in room 310 of the Center for Health Professions (building 8 on this campus map). The sessions contain the same information, so you do not need to attend more than one, nor do you need to make a reservation to hold a seat.

For exact dates for information sessions, please see the St. Philip’s College calendar, or contact Ms. Kris Aguilar via e-mail (preferred) at kaguilar19@alamo.edu or phone at (210) 486-2010.

* * * Recent Changes to Program Policies or Procedures, or to This Website * * *

In light of the COVID-19 situation, our application and selection processes have changed. For the latest information, please e-mail Ms. Kris Aguilar (kaguilar19@alamo.edu). You will receive an automated response with the most current information and can ask additional questions if necessary. – Posted 4/15/20

The application cycle is currently underway. Applicants, please watch your e-mail/spam folder for an e-mail from kaguilar19@alamo.edu with the subject “St. Philip’s College PTA Program Application.” This is your notification that the program has received your application. Please reply to this e-mail to ensure the program has the correct contact information for you. – Posted 1/31/20

Before applying to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program, applicants must first apply to and be accepted into St. Philip’s College (unless they have taken classes at an Alamo Colleges campus within the previous year). Begin with the ApplyTexas application, accessed via applytexas.org. Further information on applying to St. Philip’s College for future, former, and transfer students is available at: https://www.alamo.edu/spc/admissions/how-to-apply/
After applying to and being accepted into St. Philip’s College, the PTA Program application form and all other supporting documents, as detailed below, **MUST BE MAILED IN A SINGLE MAILING ENVELOPE to:**

St. Philip’s College Health Sciences Department  
Application for PTA Program – Attn: Kris Aguilar  
1801 Martin Luther King Drive  
San Antonio, TX  78203-2098

- Use of certified or registered mail with package tracking is strongly recommended.  
- Documents mailed separately from the application package will NOT be considered.  
- The program will not accept packages dropped off in person.

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**To comprise a full and complete application, the student must submit the following six (or seven, if the SAT/ACT test result is required) items in one mailing envelope:**

- Documentation of at least 40 hours of contemporary (within the past five years) physical therapy observation or work experience. Each student selects his/her own site for observation or work experience, but it must be in a physical therapy clinic/department and overseen by a physical therapist (PT) or physical therapist assistant (PTA). It must be documented on the [Applicant Observation or Employment Verification Form](#). Please note that use of white-out or correction tape, or other alterations to this form by the applicant will render it, and therefore the application package, invalid. If an error is noted, either re-do the form (preferred) or have the supervising PT or PTA line through and initial the change.

- Test results from the Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (**ATI TEAS**) examination, Allied Health version. This standardized examination is a multiple-choice test that helps identify students with the best chance of success in the health sciences field. It measures three basic, but important, education skill sets needed for a health science occupation—reading/English and language usage, math, and science. The objectives assessed on the ATI TEAS are those which health science educators deem most appropriate and relevant to measure entry-level skills and abilities of health science students.

  As the ATI TEAS is a new version of the test (replacing the old TEAS V), to fairly compare student scores all applicants must take this new version. (Note: This test has alternately been referred to as “TEAS Version 6,” “ATI TEAS,” and simply “TEAS.” If you follow the registration directions (click the “How to register” link on the college’s [TEAS website](#)) you will take the correct test. Again, please select the “Allied Health” version and not the “Nursing Students” or any other version.)

    - The PTA Program requires a **minimum score of 75** for the adjusted individual total score.
    - Please include printouts of your “Transcript” (shows date and time the test was taken and your total score) and “My Results” tab (gives an individual score for each portion of the test) pages in your application. There are examples of each in the [Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)](#) below.
• A completed **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Application Form**. Please type and print this document if possible. If you have more colleges attended or employers than there are spaces, please continue in the same format on a separate piece of paper. Please include your Banner ID if you have one. You do not need to include the “Notice to Program Applicants” page, but your signature on the application form itself attests that you have read and understand it.

