



# 2021-2022

## STUDENT HANDBOOK



NORTHWEST FLORIDA  
STATE COLLEGE

## Notice of Equal Access/Equal Opportunity and Nondiscrimination

Northwest Florida State College is dedicated to the concepts of equity and equal opportunity. It is the specific intention of the College not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, genetic information, national origin, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital status, disability, or age in programs or activities, in its employment practices, or in the admission and treatment of students in its programs or activities.

If you have questions regarding compliance with the College's nondiscrimination policy or a complaint regarding harassment or discrimination, please contact the College's Equity Coordinator:

Roberta Mackey  
Executive Director of Human Resources, Equity Coordinator  
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Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §§ 1681, et seq.) and its implementing regulations ([34 C.F.R. part 106](#)) prohibit and are designed to eliminate discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs or activities that receive federal financial assistance. The requirement not to discriminate in education programs or activities extends to admission and employment. Discrimination on the basis of sex includes, but is not limited to, sex-based harassment that is sufficiently serious to deny or limit an individual's ability to participate in or benefit from the program at issue. Examples of sex-based harassment include sexual harassment, sexual violence, and gender-based harassment. Northwest Florida State College complies with all aspects of Title IX and other federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination.

If you have questions regarding compliance with Title IX or if you have a complaint regarding sexual harassment or sexual violence, please contact the College's Title IX Coordinator:

Jessica Holley-Guiles  
HR Specialist, Title IX Coordinator  
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Phone: (850) 729-5365  
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To read the College's full Title IX procedure, [click here](#).

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## WELCOME

Welcome to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Northwest Florida State College. This is a challenging program that will require a high level of dedication and commitment in order to prepare you for a career as a Physical Therapist Assistant. We are here to assist you as you work toward graduation and completion of the National Physical Therapy Exam, but ultimately it is your responsibility to put in the time and effort to achieve success. Graduation does not guarantee passage of the exam and/or finding employment as a Physical Therapist Assistant.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program curriculum has been arranged to reflect the progression in course content from basic to more complex information. The general education coursework provides important baseline information needed to incorporate into the technical PTA courses. As you progress in the program, you will need to incorporate concepts and information from multiple courses and resources in order to create solutions to various patient situations or problems. This requires individualized problem solving and critical thinking skills. You cannot just memorize the material and be successful. You must learn to integrate and apply the information in order to provide safe quality interventions to patients.

This handbook is designed to serve you throughout the program. The information contained in the handbook will help you understand the policies and procedures in place to help you navigate through the program. It is your responsibility to become knowledgeable of the contents contained in this handbook. You will be required to sign and return a statement (Handbook Acknowledgement) verifying that you understand the contents and agree to abide by the guidelines set forth within. This will be kept on file for your duration in the program. The handbook does not replace Board Policy, the College Catalog, the Student Handbook, or any other official college policy and procedure. It is considered an explanatory supplemental, to the rules set forth by the College.

We look forward to having you in our program and are excited to assist you on your journey of becoming a Physical Therapist Assistant.

Sincerely,



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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is a sequence of courses that prepares students for employment as physical therapist assistants working under the supervision of licensed physical therapists in various healthcare settings. Learning opportunities develop academic, technical and professional knowledge and skills required for job acquisition, retention and advancement. The program emphasizes a combination of didactic and clinical instruction to develop skills necessary for graduation and ultimately employment.

Clinical experiences are completed at multiple various clinical sites across different types of treatment settings. The support from the administration and staff of the clinical sites is crucial in maintaining a quality educational program.

Program graduates receive an Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant degree, have the skills of an entry level physical therapist assistant, and are eligible to apply for the National Physical Therapy Exam for Physical Therapist Assistants offered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy.

Information in this handbook is subject to change. Students will be informed of these changes as they occur.

## **ACCREDITATION INFORMATION**

Effective November 3, 2020, Northwest Florida State College has been granted Candidate for Accreditation status by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (3030 Potomac Ave. Suite 100, Alexandria, VA, 22305-3085; phone: 703-706-3245; email: [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org)). If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 850-863-6511 or email [pta@nwfsc.edu](mailto:pta@nwfsc.edu).

