

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

FALL 2025 APPLICATION

The South Texas College Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program is a comprehensive two-year program developed in collaboration with local medical facilities to prepare students to become skilled providers of care and valued members of the dynamic and rewarding physical therapy profession.

Applicants should be aware that the role of a Physical Therapist Assistant extends far beyond that of a technician, athletic trainer, or massage therapist. PTAs play a vital role in the healthcare team by delivering hands-on care and contributing to patient recovery and wellness.

This fast-paced program includes a rigorous workload, daily quizzes, weekly skill checks, and frequent examinations. The technical component of the curriculum includes lecture and laboratory courses in physical therapy science and procedures, offered each semester.

PTA courses are traditionally conducted in person at the Dr. Ramiro R. Casso Nursing & Allied Health Campus, located at 1101 E. Vermont Ave., McAllen, TX. However, applicants should note that schedules and instructional formats may be adjusted to comply with any future state, county, or institutional mandates. Should circumstances require, the program may transition to a hybrid or fully online learning environment.

Cohort students are required to purchase textbooks, clinical compliance and preparatory course subscriptions, a laboratory kit, and program uniforms. Additionally, a personal laptop is essential for completing quizzes, exams, activities, and assignments.

Clinical/Practicum experiences are completed during the third and fifth semesters at assigned clinical education sites, which may include hospitals, outpatient centers, and nursing homes throughout the Rio Grande Valley—from Brownsville to Rio Grande City. Practicum schedules are determined by the clinical site and may include early morning, evening, or weekend hours. Students must ensure reliable transportation to fully participate in all program requirements.

Important Dates & Application Information

The application deadline for the Fall 2025 semester is Thursday, May 29, 2025, by 5:00 p.m.

Applicants must meet the minimum admission requirements of South Texas College, the Division of Nursing and Allied Health, and the PTA Program. Applicants who meet these standards will be considered for Phase I of the selection process.

If selected for Phase II, applicants will be expected to participate in additional selection activities scheduled for June 2025. Accepted applicants will then begin immediate onboarding, followed by mandatory Summer Boot Camp and Orientation sessions. Fall-semester classes will begin in August 2025.

Need More Information?

For additional assistance, please contact:

Mari Ponce-Vargas, Guided Pathways Specialist
(956) 872-3216

PTA Program Office
(956) 872-3152

Office Hours:

Monday–Thursday: 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Friday: 8:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Thank you for your interest in the South Texas College PTA Program. We look forward to supporting your journey into the physical therapy profession!

Sincerely,

Diana Hernandez, PT, MEd.

Chair, Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Every effort is made to assure the accuracy of the information in this packet, but be aware that stipulations set forth are subject to change!

**PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM
2025 APPLICATION**

Name _____ Date _____
Print or Type (Last) (First) (MI) (Maiden/former names)

Residence Address _____
(No. and Street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Mailing Address _____
(No. and street) (City) (State) (Zip Code)

Phone Number () _____ () _____
(Home) (Work/message/mobile)

Student ID #A _____ Email Address _____@stu.southtexascollege.edu

Is this your first application to the PTA Program? _____yes _____no
If NO, last applied? _____

Have you ever been accepted into the PTA Program? _____yes _____no
If YES, year accepted? _____

Have you ever been an alternate for the PTA Program? _____yes _____no
If YES, which year? _____

Have you ever been a PTA Student in another PTA program? _____yes _____no
If YES, which school _____

Have you ever been a Student in another STC NAH program? _____yes _____no
If YES, which Program _____

Application Checklist: (Requirements & Instructions):

_____ Apply for admission to South Texas College, if you have not already done so.

_____ Request official transcripts from high school or colleges you have attended be sent to the Office of Admissions and Records for evaluation; if applicable, official GED results must be sent to the STC Admissions.