• **ALL** official college transcripts. An official transcript is one printed on official paper from the registrar’s office and is in a sealed envelope. Students should request the transcript(s) be sent to their home address for inclusion in the application package with all other documents. **DO NOT OPEN** the transcript. The student must obtain all Alamo Colleges transcripts (if applicable) for inclusion in the application package – program faculty and staff are unable to access them for you.

• A self-prepared essay describing your reason(s) for choosing this profession and this program. The new required format is as follows:
  o double-spaced 11-point Calibri font,
  o at least one, but not more than two pages in length (not including title, if used),
  o one-inch margins,
  o printed on one side of the paper only, with the applicant’s name written on the back of each sheet – there must be no personal identifying information on the front page or within the text of the essay (e.g., your name, stating you are a physical therapy tech/aide at a specific clinic—nothing that will reveal to the evaluator who you are), as all essays are scored in the blind to preserve objectivity and impartiality.
  o It is strongly suggested that all applicants read the program’s Application Essay Scoring Rubric and **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** below to help avoid common errors for which points are deducted.

• A completed **Criminal History Statement** form acknowledging that:
  o you understand your right to request a criminal history evaluation;
  o you understand that applicants to the program with criminal convictions may not be eligible for licensure and are not eligible for full admission into the program until a declaratory order process is completed with the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners (ECPTOTE) as described in the Criminal History Statement form; and
  o you understand that if you have past criminal activity and do not complete a criminal history evaluation prior to application and the criminal background check completed before the course begins exposes criminal convictions that will render you ineligible for licensure, you will be dismissed from the program immediately.

• A college entrance examination score (SAT, ACT, etc.) **if you have not successfully completed 12 or more college hours.**
TEAS Test Information

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program provides the following information about the Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS) examination for informational purposes only. This information, including cost, deadlines, and so forth, is subject to change without notice. For the most current information about the ATI TEAS, please consult the ATI Testing website.

*** The program has done away with the requirement that applicants only attempt the ATI TEAS once every six months. You may now test as often as you wish. ***

- This test is required for ALL applicants regardless of educational status (e.g., new to college, graduate of a master’s program, already taken the GRE, etc.)
- There are only 40 seats available for each session at St. Philip’s College and nearly all Allied Health programs require this test for application, so test dates fill quickly! Typically, all available St. Philip’s College ATI TEAS test dates prior to the March 31 application deadline are filled by the first week in February. Please schedule your test as early as possible or you may have to take it at a less convenient location, if you are able to secure a date at all. The PTA Program will not extend the March 31 program application deadline.
- You also may test at any time of the year—you do not have to test during the January-March program application window. This will improve your chances of getting a test date, and it will also allow ample time for retesting, should you desire to do so.
- Please be aware that sites other than St. Philip’s College may administer the ATI TEAS in pencil and paper format. In these cases, the results will not be immediately available and may take up to two weeks to obtain. Again, the PTA Program will not extend the March 31 program application deadline.
- The cost of the examination is currently $102.00 if taken at St. Philip’s College. Costs at other sites may vary.
- Review materials are available from the TEAS Products Store if you wish to purchase them. They may also be available from your local public library or from online retailers. There are also some materials in the St. Philip’s College library. Tutoring is also available on campus.
- The dates for the examination are provided during the registration process. It may be taken at St. Philip’s College (in room 301 and/or 303 of the Center for Health Professions) or at a site more convenient to your location. Testing at St. Philip’s College is strongly advised, so the transcript can be easily and efficiently confirmed.
- The location for your test is one you select during the registration process and will be on the confirmation information e-mailed to you at the e-mail address associated with your account. Ensure you know to which testing center you must report.
- If you have trouble with the registration or payment process, do not receive a receipt for payment, or encounter any other issues, please contact Assessment Technologies Institute directly through the information provided via the “Contact” link at the top of their webpage.
Attachments Below:

1) **Application Checklist** – This is to assist you in correctly completing the application process. Do not include it in your application package.

2) **Applicant Observation or Employment Hours Verification Form** – Include in your application package.

3) **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Application Form** – Two pages. Read the “Notice to Program Applicants,” then fill out the application form. **Include only the application form in your application package.**

4) **Criminal History Statement** – include in your application package.

