



NORTHEAST
COMMUNITY
COLLEGE

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Application Packet

2025-2026 Term

Application Packet Instructions for Physical Therapist Assistant Program for 2025-2026 Term

Overview

Thank you for your interest in the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program at Northeast Community College. Please read the following instructions carefully to ensure your application is complete. Our program has rolling admissions, and completed applications are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis. The selection process will take place during the spring semester for each cohort admitted to the program for the upcoming fall semester. Up to 24 applicants will be admitted into each cohort. If all seats are not filled during the spring selection, a second selection process will occur in the summer of the same year to fill the remaining available seats.

Application Deadline

- **Spring Selection:** All application materials must be submitted by **May 1, 2025**. Applicants that qualify for the interview will be sent specific dates and times via email.
- **Summer Selection:** If a second selection process occurs, a new deadline will be updated on the website, northeast.edu/admissions/pta-admissions.

Required Application Materials

1. PTA Program Application Form

- Complete the “PTA Program Application Form” provided in this packet. Ensure all sections are completed and that your contact information is accurate.
- Submit the application form at your earliest convenience prior to the deadline, so we can begin processing your file.

2. Official Transcripts

- **High school applicants:** Submit your final high school transcript AND official college transcripts from any institutions where dual credit courses were completed.
- **Transfer applicants:** Submit all official college transcripts.

3. Job Shadowing Hours Documentation

- Contact Lisa Belz, Career Education & Outreach Coordinator, at lbelz1@northeast.edu, or 402-844-7460, to schedule a time to arrange job shadowing opportunities.

Send High School Official Transcripts to the Admissions Office.

- Northeast Community College
ATTN: Admissions Office
P.O. Box 469
Norfolk, NE 68702-0469

Send College Official Transcripts to the Registrar's Office. Including any dual/college courses taken at another institution and any foreign college transcripts.

- Northeast Community College
ATTN: Registrar Office
P.O. Box 469
Norfolk, NE 68702-0469

- Read and sign the job shadowing waiver section of the “Evaluation of Job Shadowing Form” provided in this packet. Deliver one form to each supervising physical therapist or physical therapist assistant when you attend your shadowing experience. The clinician you shadow must complete and submit the form to the program, using the options listed on the form.
- A minimum of 8 hours of inpatient shadowing AND 8 hours of outpatient shadowing must be documented on the forms.

4. Resume and Cover Letter

- Submit a current resume highlighting your education, work experience, volunteer work, and any relevant skills or certifications.
- Submit a cover letter explaining your interest in the physical therapist assistant profession, your career goals, and why you believe you are a good fit for the Northeast PTA program.
- Refer to the Resume and Cover Letter Scoring Rubrics provided in this packet for content and formatting. Contact Terri Heggemeyer, Director of Career Services, at terrih@northeast.edu, or 402-844-7263 for assistance in resume content, format, grammar, and spelling.

5. Personal Interview

- After an initial review of materials submitted, applicants will be notified if they are eligible for an interview. Eligibility is based on the application scores (see individual rubrics for scoring). Up to 35 applicants with the highest cumulative scores will be invited for interviews.
- Interviews will be conducted in person by the PTA admissions committee. Alternate modes of interviews may be requested if the applicant is unable to attend in person.
- Refer to the Interview Rubric provided in this packet for applicant characteristics being assessed. Contact Terri Heggemeyer, Director of Career Services, at terrih@northeast.edu, or 402-844-7263 for assistance with interview practice.

Submission Options

- **Mailing Submission:** Send application materials to the following address:
 - Northeast Community College
Attn: PTA Program
P.O. Box 469
Norfolk, NE 68702-0469
- **Electronic Submission:** Submit application materials to either of the following:
 - **Fax:** 402-844-7390
 - **Email:** pta@northeast.edu
- **In-person Submission:** Deliver application materials to:
 - Northeast Community College, Norfolk Campus
Ag and Allied Health building, room 210

Application Review and Interview Processes

- Applications are reviewed as they are received. Early submission is encouraged.
- High school GPA, and/or required general education dual credit/college coursework GPA, is weighted 50% of the total application score. The following minimum scores are required for admissions into the program. Scores below the minimum may result in a delay in admission, but do not prevent admission. Please speak to a program advisor for an academic plan.
 - Cumulative high school GPA of 3.0 or higher
 - Cumulative general education college/dual credit coursework GPA of 2.5 or higher. Applicants must earn a C+ or higher in all program-required coursework.
 - Reading ACT score of 19 or higher OR equivalent placement testing
- Resumes and cover letters are scored with a common rubric and are weighted 10% of the total application score.
- Job shadowing evaluations are scored according to the clinicians' completed evaluation forms and are weighted 20% of the total application score.
- Interviews are scored with a common rubric and are weighted 20% of the total application score.
- Applicants will be notified of their acceptance status within one week after the interview process is completed.