_____ Provide evidence of a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on the STC transcript.

_____ Provide evidence of TSI Assessment completion. Scores must be equivalent to college-level placement.

Exemption: Based on Bachelor Degree _____ **Yes** _____ **No**

Type of Degree and Year of Graduation: _____
(Provide evidence of degree earned)

Provide evidence of official HESI A2 assessment scores with your completed application. Note: HESI A2 scores must be no more than 2 years old. Minimum score requirements are: Composite = 75%, English = 75%, Math = 75%, and Science = 75%.

HESI Test Date=_____ HESI Composite Score =_____
(min. 75%)

English Score=_____ Math Score =_____ Science Score=_____
(min. 75%) (min. 75%) (min. 75%)

_____ Demonstrate documented completion of pre-requisite courses or equivalent as listed in the degree plan with a "B" or better.

_____ Earn a "B" or better in the Introduction to Physical Therapy within the last two years.

_____ Arrange for 2 completed "*Documentation of Experience Forms*" to be sent to STC's PTA Program Office prior to the application deadline. Each must verify completion of at least 25 hours of volunteer or work experience under the supervision of a PT or PTA, (minimum total of 50 hours). Each volunteer experience form must represent a different setting, i.e., one volunteer experience should be completed in an inpatient setting (hospital or nursing facility), and the other volunteer experience should be completed in a different type of setting such as an outpatient clinic or pediatric center. Home health hours are not accepted.

NOTE: Therapists who supervise volunteer experiences cannot be a relative or personal friend of the Student applicant.

Forms can be downloaded from <https://nah.southtexascollege.edu/pta/>. Click on the Resources link and then click on the link for volunteer forms.

"Documentation of Experience Forms" should be addressed to the PTA Program Chair and mailed directly to: **Diana Hernandez, PT, MEd**

PTA Program Chair

P.O. Box 9701, McAllen, TX 78502-9701

_____ Submit a signed Nursing & Allied Health Disclosure Statement to your completed application. (Form attached)

_____ Attach an STC final transcript with your application. The transcript must show grades for all prerequisites and supporting courses along with TSI scores.

_____ To support a more comprehensive admissions review, applicants may submit an optional personal statement. This allows individuals to:

- Explain circumstances that may have impacted their academic performance, including situations resulting in a GPA below the minimum requirement; or
- Share information that helps the Admissions Committee understand their motivation, perseverance, or potential, especially if they believe their application may not reflect their true capabilities.

_____ Complete, sign, and date the application.

_____ Submit, in person, **completed application** to **Mari Ponce-Vargas** at the:
South Texas College Dr. Ramiro R. Casso
NAH Campus Bldg, A, 1st Floor
Student Success Center Rm# 100 D
1101 E. Vermont, McAllen, TX 78504

Note: Keep a copy of the completed application for your records.

Application deadline: May 29, 2025, before 5:00 pm. The application and all verification documents must be on file by the application deadline to be considered in the applicant pool for the fall 2025 class. Spring 2025 classes will be considered for points; Summer 2025 classes will NOT.

Applications that are not complete will NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Selection Criteria/Points:

The PTA Program selection process consists of two phases.

Phase I: The PTA Program selection process is based on a Point System Evaluation.

The following selection criteria are used in Phase I to determine the applicant's points:

I.	Pre-requisite Courses	(Max 12)
II.	HESI Scores	(Max 9)
III.	Cumulative GPA of 3.0 or better	(Max 2)
IV.	Physical Therapy Observation Forms	(Max 2)
V.	Additional/Optional Points	(Max 13)

Completed applications will be processed to determine PTA Program Selection Process eligibility. Applicants who do not satisfy all requirements will be notified via email within 30 days.

PHASE II-A

Following submission of a completed application, all qualified applicants will receive an emailed copy of the most recent *PTA Program Manual of Student Standards*. You are to study the Manual **in detail** in preparation for the upcoming timed Phase II-A Selection process assessment, which will take place on **Thursday, June 12, 2025, from 8:30 to 12:30**. You will receive an email with information on where to report to take the exam via Blackboard, earlier that week.

This open-book assessment consists of a random assortment of 70-80 questions concerning the standards and guidelines relevant to all PTA students.

