



UNIVERSITY OF
GEORGIA

Pre-Health Advising Office

Applicant Orientation

(for students planning to apply to allied health schools)

Nursing, PT, OT and Allied Health Advisor | Pre-Health Advising Office

Tasneem Qadri

Pre-PA Advisor | Pre-Health Advising Office

Office of the Vice-President for Instruction



Meet our Staff!

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About the Pre-Health Advising Office

- Our office advises all UGA students interested in healthcare careers.
 - Medicine, dentistry, optometry, allied-health (PA, PT, OT, AA), veterinary and nursing.
- We are located in 130 Memorial Hall
 - **Website:** prehealth.uga.edu
 - **Email:** premed@uga.edu
 - **Phone:** 706-542-0444
- Visit our website:
 - To join our Pre-Health UGA listserv
 - To check out our Pre-Health Event Calendar for upcoming meetings/workshops/events.
 - To make an appointment with a Pre-Health Advisor.



Important Upcoming Application Dates

For the 2019-2020 application cycle:

- **CASPA (PA Schools)**
 - April 25: Application opens
- **PTCAS (PT Schools)**
 - July 5: Application opens
- **OTCAS (OT Schools)**
 - July 18: Application opens



Orientation Overview

- Application and Timeline
- Components of Application
 - Academic History
 - Academic Transcripts and GPA
 - GRE/PA-CAT
 - Supporting Information
 - Shadowing/Patient Care Experiences
 - Activities
 - Personal Statement/Essay
 - Letters of Evaluation
- Where should I apply?
- Interviews
- Should I take a Gap-Year?
- What if I am not competitive?



Allied Health Schools in Georgia

■ PA Schools

- Augusta University (Augusta)
- Emory University (Atlanta)
- Mercer University (Atlanta)
- Morehouse School of Medicine (Atlanta)

■ PT Schools

- Augusta University (Augusta)
- Brenau University (Gainesville)
- Emory University (Atlanta)
- Georgia Southern University-Armstrong Campus (Savannah)
- Georgia State University (Atlanta)

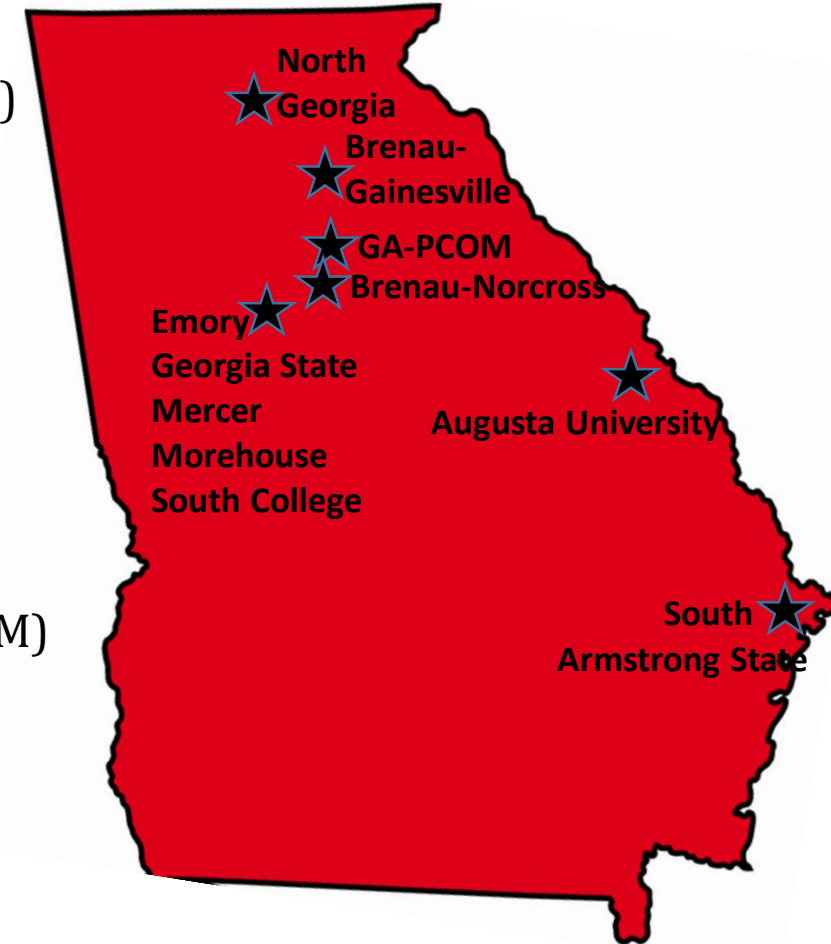
■ OT Schools

- Augusta University (Augusta)
- Brenau University (campuses in Gainesville and Norcross)

- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) (Suwanee)
- South University (Savannah)
- South College (Atlanta)
- Brenau

- Mercer University (Atlanta)
- Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (PCOM) (Suwanee)
- University of North Georgia (Dahlonega)

- Georgia State University (Atlanta)



Application

■ Centralized Application Services

- CASPA (for PA school)
- PTCAS (for PT school)
- OTCAS (for OT school)

■ Each application has an instruction manual—download it!

- Each profession's corresponding club also typically holds a meeting all about application services at the end of the term. Be on the lookout for announcements about these!

■ Submit your application as early as possible!

- Takes approximately 4-6 weeks to be verified



Supplemental Applications

- Most schools you apply to will also require that you submit a *supplemental application*.
 - This is typically an application to the institution's graduate school
 - May also include short answer/essay questions and associated fees
 - Usually linked through the CAS system, if the school participates in that service
- All portions of the supplemental application must be submitted in order for your application to be considered complete
- Avoid repeating content from CAS essay in any potential supplemental essays/responses.



PA Application Timeline

Institution	Application Period	Matriculation Date
Augusta University	July – October	May
Emory University	April – October	August
Mercer University	November – March	January
Morehouse	April-October	June
South University	April – August	January
PCOM	April - December	June
South College	April – March	Sept/Oct
Brenau University	April - Sept	January



PT Application Timeline

Institution	Application Period	Matriculation Date
Augusta University	July – December	May
Brenau University	July – March	May
Emory University	July – October	June
Georgia-PCOM	July – December	June
Georgia Southern University- Armstrong Campus <i>(formerly Armstrong State)</i>	July – October	May
Georgia State University	July – October	June
Mercer University	July – October	August
University of North Georgia	July – October	May



OT Application Timeline

Institution	Application Period	Matriculation Date
Augusta University	August – October	May
Brenau University	July – October*	August*
Georgia State University	July – January	May

Primary Components of Application

1. Academic History

- Overall GPA vs. Science/Prerequisite GPA
- Transcripts

2. Exam Performance (GRE) (PA-CAT)

3. Activities/Experiences

- Shadowing (Exposure to “provider-patient” interaction)
- Volunteering (Commitment to helping others and community involvement)
- Leadership (Extracurricular engagement)
- Research

4. Personal Statement and/or Essay(s)

5. Letters of Evaluation



Academic History

- Overall GPA vs. Science/Prerequisite GPA
 - Biology, Chemistry, Physics (BCP)
 - ~3.4-3.6 GPA is average for accepted applicants
- Trends
 - Did you challenge yourself?
 - Did you improve over time?
 - Did you take your science courses at UGA?
 - Do you have only 1-2 withdrawals?
- AP credit
 - While many programs will accept AP credit, some do not so it is important to confirm with programs of interest
 - For example, Emory PT and Georgia State OT list explicitly on their website that they do **NOT** accept AP credit
- Transcripts:
 - Submit an official transcript from every institution you attended
 - Request transcripts early as they can take several weeks to send and process
 - Refer to the application instructions regarding where to send transcripts and how to enter coursework



PA School Admission Requirements

- Always double-check with schools you are interested in!
 - Requirements can change year-to-year

General PA School Requirements	
Biology	BIOL 1107/L and BIOL 1108/L
General Chemistry	CHEM 1211/L and CHEM 1212/L
Organic Chemistry	CHEM 2211/L
Microbiology	MIBO2500/L, or MIBO3500/MIBO3510L
Anatomy and Physiology	CBIO2200/L and CBIO2210/L
Psychology	PSYC1101 and/or PSYC3230
Misc. Recommended	STAT2000, BCMB3100, GENE 3200



PT School Admission Requirements

- Always double-check with schools you are interested in!
 - Requirements can change year-to-year