Contact Information

If you have any questions regarding the application process, contact the PTA Program at pta@northeast.edu or (402) 844-7326.

We look forward to receiving your application and wish you the best of luck in the admissions process!

Northeast Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, gender, religion, national or ethnic origin, military veteran status, political affiliation, marital or family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender expression or identity in education programs, admissions policies, employment policies, financial aid or other College administered programs and activities.

It is the intent of Northeast Community College to comply with both the letter and the spirit of the law in making certain discrimination does not exist in its policies, regulations and operations.

Inquiries may be addressed to the Northeast Compliance Officer for Title IX, ADA, Section 504; Associate Vice President of Human Resources, 801 East Benjamin Avenue, P.O. Box 469, Norfolk, NE 68702-0469; phone: (402) 844-7046; email: complianceofficer@northeast.edu; or mail: Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, One Petticoat Lane, 1010 Walnut Street, 3rd floor, Suite 320, Kansas City, MO 64106.

Cover Letter Scoring Rubric for PTA Program for 2025-2026 Term

Criteria	Excellent (4 points)	Good (3 points)	Fair (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Professional Format and Structure	Proper cover letter format (header, introduction, body, closing). Consistently professional appearance and tone.	Generally well-structured but may have minor formatting issues (e.g., missing element). Tone is mostly professional.	Some structural issues or formatting errors (e.g., improper length or missing sections). Tone inconsistent.	Disorganized or missing major sections. Lacks a professional tone. Unclear structure.
Personalization and Tailoring	Letter is personalized for the vocational program. Clear mention of program name, specific interests, and reasons for applying.	Somewhat personalized for the program but lacks depth in showing understanding of or passion for the specific field.	Minimal personalization or generic letter with little connection to the program or vocational goals.	Completely generic or vague, no attempt to connect letter to program or personal interests.
Clear and Relevant Objective	Clearly states the applicant's goal and interest in the vocational program. Demonstrates a strong fit for the program's objectives.	Objective is clear, though lacks depth or could be more specifically aligned with vocational program goals.	Objective is vague, unclear, or loosely connected to vocational training.	No clear objective stated, or objective is irrelevant to the program.
Motivation and Enthusiasm	Shows strong enthusiasm for the field and vocational training. Demonstrates passion and motivation to succeed in the program.	Displays interest in the program, but enthusiasm may be more generic or not as well articulated.	Some interest shown, but little passion or clear motivation. The connection to the program is weak.	Lacks clear motivation or enthusiasm. No obvious passion for the field or program.
Relevant Skills and Experience	Clearly highlights relevant skills, experience, or projects that align with the vocational program. Shows strong preparation for the field.	Some relevant skills or experience mentioned but lacks depth or specific examples. Still somewhat related to the program.	Few or weak examples of skills or experience. Not well connected to vocational goals.	No mention of relevant skills or experience, or those listed are irrelevant to the program.
Connection to Vocational Program	Demonstrates a clear understanding of the vocational program and its offerings. Explains how the program aligns with personal goals.	Some understanding of the program but lacks depth in explaining the connection to personal goals.	Minimal understanding of the program. Vague or weak connection to personal or professional goals.	No clear connection between the program and the applicant's goals or understanding of the program.
Strength of Closing Paragraph	Concludes with a strong call to action, reiterating interest in the program.	Conclusion is polite and professional but lacks a strong call to	Weak conclusion. Lacks clarity,	No clear closing or lacks professionalism.

	Professional, confident, and polite closing.	action or confident tone.	enthusiasm or polite closing.	No call to action or closing statement.
Grammar, Spelling, and Language	Free of grammatical, spelling, and punctuation errors. Writing is clear, concise, and professional.	Few minor grammar or spelling errors. Writing is mostly clear and professional.	Several errors in grammar, spelling, or punctuation. Writing lacks clarity or professionalism.	Numerous grammar and spelling errors. Writing is unclear, unprofessional, or hard to understand.
Length and Conciseness	Appropriate length (typically 1 page). Clearly communicates key points without unnecessary repetition or wordiness.	Slightly too long or short but generally concise and clear. Minor repetition or wordiness.	Noticeably too long or short. Writing may be repetitive or lack clear focus.	Letter is either far too long or short. Lacks focus and is overly wordy or incomplete.
Overall Fit and Impression	Leaves a strong impression of a well-prepared, motivated candidate. Shows a clear fit for the program and enthusiasm for vocational training.	Leaves a generally positive impression but lacks a strong, standout connection to the program.	Weak impression, with limited connection to the program or weak overall fit for vocational training.	Poor impression. The candidate appears unprepared, unmotivated, or not a good fit for the program.