5) **Application Essay Scoring Rubric** – for your information only. Do not include the rubric in your application package.

6) **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** – for your information only.
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This page is for your assistance only. Keep it for your records. You do not need to submit it with your application.

☐ Did you check the program’s website to ensure you are applying at the proper time?
  • The application packet must be postmarked between January 1 and March 31 or it will not be considered. The deadline will NOT extend into April if March 31 falls on a weekend.

☐ Have you completed the “Apply Texas” application for admission to St. Philip’s College?
  • This is required if you have not taken classes at an Alamo Colleges campus within the past year.

☐ Did you include documentation of at least 40 hours of contemporary physical therapy work or observation experience under a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant?
  • Is it on the form from this program and not a form from another college?
  • Is the experience within the five years preceding January 1 of the year you are applying (e.g., January 1, 2015 if applying in the 2020 cycle)?
  • Is it free from white-out, erasures, or other alterations? If not, it must be redone or changes initialed by the PT/PTA.

☐ Did you include your score on the ATI TEAS examination?
  • Only include the score and transcript pages, not all the feedback and explanations. Minimum score is 75.

☐ Did you include the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Application Form?
  • Fill out the entire form legibly and completely. You must sign and date the form.

☐ Did you include ALL official transcripts?
  • Official transcripts from all colleges (including St. Philip’s College or other Alamo Colleges if applicable) attended are required. An official transcript is one printed on official paper from the Registrar’s office and in a sealed envelope.
  • Students should request the transcript(s) be sent to their home address. DO NOT OPEN THE TRANSCRIPT.

☐ Did you include an essay?
  • Does it describe your reasons for pursuing a career as a physical therapist assistant and for choosing our program?
  • Does it follow the formatting requirements as explained above and in the FAQs?

☐ Did you include the completed Criminal History Statement?
  • All applicants must complete and submit this form.

☐ Did you include your ACT/SAT scores, if required?
  • All applicants who have not successfully completed 12 college credit hours must include an ACT or SAT score.

☐ Have you included a criminal history evaluation, if required?
  • Applicants with criminal history concerns must complete an evaluation through ECPTOTE (as described on the Criminal History Statement form) and submit these documents with the application.

☐ Did you place all required documents in ONE sealed envelope addressed as below?
  • Documents mailed separately will NOT be considered. The application and required documents must be mailed to:

St. Philip’s College Health Sciences Department
Application for PTA Program – Attn: Kris Aguilar
1801 Martin Luther King Drive, San Antonio, TX 78203-2098
Applicant Observation or Employment Verification Form

OBSERVATION

Student Name: ____________________________________________

Facility: ____________________________ Phone Number: _______________________

Dates of Observation: ____________________________ Total # of hours: ____________ hours

EMPLOYMENT

Student Name: ____________________________________________

Facility: ____________________________ Phone Number: _______________________

Dates of Employment: ____________________________ Total # of hours: ____________ hours

Job Title: ____________________________________________

SIGNATURE VERIFYING EITHER OBSERVATION OR EMPLOYMENT:

Supervising Physical Therapist or Physical Therapist Assistant:

______________________________________________ PT/PTA  License Number ____________________
(Please Print Name) (circle one)
______________________________________________ Date ___________________________
(Signature)

Any changes to the information on this form must be lined through and initialed by the PT/PTA.
Please do not use correction tape, white-out, etc.
NOTICE TO PROGRAM APPLICANTS

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program makes every effort to provide a clear and understandable application process and to ensure each applicant has the necessary information for successful application completion. The applicant is responsible for reviewing the application requirements and selection criteria for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. These requirements and criteria are subject to change. Please visit the program’s website for detailed information about the Physical Therapist Assistant Program’s application and selection process.

Each applicant has equal opportunity to contact the program director prior to submitting his or her application. The program reserves the right to consider an applicant ineligible for program admission if he or she neglects any part of the stated requirements for application or selection. Fulfilling all application criteria does not guarantee acceptance into the program as cohort size is limited. Acceptance to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is subject to completion of a background check and drug screen.