As this is an "open book" assessment, you are expected to utilize a printed copy of the *PTA Program Manual of Student Standards* during the assessment. Multiple attempts are permissible; candidates are allowed to restart from the beginning for additional attempts as needed and as time allows, during the 4-hour testing window. Questions will be randomized for each exam attempt. Please make sure you have current access to Blackboard and Honorlock.

To complete the required online *PTA Program Manual of Student Standards* assessment, applicants will need a laptop computer. I-pads or tablets are not compatible with testing requirements.

NOTE: Applicants who earn the required passing score of 85% on the FIRST ATTEMPT will be assigned three (3) Phase I bonus points.

Applicants who earn the required passing score of 85% within TWO ATTEMPTS will be assigned one (1) Phase I bonus point.

Applicants who are unable to complete this assessment with an 85% or better during the scheduled 4-hour testing period will not be considered for Phase II-B of the PTA Program selection process. There will be no additional opportunity to take the assessment during the 2025 application cycle.

Phase I: PTA Program 2025 Application & Selection Process (38 points)

I. PRE-REQUISITE COURSES (12) The following courses must be completed with a "B" or higher	Pre-requisite Grades A= 4 B=0 (circle one)	Course Repeat - 1 point (Deduct 1 pt. each time the course was repeated)	Enter Points
a. BIOL 2401 Anatomy and Physiology I	A=4 B=0		
b. ENGL 1301 Composition	A=4 B=0		
c. PTHA 1409 Introduction to Physical Therapy	A=4 B=0		
II. HESI A² (ADMISSION ASSESSMENT) EXAM (9) HESI A ² Exam must have been taken within the last two years	HESI A² Score (circle one)		Enter Points
If completed, please indicate score information: HESI A² Exam Composite Score = 75 % or better	Composite Score: _____ %		N/A
a. English Language Composite = 75% or better Test Score: _____ Test Date: _____	HESI A2 English 100% - 90% = 3 points 89% - 83 % = 2 points 82% - 76% = 1 point		
b. Math Composite = 75% or better Test Score: _____ Test Date: _____	HESI A2 Math 100% - 90% = 3 points 89% - 83 % = 2 points 82% - 76% = 1 point		
c. Science Composite = 75% or better Test Score: _____ Test Date: _____	HESI A2 Science 100% - 90% = 3 points 89% - 83 % = 2 points 82% - 76% = 1 point		
III. CUMULATIVE GPA 3.0 or better (2)	Cumulative GPA (circle one)		Enter Points
Cumulative GPA as listed on the South Texas College Transcript: _____	4.0 – 3.5 = 2 points 3.49 – 3.10 = 1 point		
IV. PHYSICAL THERAPY OBSERVATION FORM (2)	Points averaged from 2 forms		Enter Points
	Recommended without reservation = 2 points Recommended with reservation = 1 point Not recommended = 0 points		

V. ADDITIONAL/OPTIONAL POINTS: (13) The following courses are not required to apply for the program; however, completion will assist the applicant to earn additional points. Unless otherwise indicated, these courses are needed to graduate.		Additional Points (Circle one)	Course Repeat -1 point (Deduct 1 pt. each time the course was repeated)	Enter points
BIOL 2401 Anatomy and Physiology II		Grade A = 3 points Grade B = 2 points Grade C (S) = 0 points		
PSYC 2314 Lifespan Growth and Development		Grade A = 2 points Grade B = 1 point Grade C (S) = 0 points		
Humanities Elective: (Check one) _____ HUMA 1301 Introduction to Humanities _____ PHIL 1301 Introduction to Philosophy _____ PHIL 2303 Logic _____ PHIL 2306 Ethics		Grade A = 2 points Grade B = 1 point Grade C (S) = 0 points		
		Additional Points (Circle one)		Enter points
CSFH 0101 STC College Success for Healthcare Course (not required to graduate)		Grade A = 1 point Grade B = 0.5 point		
PTHA 1409 Introduction to PT Final Course Grade 95% or better on 1 st ATTEMPT (course must have been taken within the last 2 years) Note: Course repeat does not apply.	Final Course Grade: _____%	Grade 95% or better = 3 points		
PREVIOUS DEGREE: (Points awarded for highest degree earned) (Must submit proof of the previous degree earned) Master's Degree or Higher Bachelor's Degree Associate's degree Certificate (Verifiable and related to the medical profession/allied health)		Masters + = 2 points Bachelors = 1 points Associates = 0.5 point Certificate = 0.25 point		
PHASE I Maximum Total Points = 38		Total Points		
All qualified applicants will be scheduled to participate in Phase II-A. This phase includes an open book, timed online PTA Program Manual of Student Standards Assessment. A personal laptop and Honorlock is required. A score of 85% or better is required during the scheduled 4-hour testing period to proceed to Phase II-B. Points will be awarded to candidates who achieve the required passing score within 2 attempts; students who are unable to pass the assessment will be ineligible to proceed to Phase II-B.				