Scoring Guide

- **36-40 points:** Exceptional cover letter, highly recommended for admission.
- **31-35 points:** Strong cover letter, recommended for admission with some areas for improvement.
- **21-30 points:** Average cover letter, may benefit from additional guidance or revision.
- **Below 20 points:** Weak cover letter, not recommended for admission without significant improvement.

This rubric is designed to assess a student's ability to clearly express their motivation, skills, and understanding of the PTA program. It helps evaluate their readiness and passion for pursuing a PTA degree.

Resume Scoring Rubric for PTA Program for 2025-2026 Term

Criteria	Excellent (4 points)	Good (3 points)	Fair (2 points)	Needs Improvement (1 point)
Formatting and Organization	Resume is well-organized, clear, and professional. Easy to read, with consistent fonts, headings, and bullet points.	Clear formatting with minor inconsistencies. Easy to follow but with occasional clutter or misaligned elements.	Formatting lacks clarity, with inconsistent font sizes or misaligned sections. Some difficulty following the structure.	Poorly formatted and disorganized. Hard to read and follow. Significant errors in structure and layout.
Contact Information	Full name, phone number, email, and address are complete, professional, and easy to locate.	Complete contact information but lacks professionalism (e.g., unprofessional email address).	Missing one element of contact information or poorly presented.	Missing multiple elements of contact information. Unclear or unprofessional presentation.
Objective/Personal Statement	Clear, concise, and aligned with vocational goals. Demonstrates strong interest in the program. Tailored to the specific program.	Generalized statement but clearly expresses interest and skills. Could be more specific or targeted.	Objective is vague or lacks focus. Not strongly related to vocational goals.	No objective or statement provided, or completely irrelevant to the program.
Relevant Skills	Clearly lists vocational and technical skills relevant to the program. Demonstrates a strong fit for the field.	Lists relevant skills but lacks specific examples or depth. Still relevant to the vocational program.	Few skills listed, or those listed are somewhat related to the program. Lacks focus.	Skills are not relevant to the vocational program or missing entirely.
Work Experience	Strong, relevant work experience (internships, part-time jobs, or volunteering). Clearly demonstrates responsibilities and accomplishments.	Some work experience related to the program but may lack detail or clear connection to vocational field.	Minimal or unrelated work experience. Lacks detail or accomplishments.	No work experience listed, or experience is irrelevant to the program.
Education	Lists relevant educational background with clear details (school, GPA, graduation date, or coursework). Demonstrates strong academic commitment.	Includes relevant education but lacks detail or depth. Minimal information provided (e.g., missing GPA or key coursework).	Education is only loosely related to vocational goals or lacking key details.	Educational background is unclear, missing, or irrelevant.
Extracurriculars or Volunteer Work	Includes relevant extracurricular activities or volunteer	Some extracurricular or volunteer experience, but not	Minimal involvement in extracurriculars or volunteer work. Not	No extracurricular activities or volunteer work listed.

	work demonstrating leadership, teamwork, or vocational interests.	strongly related to vocational goals.	clearly linked to program.	
Language and Grammar	Free from grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors. Language is clear and professional.	Minor language, grammar, or spelling issues. Generally clear and professional.	Multiple language or grammar issues, or writing is unclear.	Major grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, or unclear language throughout.
Overall Fit for Program	Resume clearly demonstrates a strong fit for the vocational program, highlighting relevant skills, experience, and motivation.	Resume indicates a general fit for the program but could demonstrate more depth or alignment.	Weak connection to the program. Some relevance but lacks a strong vocational focus.	No clear fit for the program. Resume does not indicate relevance to vocational training.

Scoring Guide

- **31-36 points:** Exceptional candidate; highly recommended for admission.
- **26-30 points:** Strong candidate; recommended for admission with some minor areas for improvement.
- **20-25 points:** Average candidate; may benefit from additional preparation or guidance for vocational training.
- **Below 20 points:** Weak candidate; not recommended for admission without significant improvement or additional qualifications.

This rubric assesses both technical preparation and soft skills relevant to success in the PTA program. It can help differentiate students based on their readiness and alignment with the program's goals.

