

DPT to PhD in Physical Therapy

School of Allied Health Professions



DEGREE OFFERED

w DPT to PhD in Physical Therapy

66 units

This program is offered in face-to-face and online formats

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

To prepare leaders in the profession of physical therapy who are capable of conducting research that will improve the lives of people through whole person care, to serve as client/patient advocates, and to serve as educators in entry-level and graduate physical therapy programs.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

For almost three decades, graduates from our research orientated DSc (1995) and PhD (2015) programs have expanded the lives of students and patients around the world. Loma Linda University's strategic plan includes a powerful goal of "Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere" education which gave rise to our most recent program, the online PhD in Physical Therapy. This program adds extra flexibility for working physical therapists who are seeking a modern, evidence-based curriculum to serve the whole person.

Whether your goal is educating the next generation of therapists, expanding the current body of evidence-based practice knowledge or improving your skills as a clinician, this program will adapt to your busy schedule. On-line classes combine with routine mentoring to produce quality, cutting-edge research in a variety of laboratories, both on and off campus.

As part of the School of Allied Health Professions (SAHP), Department of Physical Therapy, the PhD program begins with a distinctive core of classes. These fundamental courses align with the American Physical Therapy Association's movement science agenda as well as with LLU's Mission, "To continue the healing ministry of Jesus Christ".

This curriculum is uniquely and individually designed to meet the student's interests, background and desired area of research. This is accomplished through collaboration with the program director and the dissertation chair who work carefully with the student to create an interesting, challenging and applicable direction of study that will facilitate acquisition of the skills needed to produce exceptional research. Because this is a research-oriented doctorate degree, the PhD student will then select a research guidance committee consisting of 3-4 content experts to facilitate student-driven, faculty-supported research that is published by the end of the program.

After completing the required number of units of didactic work and a comprehensive examination, PhD students will engage in the active research process utilizing the experience, skills and knowledge of their dissertation chair. These esteemed research mentors are recognized faculty of the LLU School of Allied Health & Faculty of Graduate Studies with a wide diversity of research interests and active research studies.

The PhD student's research will take place in one of several specialized laboratories including:

1. Orthoscience Research Laboratory
2. Neuroscience Research Laboratory
3. Motion Capture Research Laboratory
4. SAHP Clinical Molecular Research Laboratory

Domain 1: Core Curriculum

PTGR 552	Pain Science	12u
PTGR 580	Movement Science III: Bio Motor Control	3u
PTGR 550	Psychoneuroimmunology	3u
PTGR 591	Biomechanics I	3u
PTGR 599	Comprehensive Exam	0u

Domain 2: Clinical & Applied Sciences

6u
The Dissertation Chair in collaboration with the Program Director and the student will select courses from the approved list based on the proposed research topic

Domain 3: Lifestyle Health & Wellness

AHCJ 528	Lifestyle Health & Wellness	3u
----------	-----------------------------	----

Domain 4: Education, Administration & Leadership

12u
(Select four from the list below)

AHCJ 506	Education Evaluation Clinical Assessment	3u
AHCJ 509	Transformational Teaching	3u
AHCJ 515	Curriculum Development in Higher Education	3u
AHCJ 556	Administration in Higher Education	3u
AHCJ 564	Collaborative Learning in Higher Ed	3u
AHCJ 599*	Directed Teaching	1u

Domain 5: Religion

RELR 540	Health & Wholeness	9u
RELE ---	Graduate-level – Ethical	3u
REL T ---	Graduate-level – Theological	3u

Domain 6: Research & Statistics

AHRM 581	Research & Statistics I	24u
AHRM 582	Research & Statistics II	3u
PTGR 693	Research & Statistics III	3u
	Development & Approval of Research Topic	
PTGR 694	Research & Statistics IV	3u
	Proposal Development & IRB Approval	
PTGR 695	Research & Statistics V	
	Data Collection (A, B)	3u, 3u
PTGR 696	Research & Statistics VI	3u
	Data Analysis	
PTGR 699	Research & Statistics VII	3u
	Preliminary Dissertation	

