

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY AND ATHLETIC TRAINING

The Saint Louis University Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training offers bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees in the fields of athletic training, exercise science and physical therapy. The SLU department's strong reputation includes being ranked #28 for graduate programs in physical therapy from U.S. News and World Report in 2026.

Department Mission

We are a collaborative community promoting reflective person-centered healthcare and pursuing truth and knowledge in service to humanity.

Programs Overview

The Department of Physical Therapy and Athletic Training offers the Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science (B.S.E.S.) – Exercise and Wellness, the Master in Athletic Training (M.A.T.), and the Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.).

The Bachelor of Science in Exercise Science at Saint Louis University consists of three pathways. The exercise and wellness concentration is for students who seek careers as an exercise physiologist, medical scientist, personal trainer, health and wellness coordinator, wellness coach or recreation specialist. This exercise and wellness concentration of the exercise science, B.S. is available at Saint Louis University and Saint Louis University-Madrid. SLU also offers the exercise science, B.S., with concentrations in athletic training or physical therapy. These concentrations are for students who are admitted to the direct entry toward a Master of Athletic Training (M.A.T.) or a Doctor of Physical Therapy (D.P.T.).

The Master of Athletic Training degree prepares students to sit for the national certification exam for certification as an athletic trainer. Athletic trainers are multidimensional health care providers working within a collaborative health care team focused on primary care, prevention, examination, treatment and rehabilitation of emergent, acute or chronic injuries and medical conditions. (NATA)

The Doctor of Physical Therapy degree prepares students to sit for licensure as a physical therapist. Physical therapists are health care providers working with a broad variety of patients and clients impacted by disease, injury, and movement dysfunction. (APTA) Physical therapists focus on optimizing quality of life through the maintenance, restoration or improvement of the patient/client's ability to move.

Programs

- Athletic Training, Master of (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/health-sciences/physical-therapy-athletic-training/athletic-training-program/>)
- Drake University Bachelor's to Master of Athletic Training (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/health-sciences/physical-therapy-athletic-training/drake-univ-slu-mat/>)
- Physical Therapy, Doctor of (<https://catalog.slu.edu/colleges-schools/health-sciences/physical-therapy-athletic-training/physical-therapy-program/>)

Faculty Leadership

Chris Sebelksi, Ph.D., PT, DPT, OCS, CSCS (<https://www.slu.edu/doiisy/faculty/sebelksi-chris.php>)

Department chair

Elissa Held Bradford, PT, Ph.D., NCS, MSCS (<https://www.slu.edu/doiisy/faculty/heldbradford-elissa.php>)

Assistant program director, physical therapy

Katie Sniffen, Ph.D., ATC (<https://www.slu.edu/doiisy/faculty/sniffen-katie.php>)

Program director, athletic training

Faculty

Jennifer Anderson, PT, D.P.T., CCS (<https://www.slu.edu/doiisy/faculty/anderson-jennifer.php>)

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Carol Beckel, Ph.D., PT (<https://www.slu.edu/doiisy/faculty/beckel-carol.php>)

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Gretchen Salsich, Ph.D., PT (<https://www.slu.edu/doiisy/faculty/salsich-gretchen.php>)

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