Interview Scoring Rubric for PTA Program for 2025-2026 Term

1. Communication Skills (20 points)

- **20 points:** Excellent communication; candidate expresses ideas clearly, listens actively, and responds thoughtfully. Demonstrates professional and empathetic communication styles suitable for healthcare settings.
- **15 points:** Candidate communicates clearly most of the time but may have minor issues with clarity, listening, or responding appropriately.
- **10 points:** Communication is inconsistent; candidate struggles to express ideas, or responses are incomplete or off-topic.
- **5 points:** Poor communication; candidate cannot effectively express ideas or engage in a professional conversation.

2. Knowledge of the PTA Role (15 points)

- **15 points:** Strong understanding of the PTA role, scope of practice, and relationship to physical therapists. Demonstrates knowledge of ethical and professional standards.
- **11 points:** Adequate understanding, with some gaps in knowledge or unclear explanations of the PTA role.
- **7 points:** Basic understanding of the PTA role but lacks depth or significant details.
- **3 points:** Little or no understanding of the PTA role or misrepresents the profession.

3. Interest in the Profession (15 points)

- **15 points:** Candidate shows clear enthusiasm, passion for helping others, and a strong motivation to pursue a career in physical therapy.
- **11 points:** Candidate expresses interest but with less depth or passion. Motivation for choosing PTA as a career is somewhat clear.
- **7 points:** Limited interest or unclear motivation for pursuing the PTA profession.
- **3 points:** Shows little to no interest or passion for the field.

4. Problem-Solving Skills (15 points)

- **15 points:** Demonstrates strong critical thinking and problem-solving skills through clear examples. Able to describe how they handle challenges or difficult situations.
- **11 points:** Adequate problem-solving skills; provides examples but lacks depth or clarity in approach.
- **7 points:** Weak examples of problem-solving, with limited ability to describe handling complex situations.
- **3 points:** Lacks critical thinking or problem-solving skills, unable to provide relevant examples.

5. Professionalism (15 points)

- **15 points:** Displays strong professionalism in demeanor, attire, punctuality, and attitude. Expresses commitment to ethical behavior in healthcare.
- **11 points:** Generally professional but may lack in one or two areas (e.g., attire, punctuality, etc.).
- **7 points:** Displays inconsistent professionalism, with some areas of concern.
- **3 points:** Unprofessional behavior, attire, or attitude during the interview.

6. Interpersonal Skills and Empathy (10 points)

- **15 points:** Demonstrates strong interpersonal skills, empathy, and the ability to work well with diverse populations. Shows genuine concern for others' well-being.
- **11 points:** Good interpersonal skills and empathy but lacks depth in demonstrating these qualities.
- **7 points:** Inconsistent interpersonal skills or limited empathy; struggles to connect with others.
- **3 points:** Poor interpersonal skills; lacks empathy or concern for others.

7. Cultural Competency and Awareness (10 points)

- **10 points:** Demonstrates a strong understanding and respect for cultural diversity. Able to articulate the importance of cultural competence in healthcare.
- **7 points:** Some awareness of cultural competency but lacks detailed understanding or depth.
- **4 points:** Minimal awareness of the importance of cultural competence in healthcare.
- **1 point:** Lacks awareness or understanding of cultural diversity and its role in patient care.

Scoring Guide:

- **90-100 points:** Excellent candidate; highly recommended for the program.
- **75-89 points:** Strong candidate; recommended for the program.
- **60-74 points:** Acceptable candidate; needs improvement in some areas but could succeed in the program.
- **Below 60 points:** Below expectations; not recommended for the program at this time.

This rubric ensures a comprehensive assessment of each candidate's communication skills, knowledge, motivation, and other qualities essential for the PTA program.

Application Form for PTA Program for 2025-2026 Term

Personal Information

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____

Northeast college-wide ID (if known): _____ Date of birth: _____

Personal email address: _____

Northeast email address (if known): _____

Mailing address (street, POB, city, state, zip): _____

Primary phone number: _____ Secondary phone: _____

Coursework Progress

Applicants should meet with a Northeast PTA Program advisor or faculty to discuss course requirements and create an academic plan. Indicate which courses below have been completed or are currently in progress.