Allied Health front office personnel are able to assist applicants with general application questions; however, it remains the responsibility of the applicant to follow all written instructions for application submission and selection criteria.

Alamo Colleges, St. Philip's College, the Allied Health Department and the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are not responsible for any applicant misinterpretation of the application or selection process. As evidence that you have read and understand this notice, you will be asked to confirm with your signature on the Physical Therapist Assistant Program application.
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM APPLICATION FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name: (Last, First, MI)</th>
<th>Banner ID # if current/former Alamo Colleges student:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Street Address</td>
<td>Apt #</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary Phone:</td>
<td>Alternate Phone:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Colleges/Universities Attended (continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary)</th>
<th>Degree Sought</th>
<th>Awarded? (Y/N)</th>
<th>Hours Completed</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employment History – Previous Employers (continue on a separate sheet of paper if necessary)</th>
<th>Job Titles</th>
<th>Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Are you eligible to work in the United States? Yes _____ No ____

Convicted of a felony? Yes _______ No _______ Convicted of a misdemeanor? Yes _______ No _______

Enrollment into the program by students with felony convictions could result in denial of licensure. These students would not be eligible for admission into the program until the state licensing board completes a declaratory order process and proof of eligibility for licensure or certification is provided in accordance with the procedures described in the Criminal History Statement.

Emergency Contact Number:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Relationship</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

I understand that for my application to be processed I must include the program’s observation/employment verification form, an ATI TEAS transcript (with a minimum Adjusted Individual Total Score of 75), an essay, ALL official transcripts (including any and all transcripts from each individual Alamo College attended), a Criminal History Statement, this application form and an ACT or SAT score (if required).

I understand that falsification of any information on this application will automatically disqualify me as an applicant for admission and will result in my being dropped from the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

I have read and understand the above Notice to Program Applicants.

__________________________________________  ______________________________
Applicant Signature                      Date
CRIMINAL HISTORY STATEMENT

Applicants and enrollees in certain educational programs could face consequences of any criminal conviction on eligibility for an occupational license. The law requires physical therapist assistants to obtain a license in order to practice in the United States, thus criminal convictions that would preclude licensure will exclude an applicant or enrollee from the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at St. Philip’s College. The program may admit applicants with criminal convictions after a declaratory order process is completed with the state’s licensing board. The applicant must provide proof of eligibility for licensure for consideration for admission into the program.

In accordance with the Texas Occupations Code, Title 2, Chapter 53, Subchapter E, Section 53.152, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at St. Philip’s College provides the following notice of:

(1) the potential ineligibility of an individual who has been convicted of an offense for issuance of an occupational license on completion of the educational program;

(2) the current guidelines issued under Texas Occupations Code, Title 2, Chapter 53, Subchapter B, Section 53.025 by any licensing authority that may issue an occupational license to an individual who completes the educational program;

(3) any other state or local restriction or guideline used by a licensing authority described by Subdivision (2) to determine the eligibility of an individual who has been convicted of an offense for an occupational license issued by the licensing authority; and

(4) the right to request a criminal history evaluation letter under Texas Occupations Code, Title 2, Chapter 53, Subchapter D, Section 53.102.

After reading the above, I understand that:

- my past criminal convictions may prevent me from admission to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

- per paragraph (4) above, I have the right to request a criminal history evaluation letter. [Students with concerns regarding past criminal convictions should request a criminal history evaluation through the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners (ECPTOTE). The ECPTOTE webpage is: https://www.ptot.texas.gov/page/home. Once on this webpage, click on the "Request a Criminal History Evaluation" link and follow the given directions.] I will submit this criminal history evaluation letter with my application.

- if I do not complete a criminal history evaluation prior to application and the criminal background check completed during the course exposes criminal convictions which will render me ineligible for licensure, I will be dismissed from the program immediately and forfeit all monies paid to St. Philip’s College.