General PT School Requirements	
Biology	BIOL 1107/L (BIOL 1108/L required for many out of state programs)
General Chemistry	CHEM 1211/L and CHEM 1212/L
Physics	PHYS 1111/L and PHYS 1112/L or PHYS 1211/L and PHYS 1212/L
Statistics	STAT 2000 (sometimes BIOS 2010)
Anatomy and Physiology	CBIO2200/L and CBIO2210/L
Psychology	PSYC1101 and/or PSYC3230
Misc. Recommended	HDFS2200/PSYC4220, CLAS1030



OT School Admission Requirements

- Always double-check with schools you are interested in!
 - Requirements can change year-to-year

General OT School Requirements	
Anatomy and Physiology	CBIO2200/L and CBIO2210/L
Statistics	STAT 2000
Psychology	PSYC1101 and PSYC3230
Lifespan Development	HDFS2200 or PSYC4220
Medical Terminology	CLAS1030
Anthropology or Sociology	ANTH1102/SOCI1101
Misc. Recommended	CHEM 1211/L (Brenau), PHYS 1111/L (Augusta)



Is AP credit accepted?

- The policies regarding acceptance of AP credit vary greatly amongst allied health programs in the state.
- For **PA** programs in state:
 - Morehouse does NOT accept AP credit
 - All other PA programs in Georgia DO accept AP credit as long as the credits appear on your college transcript; however, it is recommended to confirm out of state program policies regarding AP credit
- For **PT** programs in state:
 - Emory does NOT accept AP credit
 - Georgia State lists that they do NOT accept AP credit for PSYC and all other AP credits are subject to committee review (however they are generally NOT accepted)
- For **OT** programs in state:
 - Georgia State lists that they do NOT accept AP credit
- Important to check with individual schools you hope to apply to.



GRE/ PA-CAT

- Take the GRE no later than Spring/early Summer of the year you plan to apply
 - Offered regularly; however, it will take a couple of weeks to receive your official score report and have that sent to programs of interest.
 - Registration is rolling and can be completed via the University Testing Center on campus.
- Courses you need before the exam:
 - No specific coursework is required pre-GRE since the “General Test” is required
- GRE scores range from 260-340
 - Try to score at least 300 (50th percentile) as a composite (combined) score
 - ~150 for quantitative, ~150 for verbal, ~4.0 writing
- You can study for the GRE on your own or take a GRE prep-course
 - Key is to make a study plan and take practice tests!

PA-CAT – Schools will be adopting this admissions test within the next 2 years.



Supporting Information: Activities & Experiences

- Applicants use the Supporting Information/Experiences section to provide detailed information about:
 - **Observation Hours:** Time spent officially following and observing a health care professional at work, preferably in the field you are applying to (i.e. PA, PT or OT).
 - **Patient Care Experience (for PA):** Experiences in which you are directly responsible for a patient's care. For example, performing procedures, directing a course of treatment, actively working on patients as a MA, EMT, CNA, phlebotomist, etc.
 - **Employment:** Paid work done outside of the health care field; for example, a retail or restaurant job.
 - **Extracurricular Activities:** Includes research, club memberships, sports, etc. through a college or university.
 - **Research:** Research projects done in addition to classroom work; research generally should NOT appear as credit on a school transcript, but may be acceptable for some programs (refer to instructions for specific application).
 - **Volunteer:** Volunteer work done outside of the health care field; for example, working for Habitat for Humanity, tutoring students, participating in or working for a fundraiser walk or blood drive, etc.
- Anything you add is fair game for an interview!
 - Include activities in which you were actively engaged.
 - Highlight specific qualities (e.g. leadership, teamwork, compassion, etc.).
 - Try to avoid including things in which you are a passive participant.



Observation Hours and Patient Care Experience

- Keeping track of experiences
 - It is recommended that you keep a word document or excel file to keep track of your experiences—specifically your supervisor’s name and contact information, dates present, and hours accumulated.
 - You may also want to make note of memorable experiences to draw from later for interview/essay prompts
- Verifying Experiences
 - Generally, application services will request the contact information of your supervisor for observation hours and direct patient care experiences.
 - They will then contact this individual (usually via email) to electronically verify your experiences
 - No physical signatures need to be obtained by you
 - Good practice to follow up with providers before application opens to let them know this email is coming!



