



College of Public Health

Information for Freshman Applying to Temple University Who Are Also Interested in the Accelerated 3+3 Option for Physical Therapy

Introduction:

There are two common options for application to a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program: the standard 4+3 option and the accelerated 3+3 option.

The Standard 4+3 Option:

The majority of students utilize the standard 4+3 option to apply to the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at Temple and at other universities and colleges: the completion of an undergraduate degree in any field at any accredited college or university, the completion of the program-specific pre-requisite courses (specific courses required by the DPT program- each DPT program has a unique set of pre-requisite courses), the taking of the GRE, and then applying to the DPT program. The path is similar to that utilized by students interested in pharmacy, medicine, dentistry, and veterinary school. Students apply to the DPT program in the summer between the junior and senior years and DPT school. In most cases, the bachelor's degree has not yet been awarded but must be prior to matriculation in the DPT program. Temple DPT begins classes in July after the May undergraduate graduation. Non-traditional students (those taking a year "off" between undergraduate school and graduate school and second-career applicants) may apply to DPT programs beginning in July of any given year. The application requirements are the same as those for traditional students. Students attending Temple for their undergraduate education and are in the Standard 4+3 Option are free to apply to any DPT program in the country with the caveat being that each program has different pre-requisites. Pre-requisite listings for all programs may be found at ptcas.org. Interested students may complete their undergraduate degree at any institution and apply to the [DPT Program at Temple](#) or may attend Temple undergraduate and apply to a distant DPT program. Most undergraduate students considering a career in Physical Therapy and are in the Standard 4+3 Option apply to six programs.

The Accelerated 3+3 Option:

The purpose of the accelerated option (3 years undergraduate and 3 years doctoral education) to becoming a physical therapist is primarily financial. Accelerated 3+3 option students skip the senior year of undergraduate school and enter the work force a year sooner than the Standard 4+3 Option students.

The Accelerated 3+3 Option is very challenging; students must complete their “major” courses and general education courses in three years plus maintain specific academic benchmarks.

There are two types of Accelerated 3+3 Options available in DPT programs: guaranteed and non-guaranteed. In the guaranteed option, the student applies to the university or college as a freshman and signs a non-binding contract of understanding that if he or she meets specific benchmarks (such as a cumulative GPA of 3.5 and GRE scores of 150 in verbal and quantitative) after three years of undergraduate school, the student may skip the senior year of undergraduate school and immediately begin the DPT program at that school. The student’s major is often “Pre Physical Therapy” but can also be any variety of sciences. The upside of the guaranteed option is that the student, if the benchmarks are met, has already been accepted to a DPT program. The downsides of the guaranteed option are: what happens if the student changes his mind and decides on another career? What happens if the student does not meet the benchmark standards? What happens if the student wants to attend a different DPT program?

In non-guaranteed Accelerated 3+3 Options the requirements and process is quite similar to those of guaranteed options save for the requirement that admission to the DPT, even if benchmarks are met, is not guaranteed. The student, upon reaching the benchmark, must still apply to the DPT program associated with his university. At face value this appears to be the poorer of the two Accelerated 3+3 Options but in reality there is significant merit.

Here is how the non-guaranteed Accelerated 3+3 Options works at Temple (Temple does not have a guaranteed Accelerated 3+3 Option). The student applies to Temple as a freshman (out of high school) for one of eight majors: biology, chemistry, physics, kinesiology, computer science, informational science and technology, math or natural sciences. (Remember when a student applies to any college or university he or she applies to the college or university and to a specific major. The student may be accepted to one’s major and the university, to the university and not one’s major, or to neither the university nor the major. If the student is accepted to Temple but not one of the majors listed above he is not eligible for the accelerated 3+3 option).

Once accepted to one of the eight majors above, the student must declare to his/her advisor and to the [Office of Pre-Professional Health Studies Advising](#) during the fall semester of the freshman year interest in the Accelerated 3+3 Option for PT. Beginning spring semester freshman year the student’s schedule of classes will be amended to allow the completion of all required major and general education coursework within three years.

The student is then free to apply to Temple’s DPT program after the sophomore year for entrance into the DPT program one year later, in July- skipping the senior year of undergraduate school. The courses during the first year of the DPT program will count dually toward the undergraduate degree and the doctoral degree. Accelerated students are awarded the undergraduate bachelor’s degree after the first year of the DPT program. The student may not apply to any other DPT program at this time. The student in the accelerated option must maintain a benchmark 3.5 cumulative GPA and a 3.4 GPA in his/her major and complete the 10 pre-requisite courses. If the GPA benchmarks are not met after the

sophomore year the student simply stays in school, completes the senior year of college, earns the undergraduate degree, and then applies with everyone else (in the standard 4+3 option)- and is free to not only apply to Temple but to any DPT program in the nation. If the student changes his mind to another graduate program such as pharmacy or medical school, the student simply reverts back to the 4-year undergraduate degree and then applies to those programs. If the student feels the Accelerated 3+3 Option curriculum a bit overwhelming, the student simply reverts back to the 4+3 curriculum. There is really no downside or risk to attempting the Temple non-guaranteed 3+3 Option.

Choosing an Accelerated Option is a difficult decision. Students in the senior year of high school, if interested in this option, must choose not only the undergraduate institution, the major, but also will be required to attend the same school for the doctoral degree.

For persons interested in either the accelerated or standard options for the DPT Program at Temple, pre-application advising sessions may be schedule by calling or emailing Scott Burns, PT, DPT, OCS, FAAOMPT at scot.burns@temple.edu or 215-707-9121.