I, the undersigned, have no criminal convictions that would render me ineligible for licensure, or I have completed and enclosed a criminal history evaluation from the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Examiners.

____________________________________   ________________________
Signature       Date
# PTA Program Application Essay Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria to be Assessed</th>
<th>3 Exceeds Expectations</th>
<th>2 Meets Expectations</th>
<th>1 Needs Improvement</th>
<th>0 Inadequate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Organization</td>
<td>Logically organized</td>
<td>Clear organizational structure with some digressions</td>
<td>Some level of organization, but frequent digressions</td>
<td>No apparent organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Flow of thought</td>
<td>Easily followed</td>
<td>Fairly easily followed</td>
<td>Difficult to follow</td>
<td>Very difficult to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Transitions</td>
<td>Effective, smooth, and logical transitions</td>
<td>Basic transitions</td>
<td>Ineffective transitions</td>
<td>No or poor transitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Format</td>
<td>Professional format</td>
<td>Structured format</td>
<td>Rambling format</td>
<td>No format</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grammar &amp; mechanics</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Syntax</td>
<td>Effectively uses complex sentences for effect/impact</td>
<td>Uses complex sentences</td>
<td>Uses compound sentences</td>
<td>Uses simple sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grammar</td>
<td>No grammar errors</td>
<td>Few grammar and/or mechanical errors</td>
<td>Several grammatical and/or mechanical errors</td>
<td>Too many grammatical and/or mechanical errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mechanics</td>
<td>No mechanical errors</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diction</td>
<td>Vocabulary is sophisticated and correct as are sentences which vary in structure and length</td>
<td>Vocabulary is varied, specific, and appropriate</td>
<td>Vocabulary is used properly although sentences may be simple</td>
<td>Vocabulary is unsophisticated and not used properly in very simple sentences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tone</td>
<td>Uses and manipulates subject-specific vocabulary for effect</td>
<td>Frequently uses subject-specific vocabulary correctly</td>
<td>Infrequently uses subject-specific vocabulary correctly</td>
<td>Uses subject-specific vocabulary too sparingly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diction</td>
<td>Writer’s tone is clear, consistent, and audience-appropriate</td>
<td>Writer’s tone is generally audience-appropriate</td>
<td>Writer’s tone exhibits some level of audience sensitivity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tone</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clarity of purpose</td>
<td>Central idea is well-developed and clarity of purpose is exhibited throughout the paper</td>
<td>Central idea and clarity of purpose are generally evident throughout the essay</td>
<td>The central idea is expressed, although it may be vague or too broad; some sense of purpose is maintained throughout the essay</td>
<td>Central idea and clarity of purpose are absent or incompletely expressed and maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Original thought</td>
<td>Abundance of evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight</td>
<td>Evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight</td>
<td>Some evidence of critical, careful thought and analysis and/or insight</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of critical, careful thought or analysis and/or insight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Use of examples</td>
<td>Evidence and examples are vivid and specific, while focus remains tight</td>
<td>There are good, relevant supporting examples and evidence</td>
<td>There are some examples and evidence, though general</td>
<td>There are too few or no examples and evidence, or they are mostly irrelevant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total score _________________  X  .833 = _____________________
PTA Program Application Essay Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RUBRIC POINTS</th>
<th>SCORE TOTAL*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>9.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>8.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>4.17</td>
</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>3.33</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2.50</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Each application committee member will score the essay according to the above rubric and assign one of the above 13 scores. The average (mean) of these scores, rounded to the hundredths position, will be the applicant’s essay score.
Frequently Asked Questions

How long is the program?

The program is approximately twenty months in length and spans two academic calendar years. Students who have been accepted into the program (notification is typically in June) begin PTA coursework in the fall semester and continue straight through five continuous semesters (with a break of a few weeks between semesters III and IV). Graduation is in May. (For example, if you are selected to begin courses in August of 2020, you will graduate in May of 2022.)

Are classes available during the evenings or on weekends or online?

Currently, all classes are offered only on weekdays between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, and must be attended in person. The program does not foresee offering evening, weekend, or online courses in the near future.