Supporting Information: Personal Statement/Essay

Personal Statement

- Your chance to inform committee about yourself beyond transcript.
 - Pay close attention to number of characters (not words) that you can submit
 - DO NOT exceed maximum length
 - Triple-check for grammar and spelling errors!
- Need to answer these questions:
 - *Why do you want to be a PA (or OT)?*
 - *Why do I want to pursue a PA/OT education?*
 - *Why have you selected this field of healthcare?*
 - *What motivates you to learn more this field?*
 - *What do you want schools to know about you that hasn't been disclosed in other sections of the application?*
 - *Explain a defining moment that helped steer you toward a career in this field*

Essay Prompt(s)

- For PT applications (and potentially supplemental applications) you will be given an essay prompt
 - Typically limed to ~1 page (5,000 characters including spaces)
 - 2019-2020 prompt: *Describe a meaningful experience in your life. Reflect on how that experience influenced your personal growth, such as your attitudes or perceptions*
- Start early! Give yourself at least two months to work on your statement.
 - Have several people read it (letter-writers, advisor, etc.)
 - UGA resources: Honors College, Career Center



Supporting Information: Letters of Recommendation

- Most programs require **three letters**:
 - 1 healthcare provider (PA, PT, OT)
 - 1 professor (preferably in major or in prerequisite course)
 - Additional letter(s) from another academic professional, healthcare provider, supervisor, or someone who knows the you well enough to speak positively on the your behalf.
- Letters should come from people who know you!
 - Will need to describe you as an individual—behavior, character traits, maturity-level, etc.



Regarding Committee/Advisor Letters

- The Pre-Health Advising office no longer writes nor submits letters of evaluation.
- The absence of a committee or advisor letter will not negatively affect your application.



How should I ask for Letters of Evaluation?

- Ask early! January-March of year you plan to apply.
 - Keep in mind, though, that letters cannot be submitted until the application cycle officially opens
- Email about meeting in person, then ask for letter during meeting.
- Always ask whether they can write you a positive letter!
- Provide the following to your letter-writers:
 - Resume or CV
 - Draft of personal statement (if needed for application)
 - Information about the programs you're applying to and your goals
 - [Guidelines for Letter-Writers handout](#) (provided by Pre-Health Advising Office)



How should my Letters be submitted?

- Programs that participate in the CAS system will have evaluators submit electronically.
 - Student will be asked to provide contact information for recommender
 - Recommender will then receive an email regarding how to submit recommendation form and corresponding letter
- Work with letter-writer to ensure they have received the information via email and work to make submission as easy as possible.
- Always waive your right to view your letters of evaluation!



Where should I apply?

- Recommend applying to several schools.
 - Admissions are very fickle. Many variables affect likelihood of interview.
 - There are no true “back-up” schools.
- Consider applying to private out-of-state schools.
 - State institutions are very particular about residency, private schools are not.
- Use the ***PAEA and PTCAS Program Directories, as well as individual OT webpages***
 - Overview and admissions data for accredited programs
 - Review necessary application materials



Background Check

- Report anything you think might be an issue.
 - Honor Code violations
 - Legal issues (misdemeanors, felonies, etc.)
- Not reporting is considered the same as lying.
- If you have had a violation expunged, be sure to pull record and verify.
- If something happens *after* you apply or are accepted, you must report.
- Bottom-line, try to keep your nose clean!



Interviews

- Interview season begins as early as August/September and will continue into the Spring.
- An invitation to interview typically means your “numbers” are good.
- Interviewers are trying to find out who you are.
 - No right/wrong answers—more about how you answer and interpersonal communication skills.
- Tips:
 - Know your application inside and out.
 - Dress conservatively (no tattoos, minimal jewelry, beards trimmed, comfy shoes)
 - Interview begins the minute you step on campus
 - Send thank-you notes within 2-weeks of interview (email or hand-written)
- Career Center conducts mock interviews
 - Schedule early! Try for Spring/Early Fall.
- Pre-Health Advising Office conducts Interview Panel—watch for announcement



Gap Year

- Why take a Gap Year?
 - I didn't get in.
 - I am not ready to apply.
 - I need a break from school.
- Work on weak spots in your application.
 - Complete post-bac or Master's program
 - Retake GRE
 - Increase clinical involvement and experience
- Key to Gap Year is planning.
 - Try to stay busy and do things that allow you to grow and cultivate new skills



What if I am not competitive?