- Anatomy and Physiology
 BIOS 2250 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____
 If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____
 Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____
- English Comp; or Business Communications
 ENGL 1010 or BSAD 2050 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____
 If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____
 Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____
- Applied Statistics
 MATH 2170 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____
 If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____
 Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____
- Introduction to Psychology
 PSYC 1810 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____
 If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____
 Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____
- Comprehensive Medical Terminology; or Medical Terminology for the PTA
 HLTH 1060 or PTAS 1010 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____
 If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____
 Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____
- Fundamentals of Communications; or Public Speaking
 COMM 1010; or COMM 1110 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____

If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____
Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____

- Introduction to Physical Therapy

PTAS 1020 Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____

If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____

Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____

- Personal Finance; or Principles of Macro; or First Year Experience; or Exploring Unity & Diversity
ECON/BSAD 1040; or ECON 2110; or LNSK 1010; or SOCI 2150

Complete? Yes: _____ No: _____ In progress: _____

If complete what was the final letter grade? If in progress, use the midterm grade: _____

Institution name: _____ Credit hours: _____

Education Information

Are you currently enrolled at a college other than Northeast Community College? Yes or No _____

If yes, name and location of institution: _____

If applicable, what is the highest level of degree you have been awarded? _____

How did you hear about the PTA Program at Northeast? _____

Background Information

Excluding minor traffic violations, have you ever been convicted of a misdemeanor or felony?

Yes _____ No _____ If Yes, briefly describe: _____

The program does not use the above information in the admission criteria. If you answered "Yes" to the above question, the state in which you intend to practice as a physical therapist assistant (PTA) may require you to submit court documents prior to approving your certification or license. Each case is handled on an individual basis. The decision made by the state may vary from denial of initial certification to a probationary period after becoming a certified/licensed PTA.

Signature

I certify that all information on this form is complete and accurate, and I agree to abide by the policies and regulations of Northeast Community College. Completion and submission of this form does not indicate that I am accepted into the PTA Program.

Applicant's Printed Name: _____

Applicant's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Once this form is complete, submit to Northeast Community College by mail: Northeast Community College, Attention PTA Program, POB 469, Norfolk, NE 68702-0469; by fax: 402-844-7390; or email: PTA@northeast.edu. Inquiries about the application can be directed to PTA@northeast.edu or 402-844-7326.

Job Shadowing Waiver for PTA Program for 2025-2026 Term

Applicant's Waiver

This section must be completed by the applicant prior to scoring. Once signed, give waiver to clinician to include with the job shadowing evaluation.

Applicant's name: _____ Phone: _____

Under provisions of Public Law 93-380, the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act, a student (defined as any person who has been officially admitted and registered at Northeast Community College) has the right to review evaluations unless the student waives this right at the time the evaluation is solicited. Please initial ONE of the two statements below:

_____ I hereby *waive my right* to review evaluations required by Northeast's PTA Program regarding my application for admission into the program at Northeast Community College.

-or-

_____ I hereby *reserve the right* to review evaluations required by Northeast's PTA Program regarding my application for admission into the program at Northeast Community College.

Applicant's Signature

Date

Applicant's Initials: _____ I acknowledge that the waiver was read, and the waiver signed before providing to the clinician prior to the job shadowing. A signed waivers must be provided with each evaluation.

Job Shadowing Evaluation for PTA Program for 2025-2026 Term

Evaluation of Job Shadowing

Please score the applicant on the topics below. Once scored, fill in the details regarding the job shadowing setting.

	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Dependability: The applicant arrived on time.			
Presentation: The applicant's body language communicated engagement.			
Professionalism: The applicant was dressed in professional attire.			
Verbal Professionalism: The applicant was verbally interactive with clinician, staff, and patients.			
Empathy: The applicant was sensitive and responsive.			
Cultural Competence: The applicant appeared capable of looking at patients from the full perspective of humanity.			
Communication: The applicant asked appropriate and medically related questions.			
Motivation: The applicant displayed a positive attitude and interest in PT.			
Recommendation: I recommend this applicant for acceptance to the PTA program.			
Waiver: The applicant's waiver was signed and provided prior to shadowing.			

Additional comments or observations from the evaluator are welcome but not required: .

Indicate the number of hours, dates, and whether inpatient* or outpatient* shadowing the applicant observed under your supervision.

* Inpatient, e.g., skilled nursing, acute or sub-acute care, Medicare Part A, etc.

* Outpatient, e.g., wellness, occupational health, private practice, Medicare Part B, etc.

Date: _____ Hours: _____ In- or out-patient? _____

Date: _____ Hours: _____ In- or out-patient? _____

Evaluator's Printed Name

Facility Name

Evaluator's Signature

Phone Number

Clinician's Instructions

Do not complete evaluation until the applicant has provided a signed waiver. The completed evaluation and waiver should not be returned to the applicant. Send evaluations by mail: Northeast Community College, Attn PTA Program, POB 469, Norfolk, NE 68702-0439; or by fax: 402-844-7390; or by email: PTA@northeast.edu. Inquiries can be directed to PTA@northeast.edu or 402-844-7326. The evaluator may opt to return the evaluation and waiver to the applicant but only if the forms are in a sealed envelope with the evaluator's signature across the seal.