Can the program be completed on a part-time basis?

No. All PTA courses must be taken in sequence and can be taken only in the semester listed in the curriculum. Each semester is 8 to 16 semester hours (5 semester hours in the summer term), depending on whether the student has already completed all other general education/core requirement courses listed in the PTA curriculum. Those courses are:

- Human Anatomy & Physiology I,
- Human Anatomy & Physiology II,
- Composition I (or higher),
- College Algebra (or higher),
- General/Introduction to Psychology, and
- one additional course from the Humanities or Visual and Performing Arts core

What are the hours during clinical rotations?

The student will be at the clinical site for at least 40 hours per week during the clinical portion of the program. The specifics (start time, weekend hours, etc.) are left to the discretion of the clinical instructor and will comply with the rules of the clinic to which the student is assigned.

How much can I work while enrolled in the program?

It is strongly recommended that the student plan to work only minimally, if at all, while enrolled in the program. There is much new information to learn; therefore, a considerable amount of study time is required. Students will average 15 hours per week in the classroom, and should anticipate additional time for academic study and practice of learned skills. There are also outside assignments, such as service learning and attending professional organization meetings that will require additional time outside of normal classroom hours. Furthermore, the student will already be working a 40-hour, full-time schedule each week of clinical rotations.
What are the costs?

The approximate costs per semester include (based on 2019-20 tuition and fees):

- Tuition per Semester (averaged*) $891/$1,287
- Special Tuition Fees and other fees per semester $765
- Books per Semester (costs vary by source) $270
- Immunizations** $0-870
- CPR certification (cost varies by provider) $75
- Criminal Background Check $55
- Drug screening $35

Estimated total cost of program* $9,590/$11,670

* Costs shown are for in-district tuition. Out-of-district tuition is approximately 60% higher. The figures shown represent tuition with all required core courses completed/not completed.

** Immunization costs will vary, depending on healthcare provider, insurance coverage, and number of required vaccinations already completed (e.g., in the military or as required for public school entrance).

How is physical therapy different from occupational therapy?

There is some overlap of the two fields, yet distinctions remain. Physical therapy aids in recovery of injury or disease with a focus on restoring mobility, improving balance and strength, and decreasing pain. Physical therapy is likely to work on improving activities such as standing and walking. Physical therapists may recommend assistive devices such as walkers, canes or wheelchairs. Occupational therapy focuses on restoring functional ability to complete activities of daily living such as getting dressed, brushing teeth, toileting, and combing hair. Occupational therapists may recommend devices to assist with activities of daily living such as reachers and shoehorns. Occupational therapy and physical therapy often work closely together to help patients progress toward independence.

What is the difference between a physical therapist (PT) and physical therapist assistant (PTA)?

A PT is a healthcare professional who evaluates and treats people with health problems resulting from injury or disease. PTs assess joint motion, muscle strength and endurance, function of heart and lungs, and performance of activities required in daily living, among other responsibilities. The minimal education requirement is a college degree in physical therapy from an accredited program. Most schools offer the Doctorate in Physical Therapy, which takes 7-8 years to complete. In order to practice as a PT, licensure is required.

A PTA is a skilled health care provider who works under the supervision of a PT. Duties of the PTA include assisting the PT in implementing treatment programs, training patients in exercises and activities of daily living, conducting treatments, and reporting to the PT on the patient's responses. The PTA may also be responsible for clinic or equipment preparation and maintenance, ordering supplies and equipment, and scheduling. In some cases, PTAs assume educational or administrative roles, and may serve as clinic/department director. PTAs must complete a 2-year curriculum from an accredited school, typically at a community or junior college. In order to practice as a PTA, licensure is required.
How is the job market for PTAs? What can I expect as a starting salary?

The job market for PTs and PTAs is quite good in the San Antonio metropolitan area. The market in the rural areas of Texas seems to be great. The average entry-level pay in the San Antonio area for a program graduate is around $3,500 per month.

I am not sure I understand the application process. Am I applying to the PTA Program? To St. Philip’s College? Or both?

