



# ALAMO COLLEGES DISTRICT

## St. Philip's College

The following are some frequently asked questions about the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program:

### 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. Graduation is in May. (For example, if you are selected to begin courses in August of 2019, you will graduate in May of 2021.)

### 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. Furthermore, the student will already be working a 40-hour, full-time schedule each week of clinical rotations.

### What is the deadline for applications?

Application packages containing all supporting documents are due March 31 of each year for the cohort that will begin in the fall. For example, if you apply in March of 2019 and are selected, you will begin classes in August of 2019. 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.

### 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 is responsible for submitting 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 transcript—the applicant must provide it. The selection committee only reviews documents that are included in the application packet.

### What are the costs?

The approximate costs per semester include (based on 2018-19 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)	\$250
Immunizations**	\$0-870
CPR certification (cost varies by provider)	\$75
Criminal Background Check	\$55
Drug screening	\$35
=====	
<b>Estimated total cost of program*</b>	<b>\$10,225/\$12,555</b>

\* 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).

### 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.

### **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 ranges from \$2,800-\$3,500 per month.

### **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 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 138, the majority of the points available (nearly 80%) 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.

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

We would like to see your reasons for choosing to pursue a career as a PTA. 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 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. The job title is "physical therapist assistant" (not "physical therapy assistant" and not capitalized). Have a trusted friend, colleague, or instructor proofread your essay prior to submission. Also, please ensure you follow the formatting requirements (font, margins, etc.) as given on our website.

### **I got a "C" in English Composition I. Should I retake the class for a better grade?**

The program will neither recommend 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.

### **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.

### **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. Begin with the ApplyTexas application, accessed via [applytexas.org](https://www.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/>

### **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.

### **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 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](mailto: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.

### **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 2018 were 85.75 and 116.53, respectively. For the class that began in 2017, those scores were 83.82 and 112.06.

### **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.

### **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 schedule the ATI TEAS test well in advance of the March 31 deadline. Study materials for the test are available from the ATI website itself ([https://www.atitesting.com/ati\\_store/TEAS-Products.aspx](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.

In any case, do bear in mind that test dates and seats fill very quickly. It may be impossible to secure a test date locally if you wait too long, as nearly every program in Allied Health requires an ATI TEAS score from its applicants.

**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 on the ATI TEAS, you may consider application to other programs in healthcare offered at St. Philip's College or you may choose 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 Individual Performance Profile and your Transcript. These documents will look similar to the samples below:

# Individual Performance Profile

## ATI TEAS



Individual Name:	JOHN DOE	Test Date:	12/6/2017
Institution:	St Philips College ALLIED HEALTH	Attempt:	2 of 2
Program Type:	Allied Health	Days Since Last Attempt:	981
Student Number:	900719883		

### Scores

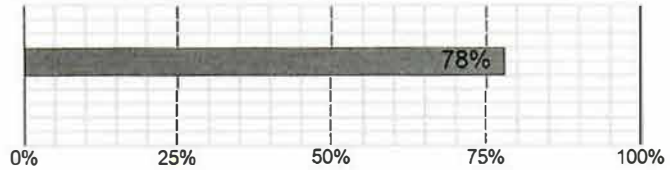
#### Total Score:

75.3%

Academic Preparedness Level: **Proficient**

National Mean: 65.6%

Percentile Rank: % of students who scored at or below your score



#### Reading Score:

80.9%

#### Math Score:

96.9%

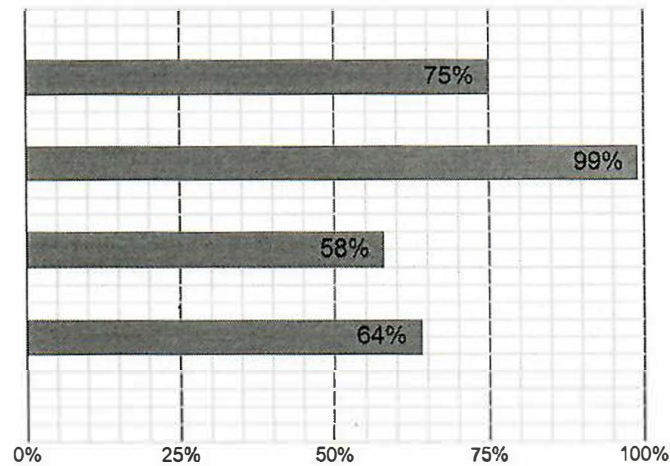
#### Science Score:

57.4%

#### English and Language Usage Score:

70.8%

Percentile Rank: % of students who scored at or below your score



**National**

Content areas do not add up to the total score

### Topics To Review

#### Reading (47 items)

##### Key Ideas and Details (22 items, 77.3% answered correctly)

- Follow a given set of directions. (ATI TEAS Study Manual R.1.4)
- Follow a given set of directions. (ATI TEAS Study Manual R.1.4)
- Recognize events in a sequence. (ATI TEAS Study Manual R.1.7)
- Recognize events in a sequence. (ATI TEAS Study Manual R.1.7)



# Transcript for John Doe

Institution: St Philips College ALLIED HEALTH

Program Type: Allied Health

## Proctored Assessment

Assessment Name	Date/Time	Individual Score	Proficiency Level	Individual Mean		Individual PR		Total Focused Review Time	Individual Score										
				National	Program	National	Program		0	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	99
ATI TEAS	12/6/2017 1:12:00 PM	75.3%	Proficient	65.6%			78	N/A	▲										
Test of Essential Academic Skills V for Allied Health	3/31/2015 1:08:00 PM	75.3%	N/A					N/A	▲										

## Practice Assessment

Assessment Name	Date/Time	Individual Score	Practice Time	Total Focused Review Time	Individual Score										
					1	10	20	30	40	50	60	70	80	90	99

## Continuing Education Credits - Earned as of 3/29/2018

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> - Course Completed and Completed Date	<input type="checkbox"/> - Course Not Completed and Due Date	
		Total Contact Hours Earned ▶

## Tutorials - Earned as of 3/29/2018

NOTE: \* denotes custom assessment