Phase II-A: PTA Program 2025 Application & Selection Process (3 points)		
PTA PROGRAM MANUAL OF STUDENT STANDARDS ASSESSMENT: Qualified applicants are required to earn a score of 85% or better during the scheduled 4-hour testing period.	Additional Points (Circle one)	Enter Points
Number of exam attempts = _____ Exam Score = _____ % <i>Does Applicant proceed to Phase II-B (please circle one) Yes or No</i> This exam will be on campus and administered via Blackboard Respondus. A personal laptop is required.	A passing score of 85% on 1st Attempt = 3 bonus points A passing score of 85% on 2nd Attempt = 1 bonus point	
PHASE II-A Maximum Points = 3	Total Points	

PHASE II-B:

Once APPLICATION (Phase I) POINTS and SELECTION Phase II-A points have been tabulated, the 30-40 applicants with the highest scores will be notified via email and asked to return for Phase II-B. Phase II-B activities will tentatively take place on June 20, 2025 (in-house written assignment and personal interview) at STC's NAH Campus. Individual appointment times will be emailed the week before. Applicants not selected for the second phase will be notified via email within 30 days of the application deadline.

Selection Phase II-B: The following selection criterion is used in Phase II to determine the applicant's points:

Phase II-B (40 points)	Available Points	Enter Points
Written Assignment Applicants will receive an on-site prompt related to their observation/experience hours and instructions related to length and formatting for the completion of a written submission. Writing will be scored utilizing a rubric for a maximum of 5 points; points will be awarded for the development of a clear, concise, quality response, utilizing proper format, spelling, grammar, and syntax.	Excellent = 5 points Good = 3 points Fair = 1 point Poor = 0 points	
Interview Applicants will meet face-to-face on campus with interview committee members and respond to a series of interview questions. This offers candidates an opportunity to demonstrate communication and interpersonal skills, judgment, maturity, and the qualities that are important for a future therapist.	35 points max	
PHASE II B Maximum Total Points = 40	Total Points	

Phase I and II scores will be added, and applicants will be ranked from highest to lowest points.

FOR PTA FACULTY/STAFF USE ONLY

FINAL APPLICATION POINTS:

PHASE I/Application Points: _____ (Max. 38)

PHASE II-A Handbook Points: _____ (Max. 3)

PHASE II-B Written Assignment _____ (Max 5)

PHASE II-B Interview Points: _____ (Max. 35)

FINAL Application Points: _____ **(Max. 81)**

STUDENT RANKING: _____ / _____

The typical number of new positions available on an annual basis is 20-21. The final number of admissions is dependent on available resources. Applicants will receive a notice via email of their status, i.e., accepted, alternate, or not accepted, by the first week in July of the current year. In the case of tied applicants, finalists will be chosen based on 1) previous acceptance/alternate status and 2) the date of application.

NOTE: The applicant's responsibility is to ensure an appropriate South Texas College student email address is provided to allow for timely notification of application status.