Application to the PTA Program is a separate process from applying to St. Philip’s College. Before applying to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program, applicants must first apply to and be accepted into St. Philip’s College if they have not taken classes at an Alamo Colleges campus within the previous year. Begin with the ApplyTexas application, accessed via applytexas.org. Further information on applying to St. Philip’s College for future, former, and transfer students is available at https://www.alamo.edu/spc/admissions/how-to-apply/

What is the deadline for applications?

Application packages containing all supporting documents must be postmarked by March 31 of each year for the cohort that will begin in the fall. For example, if you apply in March of 2020 and are selected, you will begin classes in August of 2020. Applications are only accepted during the spring semester each year – between January 1 and March 31. Applications postmarked before or after this window will not be considered.

Should I submit letters of recommendation with my application?

Letters of recommendation do not influence the selection process, as it is an exclusively points-based system. You may include letters if you wish to do so, but they will not influence your chance of selection.

Do I have to provide a transcript from St. Philip's College or any of the other Alamo Colleges with my application if I have taken all of my courses there?

Yes. The applicant must submit official transcripts from all colleges attended. The faculty of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are not permitted to obtain an applicant’s St. Philip’s College (or other Alamo Colleges) transcript—the applicant must provide it.

How can I improve my chances of earning acceptance into the program?

The selection process is based on the application package scores alone. No interviews are conducted, and letters of recommendation do not affect selection chances. With a maximum possible score of 133, the majority of the points available (75 percent) will come from the Assessment Technologies Institute's Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS) examination and the essay—100 points and 10 points respectively. This is where you should focus your efforts. The average selectee scores in the low to mid 80s on the ATI TEAS.
I got a “C” in English Composition I. Should I retake the class for a better grade?

The program will neither recommend students retake nor discourage students from retaking a course if they choose to do so. It is good to remember the scoring process is subject to change from year to year and the greatest amount of points are available from the Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS) examination and the essay. With that said, most selectees have all As and Bs in their general education courses.

I completed College Algebra 20 years ago. Do I need to retake it?

You do not need to repeat the course if St. Philip’s College accepts your coursework for credit. The program recommends completion of Anatomy and Physiology I and II within the last five years, however.

At the time of application, I am enrolled in Human Anatomy and Physiology II. Will I receive bonus points for my average in this course even though it is not on my official transcript yet?

No. Bonus points are only given for courses and grades that are documented on the official college transcripts.

What are you looking for in the essay? How can I improve my essay score?

We would like to see your reasons for wanting to pursue a career as a PTA and for choosing the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at St. Philip’s College. We will not be assessing these reasons, but it gives us an opportunity to learn something about our applicants, as we do not do interviews. Scoring is based on your technical accuracy and attention to detail. Points will be deducted for errors in format, grammar, punctuation and spelling. Remember, as a PTA you will be documenting the treatment you provide in official medical records and will need to do so precisely and succinctly.

To improve your essay score, ensure you eliminate all typographical and grammatical errors. For example, the program’s title is the Physical Therapist (not Therapy) Assistant Program, and the school to which you are applying is St. Philip’s (not St. Phillip’s) College. Both are capitalized. The job title is “physical therapist assistant” (not “physical therapy assistant” and not capitalized). Have a trusted friend, colleague, instructor, or staff member at the Rose R. Thomas Writing Center in the Sutton Learning Center (room 201) proofread your essay prior to submission. Also, please ensure you follow the formatting requirements (length, font, margins, etc.) as given on our website. Too-short or too-long essays are an automatic two-point deduction per the rubric. This does not include the title. Your best bet is to have a paragraph or two on the second page so there is no doubt your essay is the proper length.

What scores do I need to be selected?

We are unable to give a firm number that will guarantee admission into the program. Each year’s candidates score differently, thus the cutoff varies from year to year. The average Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS) examination and total package scores for the students selected to begin the program in 2019 were 83.13 and 113.77, respectively. The scores in 2018 were 85.75 and 116.53. For the class that began in 2017, those scores were 83.82 and 112.06. We expect future scores to drop a bit as the program has done away with awarding bonus points for completion of associate and bachelor’s degrees.
Why do I have to take the Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS)? What does that have to do with physical therapy?