TOTAL 66 quarter units

*Graduate Certificate in Teaching is available with one additional unit of Directed Teaching.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

PhD Program Graduate will demonstrate:

- Skills to design and conduct novel, original research, provide evidence of an understanding of research designs and the ability to formulate, develop methodologies, collect data, excogitate conclusions, and effectively disseminate research findings;
- Qualities of lifelong learning and commitment to scholarship after graduation;
- The ability to add to the body of knowledge in physical therapy research literature through publications and presentations;
- A commitment to conducting research in lifestyle health and wellness and providing whole-person care.
- The ability to serve as an educator in entry-level, post-professional and graduate level programs
- Personal and group leadership skills at institutional, professional, national, and global levels.

ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

- Grade Point Average (GPA) Minimum = 3.3/4.0.
- GRE or approved substitution (e.g., structured interview)

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

- TOEFL score of 80 or higher
- Foreign Transcript Evaluation (World Education Services [WES])

PROGRAM INFORMATION

- Classes meet every Tuesday and Thursday evening from 5:00 to 10:20 p.m.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Please review LLU's Find a Program website [page](#) for the most up-to-date information on the cost of attendance or scan the QR code below:



Each student will be required to perform one or more research projects in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Physical Therapy. The typical costs for student research projects range from \$2,500 to \$10,000. During the research project planning and feasibility processes, each PhD student will create a research budget in consultation with their dissertation chair. The physical therapy department will cover the first \$2,500 of approved research expenses. The student and/or their sponsor will be required to cover any research-related expenses over this amount. When necessary, the program director and dissertation chair will assist the student in attempting to secure funding for unmet research expenses.

Student Health Requirements:

Please review the New Students—Health Requirements. <https://llu.edu/campus-spiritual-life/student-health-service/new-students-health-requirements>.



COMPUTER REQUIREMENTS

HARDWARE

- Personal computer or laptop
- iPad tablet to be used with iBook manuals with still and video image and speakers
- Microphone
- Webcam
- Additional Hardware may be Required

SOFTWARE

- Windows 10 or newer
- Mac OS 10.14 or newer
- Please visit LLU Libraries, Information for Students, Software, Printing, and IT Help for available software for students (e.g., Canvas, PowerPoint, EndNote, Google Drive, Infobase Learning Cloud (e.g., Microsoft Office, Windows, OS X, Adobe), Panopto, Zoom, etc.) <https://libguides.llu.edu/infoforstudents/software>
- Additional Software may be Required (Details can be found in the Course Syllabus)

INTERNET CONNECTION

- High speed Broadband Internet Connection is Required

HOW TO APPLY

For further information or to apply, please visit <http://alliedhealth.llu.edu/academics/physical-therapy/degree-options/physical-therapy-phd>

CONTACT US

Everett Lohman, III, D.Sc., P.T., OCS

Associate Dean, Graduate Academic Affairs

Assistant Dean, Research Affairs

Program Director, Post-professional Physical Therapy Programs

Director, Orthoscience Research Laboratory

Director, Motion Capture Research Laboratory

Professor

LOMA LINDA UNIVERSITY | School of Allied Health Professions & Faculty of Graduate Studies

HARVARD UNIVERSITY | Harvard Macy Institute Scholar and Alumnus

Loma Linda University

24951 N. Circle Drive, Room A-620, Loma Linda, CA 92350

909-558-1000, ext. 83171

elohman@llu.edu

“As a working physical therapist, this program enhanced my knowledge and taught me the value of the whole person care”.

K. Sabha

Reviewed 08/24/2025



LOMA LINDA
UNIVERSITY

LLU at a Glance

>> Founded in 1905 >> A Seventh-day Adventist institution integrating health, science, and Christian faith >> Offers over 200 programs in the health sciences >> Houses eight schools: Allied Health Professions, Behavioral Health, Dentistry, Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Public Health, and Religion >> About 4,000 students >> Over 1,300 faculty >> 2,000 professional researchers >> \$46 million dollars in private and public grants generated each year >> Many service-learning opportunities

Loma Linda University
Loma Linda, California 92350
909.558.4632
Website: www.llu.edu
www.facebook.com/llualliedhealth