Degree Benefits
The physical therapist assistant (PTA) is an educated health care provider who assists the physical therapist (PT) in the provision of physical therapy services. The PTA is a graduate of a physical therapist assistant Associate of Applied Science degree program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the American Physical therapy Association, located at 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-1488, 1-800-999-APTA.

PTAs provide physical therapy services under the supervision and direction of the PT. They assist with data collection; implement delegated patient interventions; make appropriate judgments; modify interventions within the PT’s established plan of care; participate in discharge planning and follow-up care; document the care provided; educate and interact with PT and PTA students, aides, volunteers, patients, families and caregivers; and demonstrate an understanding of the significance and impact of cultural and individual differences. PTAs contribute to society and the physical therapy profession through the provision of physical therapy services, teaching, and administration. (Prepared for the Coalitions for Consensus conferences by the APTA Education Division, 1995.)

Job Options
Graduates of Cal U’s PTA program are employed all across the United States in wide variety of settings. According to the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), the vast majority of PTAs, approximately 72%, work in hospitals or privately owned physical therapy practices. Others work in home health, schools and rehab units. Graduates of Cal U’s PTA program may elect to further their education by earning a bachelor’s degree in related health care fields such gerontology, health and wellness, or athletic training. The median salary for a PTA is $45,000 depending on position, years of experience, degree of education, geographic location and practice setting. (Source: APTA 2009 Median Income of Physical Therapist Assistants Summary Report.)

University Resources
The PTA program has been accredited since 2001.

Cal U’s state-of-the-art classrooms, laboratories, AV aides and other means of technology, in addition to the quality of its faculty, set it apart from programs at other colleges and universities.

Students gain valuable experience outside of the classroom during three, six-week, full-time clinical internships. The first internship is offered in Semester 3 of the program, thus incorporating real-world experience early in the curriculum. The final internships occur during the last semester. Internship sites vary from acute care hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, rehabilitation centers and private practice outpatient clinics to specialized sites focusing on pediatrics, wound care or aquatics.

ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT—66 CREDITS

Admission into the PTA program is competitive, and only a limited number of students are selected each year. Any student is able to enter the pre-technical phase of the program, which begins in the fall semester. Formal admission into the technical phase of the PTA program occurs at the completion of the fall semester. Only 26 students will be admitted into the technical phase, which will commence with the subsequent spring term. Students may meet all of the admissions criteria and not be formally admitted into the technical phase due to program size limitations. A maximum of 26 students will be selected based upon their GPA in the pre-technical phase (semester 1) courses and a personal interview with two to three members of the PTA Advisory Committee. Candidates must have a minimum of a 2.75 GPA in the pre-technical phase courses, including a B- or higher in HSC 110, Human Anatomy and Physiology I. In addition, candidates must complete 10 hours of observation in a physical therapy setting. For additional details on admission requirements, contact the program director at Hamer Hall 103 or visit the program’s website at: http://www.calu.edu/academics/programs/physical-therapist-assistant/index.htm.

The following five-semester schedule of courses provides a recommended framework for completing this program of study in two years.

Program Objectives
The goals of the PTA program are to:

- Provide quality education at a reasonable cost.
- Educate a technologically adept student.
- Enhance critical thinking and analytical reasoning to promote PTA graduates who will be problem solvers.
- Graduate ethical, safe, and clinically competent PTAs.
- Supply a fundamentally rounded physical therapy education that will provide the graduate an opportunity to become a licensed PTA.
- Promote a team approach to ensure high patient-care quality.
**PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT**

**Freshman Year**

**First Semester** ............................................................... 15 credits
- PTA 100 Introduction to Physical Therapist Assistant .......... 3 crs.
- PTA 101 Basic Physical Therapy Procedures ..................... 1 cr.
- HSC 110 Human Anatomy & Physiology I ............................ 4 crs.
- PSY 100 General Psychology ............................................. 3 crs.
- COM 101 Oral Communication ......................................... 3 crs.
- UNI 100 First Year Seminar ............................................ 1 cr.

**Second Semester** ............................................................. 18 credits
- HSC 120 Human Anatomy & Physiology II .......................... 4 crs.
- PTA 230 PT Interventions Across the Lifespan ..................... 4 crs.
- HSC 290 Therapeutic Modalities ....................................... 4 crs.
- SOC 100 Principles of Sociology OR
  - GTY 100 Intro to Gerontology ....................................... 3 crs.
- ENG 101 English Composition I ....................................... 3 crs.

**Summer**

**Third Semester** ............................................................. 6 credits
- PTA 110 Introduction to Pathology (online course) ............... 2 crs.
- PTA 150 Physical Therapy Clinical Internship I ................. 4 crs.

**Note**

The policies and procedures described here may be reviewed and revised as the need arises. This fact sheet should be used as an informational guide. For details on current policies and procedures, contact the chair of the department.

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**Sophomore Year**

**Fourth Semester** ........................................................... 13 credits
- PTA 205 Interventions in Cardiopulmonary Impairments ........ 2 crs.
- PTA 210 Interventions in Neurological Impairments ............. 4 crs.
- PTA 225 Interventions in Orthopedic Impairments ............... 4 crs.
- HSC 275 Functional Kinesiology ..................................... 3 crs.

**Fifth Semester** ............................................................... 14 credits
- PTA 250 Physical Therapy Clinical Internship II ................ 12 crs.

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**Program Contact Information**

Contact the Department of Health Science by phone at 724-938-4562.

**Department Website**

www.calu.edu/academics/colleges/education/health-science

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**QUESTIONS ABOUT ADMISSIONS?**

Office of Admissions
California University of Pennsylvania
250 University Ave.
California, PA 15419-1394

Phone: 724-938-4404
Toll-free: 888-412-0479
Fax: 724-938-4564
E-mail: inquiry@calu.edu

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**ABOUT US**

California University of Pennsylvania is a proud member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education. Located in the borough of California, just 35 miles from Pittsburgh, Cal U serves about 8,200 undergraduate and graduate students.

- Cal U’s main campus houses academic buildings, dining and recreation facilities, and six suite-style residence halls.
- Cal U’s upper campus includes the Vulcan Village apartments, athletic facilities at Roadman Park, and space for student meetings and outdoor recreation at SAI Farm.
- Cal U Global Online is the University’s virtual campus, offering degree and certificate programs 100% online.

**FINANCIAL AID**

For information on student loans and undergraduate scholarships, visit www.calu.edu or call 1-888-412-0479.

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California University of Pennsylvania is an academic community dedicated to the ideals of justice, fairness and equal opportunity for all. In compliance with federal and state laws, the University is committed to providing equal educational and employment opportunities for all persons without regard to race, color, sex, religion, national origin, age, disability, ancestry, sexual orientation or status as a disabled or Vietnam era veteran. The University will not tolerate racial, ethnic or sexual discrimination. Sexual harassment is considered by law to be a form of sexual discrimination and is, therefore, unacceptable. Direct equal opportunity and affirmative action inquiries or complaints to the Special Assistant to the President for Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity, Office of Social Equity, South Hall 112; 724-938-4014. Direct inquiries regarding services or facilities accessibility to the ADA/504, Compliance Officer, Office of Student Development and Services, G 52 Carter Hall, 724-938-4056. Direct Title IX inquiries to the Senior Women’s Administrator/Title IX Coordinator, Department of Athletics, Hamer Hall 248; 724-938-4351.

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Policies and Procedures: Note that the policies and procedures described above may be reviewed and revised at any time. This fact sheet should be used as an informational guide. For details on current policies and procedures, contact the Provost/Vice President of Academic Affairs at 724-938-4407.

Rev 5/14