The ATI TEAS and its predecessors have long given the Allied Health programs an objective means of predicting student success. In particular, we have many years of correlating data demonstrating that students who score lower on the TEAS, particularly in the reading comprehension portion, tend to struggle with the complex material presented in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

I am concerned that I may not score very high on the Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS). What can I do to increase my score?

You should complete the ATI TEAS examination well in advance of the March 31 deadline. Ideally, you will test in the summer of the year prior to which you wish to apply. This will enable you to more easily register for a date and allow ample time to retest should you wish to do so. In any case, do bear in mind that test dates and seats fill very quickly. It may be impossible to secure a test date at St. Philip’s if you wait too long, as nearly every program in Allied Health requires an ATI TEAS score from its applicants.

Study materials for the test are available from the ATI website itself (https://www.atitesting.com/ati_store/TEAS-Products.aspx), from various online retailers, or from the public library (http://sapl.sat.lib.tx.us/search/Y?SEARCH=teas). There are also limited copies of TEAS study guides in the St. Philip’s College library. If you do use a study guide, please ensure it is for the TEAS 6 or is copyrighted in 2016 or later to ensure you have the guide for the current version of the test. Tutoring is also available on campus.

Other helpful information regarding the TEAS:

- The science section has typically been 90% anatomy and physiology with 10% other items. This section is historically the most difficult for the majority of students and the one that has the largest negative impact on the overall score. If possible, the program recommends taking the TEAS at the end of the semester in which you are taking A&P so that the information is fresh in your mind.

- Math is the second most difficult section of the test for most students. There will be some basic calculations, order of operations, geometry, and algebra. Students will see word problems along with calculations and equations.

- If you require accommodations, be sure to see the Disability Office at least three weeks prior to your test date so that proper notification can be provided to the test administrator.

- Proper government-issued identification is required (e.g., driver’s license, military ID card or passport). The Alamo Colleges/St. Philip’s College ID badge is not an acceptable form of identification for this test.

- Arrive at least 30 minutes prior to the start of the test.

- Food and drinks are not allowed during testing.

The two TEAS 6 guides/review books that students have highly recommended in the past are:


What if I score less than the minimum 75 on the Assessment Technologies Institute’s Test of Essential Academic Skills (ATI TEAS)?

If you score less than a 75 (actually a 74.5 percent we will round to 75 percent) on the ATI TEAS, you may consider application to other programs in healthcare offered at St. Philip’s College, or you may decide to retest at the time of your choosing. Previous program policy mandated a wait of at least six months between ATI TEAS attempts. This requirement has been done away with and you may test as often as you wish.

What TEAS score sheets do I need to include?

Please include copies of your Transcript and your Individual Performance Profile. These documents will look similar to the samples below:
How can I facilitate the processing of my application?

If possible, type your student application form. Frequently it is difficult to read handwritten application forms. This is especially problematic with e-mail addresses (e.g., trying to discern if you wrote a capital “Z” or a number “2”). The program’s primary method of communicating with you is through the email you provide in your application.

Please do not staple any of the items together. If you feel you need to keep items together, please use paper clips. Also, do not include any unnecessary extra items. Placing all your documents neatly into page protectors or binders actually slows down the processing of your package, as the program has its own filing system and does not allow for inclusion of these items.

Also, remember to include kaguilar19@alamo.edu in your e-mail’s safe senders list. All your status notifications will come from this e-mail address. The first e-mail you will receive after submitting your application is an acknowledgement that the program has received your package. Please acknowledge receipt of this first e-mail to ensure we have good contact information for you.
Other suggestions?

Throughout the application and selection process, you will need to precisely follow written instructions, organize your time and materials, meet deadlines, and demonstrate initiative in obtaining information when questions arise. These are also skills and abilities required of a good physical therapist assistant. In that vein, we are also assessing your ability and willingness to accept and carry out these responsibilities as a part of the application process.