- It's *okay* not to get in the first time! Plenty of people have to reapply.
 - Especially true for PA school!
- Take a Gap Year to work on becoming more competitive.
 - Take additional courses or complete a graduate degree
 - Re-take the GRE
 - Seek out more volunteering and shadowing opportunities
- Consider another career in healthcare
 - Nursing, Physician Assistant, Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, Genetic Counseling, etc.
 - Consider talking with a career consultant further about other career paths may be best-suited to your strengths



Fee Assistance Programs

■ PA School

- CASPA offers a [fee assistance program](#) to assist students applying to PA school.
 - Covers only initial application fee
- Granted on a first-come, first-served basis
- Apply for fee assistance when application opens in April 2020

■ PT School

- PTCAS offers a [fee assistance program](#) to assist students applying to PT school.
 - May apply to 1 program in PTCAS for free (pay \$45 for each additional program designation)
- Granted on a first-come, first-served basis
- Apply for fee assistance well before you submit your PTCAS application.

■ OT School

- OTCAS offers a [fee assistance program](#) to assist students applying to OT school.
 - Covers initial application fee, as well as the ability to apply to 1 program in OTCAS for free (pay \$60 for each additional program designation)
- Granted on a first-come, first-served basis
- May request fee waiver as soon as an OTCAS application has been created
 - *Once approved for a waiver, though, student is required to submit OTCAS application within 14 days (including holidays and weekends)!*



Recent PA Admissions Data (2018-2019)

University of Georgia

- 105/241 (accepted/verified applicants): 44% acceptance rate
- Average applicant vs. accepted GPA: (Overall/Science)
 - 3.50/3.70 vs. 3.58/3.52
- Average applicant vs. accepted GRE:
 - Verbal: 154 vs. 155
 - Quantitative: 153 vs. 154
 - Analytical/Writing: 4.0
- Matriculated into 36 PA schools
 - Including: Mercer, South, Emory, GA-PCOM, Augusta, University of Alabama-Birmingham, Wake Forest, Duke, Northwestern, Nova Southeastern and many more.

National

- 8,792/26,953: 33% acceptance rate
- Average Matriculant GPA:
 - 3.57/3.51
- Average Matriculant GRE Percentiles *(for previous cycle since new data not yet available)*:
 - Verbal: 58.94
 - Quantitative: 51.82
 - Analytical/Writing: 55.55
- Matriculant Age:
 - Median: 23; Range: 19-61; Mean: 25
- 41% re-applicant
 - up to 46% for 2017-2018 cycle
- Average designations per applicant: 7



Recent PT Admissions Data (2016-2017)

University of Georgia

- 98/140 (accepted/applicants): 70%
 - *UGA ranked as #2 in nation for "Top Primary Institutions Attended by Accepted PTCAS Applicants"!*
- Matriculated into over 12 PT schools
 - Including: All 7 DPT programs in Georgia, as well as Duke, Miami, Michigan, University of Tennessee Health Sciences, and many more.

National

- 9,707/19,025: 51%
- Average applicant vs. accepted GPA: (Overall/Prerequisite)
 - 3.41/3.30 vs. 3.59/3.52
- Average Matriculant GRE Percentiles:
 - Verbal: 51.89
 - Quantitative: 45.82
 - Analytical/Writing: 55.66
- Matriculant Age:
 - Median: 22; Range: 18-59; Mean: 22.86
- Average Designations per Applicant: 6



Recent OT Admissions Data (2016-2017)

University of Georgia

- 52 verified applicants
 - Increase from 47 verified applicants in previous admissions cycle
 - Comprehensive matriculant data and decision codes forthcoming
- Matriculated into several OT programs, including those in state, as well as Medical University of South Carolina and South Alabama

National

- Applicant and matriculant data for 2016-2017 admission cycle is still forthcoming
- For 2014 admissions cycle:
 - Doctoral Degree-Level Programs:
 - 248 students admitted
 - 1,481 total applications
 - Master' Degree-Level Programs:
 - 6,945 students admitted
 - 40,839 total applications



Major Takeaways

- Plan out each step in advance!
- Submit your application as early as you can (but don't rush it)!
- Always have a Plan B!
- Utilize the Pre-Health Advising Office!
 - Join the Pre-Health listserv
 - Meet with Pre-Health Advisor
 - Review our website





Questions?

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