Please be advised of the following:

- Applicants who are accepted will have three weeks to purchase a Complio subscription and provide proof of meeting all clinical requirements including immunizations, health/accident insurance, CPR certification, TB testing, cleared criminal background check, and/or evidence of Texas licensure eligibility, negative urine drug/alcohol screen, and all related expenses. (Approximate cost = \$245.00)
- Applicants who are accepted will have three weeks to purchase a Caduceus International Publishing, Inc. subscription to access an online Skills Accelerator preparatory course, to be completed before Orientation. This course is designed to ensure you have the necessary foundational knowledge of the musculoskeletal system and basic medical terminology to facilitate the successful completion of first-semester courses, specifically PTHA 1413 Functional Anatomy. (Approximate cost = \$110.00)
- Applicants who are accepted will have three weeks to place their order for a clinical skills lab packet (approximate cost = \$125.00)
- Applicants who are accepted will have three weeks to place their order for uniform tops and purchase the required uniform bottoms. (Approximate cost = \$125.00)
- Applicants who are accepted will be required to purchase all 1st-semester textbooks before the start of the semester. (Approximate cost = \$575.00)
- Applicants who are accepted will be required to participate in mandatory evening success workshops in July and new student orientation programming in August before the fall start date. Specific dates will be provided upon program acceptance.

I have read and understand the following statements:

- According to the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners, PT Rules 343.5 the Board may deny a license to or discipline an applicant/respondent who has been found to have a history of substance abuse.
- According to the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners PT Rules 343.9 the Board may revoke or suspend an existing valid license, disqualify a person from receiving or renewing a license, or deny a person the opportunity to

be examined for a license because of a person's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor if the crime directly relates to the practice of physical therapy.

NOTE: Applicants with criminal histories are required to provide proof of licensure eligibility from the Executive Council of OT and PT Examiners upon acceptance. Please log onto the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy website at <http://www.ecptote.state.tx.us> for additional information and to request a Criminal History Evaluation Letter.

The Board of Trustees approved Board Policy (#3337) for all students participating in a Nursing or Allied Health Program clinical course, which **requires all students to pass a criminal background check and meet immunization and medical health requirements before enrolling in a clinical course**. In addition, students participating in the program are subject to periodic "for cause" drug screening. This policy is being implemented to ensure uniform compliance with Joint Commission standards pertaining to Human Resource management and state licensing regulations. Moreover, the public is demanding greater diligence in light of national reports of increasing numbers of medical errors.

Following acceptance to the program, students will be provided with specific procedures for obtaining the prescreening criminal background check and drug test. The student is responsible for the cost of a criminal background check and alcohol and drug test.

Students having questions about this rule should see the NAH Clinical Affairs Specialist, PTA Program Chair, or the Dean of Nursing and Allied Health Division. All consultations are confidential.

I have read and understand the ADA Statement in the South Texas College Catalog. If I choose not to disclose a disability to the Student Services Counselor, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program and/or Program faculty are not held accountable.

I understand that the STC Physical Therapist Assistant program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. Additional information regarding accreditation may be obtained from the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314; accreditation@apta.org; (703) 684-2782 or (702) 706-3245.

I certify that the information provided within this application is complete and correct. I understand that reporting untrue information or omitting information may result in my disqualification from the applicant pool, refusal/cancellation of admission to the program, and/or render me ineligible to apply at a later date.

SIGNED _____
Applicant Signature

DATE _____

Applicants are encouraged to keep a copy of the application for their records.

NOTE: The applicant's responsibility is to ensure an appropriate South Texas College student email address is provided to allow for timely notification of application status.

PLEASE SUBMIT YOUR COMPLETED APPLICATION IN PERSON TO:

**Mari Ponce-Vargas
South Texas College
Dr. Ramiro R. Casso Nursing and Allied Health Campus – Bldg. A
1st Floor, Student Success Center Rm# 100 D
1101 E. Vermont
McAllen, TX 78504**

SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE NURSING/ALLIED HEALTH DIVISION

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

IMPORTANT: This document must accompany your application for admission to the PTA Program

The Nursing/Allied Health (NAH) Division requires applicants for admission to all programs leading to licensure, certification, or requiring field placements (e.g. clinical or practicum experiences) to complete the following disclosure statement.

Applicants for admission must disclose whether they have ever been charged with or convicted of any crime and whether licensure of any kind has ever been denied or revoked in any state for reasons other than insufficient credits or courses. The existence of a criminal record or denial or revocation of licensure does not constitute an automatic bar to admission or automatic cause for removal from the program but will be considered only as they substantially relate to the duties and responsibilities of the program and eventual licensure, certification or clinical/practicum practice.

Falsification or omission of information relevant to these questions may constitute grounds for denying your admission to the program or for termination of your admission if the falsification or omission is discovered after admission. Further, after you have submitted the disclosure statement, while your application is being considered or while you are a student in a program, you have an affirmative duty to supplement or update the answers that you have provided at any point in time when any answer would no longer be true as stated. You must immediately inform the department's Program Chair of the changed responses.

An affirmative response to an item does not mean that you will be denied admission. You will be contacted to explain the circumstances leading to the affirmative response. It will be your responsibility to provide the department with any further information needed to determine the best course of action regarding your admission or removal. The department will take the information provided into account in determining whether to admit you to the program, postpone admission, remove you from the program, or provide special accommodations.

In the event you are denied admission to the program based on your responses to the questions, you have the right to appeal that decision. Notice of the grievance procedure will be forwarded to you in the event of a denial. A copy of the grievance procedure is also available from the NAH division office.

Please sign the Disclosure Statement and attach the signed form to your PTA Program application. Failure to return a signed disclosure statement will result in the non-acceptance of the application.

- According to the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners, PT Rules 343.5 the Board may deny a license to or discipline an applicant/respondent who has been found to have a history of substance abuse.
- According to the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners PT Rules 343.9 the Board may revoke or suspend an existing valid license, disqualify a person from receiving or renewing a license or deny a person the opportunity to be examined for a license because of a person's conviction of a felony or misdemeanor if the crime directly relates to the practice of physical therapy.
- Additional information regarding rules governing licensure may be found in the complete Physical Therapy rules located on the Executive Council of Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy website at www.ecptote.state.tx.us.

DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

NAME _____

Student ID Number _____

The following questions apply to adult and juvenile proceedings in any state or federal jurisdiction in this country or in any other country.

1. Yes No Have you ever been arrested for any offense (whether or not the case was adjudicated)?
2. Yes No Have you ever pleaded guilty or nolo-contendre to any Class B or Class A misdemeanor?
3. Yes No Have you ever pleaded guilty or nolo-contendre to any felony offense?
4. Yes No Have you ever served a sentence of imprisonment or incarceration in any jail or prison?
6. Yes No Are you now or have you ever been on probation, deferred adjudication, pre-trial diversion, or parole?
7. Yes No Do you have any pending criminal charges or unresolved arrests, excluding minor traffic violations (driving under the influence of any drug or intoxicant is not a minor traffic violation)?
8. Yes No Have you ever been dismissed from a health professions program for other than academic deficiencies (safety, academic integrity, non-professional conduct or unsafe clinical practice are not an academic deficiency)?
9. Yes No Have you ever had any license, certification, or registration revoked, suspended, or sanctioned by any local, state, or federal agency; or have you ever been a party to any proceeding in which your license, certification, or registration was being revoked, suspended, or sanctioned, regardless of the outcome.

If you answered "YES" to any of the questions above, please meet with the NAH Clinical Compliance Specialist or Program chair for the selected NAH program you are seeking admission to or in which you are currently enrolled, for guidance and advisement regarding policy #3337 requirements concerning criminal histories.

I have been provided a copy of policy #3337, and I am aware of its requirements concerning criminal histories. I swear or affirm that the answers that I have provided herein are true and correct. I understand and acknowledge that I am under an affirmative duty to supplement or update my answers at any point in time when my answers would no longer be correct as stated. I further understand and acknowledge that if I have provided false answers, it may constitute grounds for denying me admission to the program or for removing me from any NAH program.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

I certify that the information provided within this form is true and realize that reporting untrue information will result in my disqualification from the applicant pool and program and I will not be eligible to reapply.