Candidate for Accreditation is an accreditation status of affiliation with the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education that indicates the program may matriculate students in technical/professional courses. Achievement of Candidate for Accreditation status does not assure that the program will be granted Initial Accreditation.

## **PROGRAM MISSION AND GOALS**

### **Mission**

The mission of the Northwest Florida State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program is to provide high quality education, based on contemporary physical therapy practice, preparing individuals to become licensed physical therapist assistants; who, under the supervision and direction of physical therapists, provide effective, ethical patient care across all patient populations and settings, and engage in life-long learning to meet the needs of the local community.

### **Goals**

1. Graduates will effectively demonstrate and apply intraprofessional and interprofessional collaborative practices to serve the region as a part of the health care team.
2. Graduates will demonstrate a commitment to lifelong learning and professional growth.
3. Program faculty will provide a positive learning environment and a curriculum consistent with contemporary physical therapy practice.
4. Program faculty will model ongoing personal and professional development through lifelong learning opportunities and participation in professional organizations.
5. Successfully prepare graduates for the NPTE with results that meet/exceed CAPTE standards for physical therapist assistant education.
6. Positively impact the regional community by providing an educational program that will prepare students for employment as entry-level physical therapist assistants.

### **Student Achievement Measures**

1. Graduation rates are at least 60% averaged over two years.
2. Ultimate licensure pass rates are at least 85%, averaged over two years.
3. Employment rates are at least 90%, averaged over two years.

### **Program Level Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Develop communication strategies (verbally, nonverbally, and in written form) that are effective, respectful, and timely in ways that are congruent with situational needs.
2. Think independently and critically, using foundational physical therapy knowledge and evidence-based practice, to provide safe, effective and efficient treatments.
3. Perform competent data collection, implementation, safe progression and documentation of physical therapy interventions guided by patients' status and consistent with the goals and plan of care, under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist.
4. Exhibit entry-level professional behaviors demonstrated by adherence to the standards of professional practice delineated by the APTA, interprofessional teamwork and collaboration, fulfillment of administrative responsibilities, and practice within legal, ethical and regulatory frameworks.



## **PTA JOB QUALIFICATIONS AND PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS**

### **A. Competency in the NWFSC PTA Program Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)**

Each student will be expected to demonstrate competency in the NWFSC PTA Program SLOs throughout their progression in the program. These will be assessed using a variety of assessment methods appropriate to the individual outcome. These outcomes include specific physical therapy skills, behaviors, and/or knowledge. All of these outcomes are standardized and are assessed by the clinical instructors and the PTA faculty.

### **B. Essential Functions of a PTA Student**

Students of Northwest Florida State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program must be able to meet minimum standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, for successful completion of the program requirements (separate from the academic standards for admission). This document can be found in the appendix.

### **C. Disability Policy**

Northwest Florida State College is committed to providing equal access and opportunities for educational success to all students with disabilities as guided by the American Disabilities Act and other disability-related laws. Northwest Florida State College does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in any of our programs, services, or activities based on Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Support is provided through the Accommodation Resource Center (ARC). The Accommodation Resource Center (ARC) helps navigate accessibility for students with disabilities by removing educational barriers and partnering with the campus community for inclusion and support. More information can be found by visiting the ARC website: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/accommodations/>.

### **D. Clinical Facility Requirements**

Northwest Florida State College will establish contractual agreements with area clinical agencies confirming that our PTA students will abide by their policies and procedures when caring for patients in their facilities. Therefore, students will need to be oriented to each of the agencies in which they are assigned clinical patients. Some of the clinical agencies' requirements may include signing confidentiality statements, completing blood-borne pathogen competencies, having documentation of specific immunizations, and agreeing to drug screens and /or criminal background checks prior to clinical affiliations, etc. Students will need to purchase and wear a NWFSC nametag identifying them as a student when working in the clinical agencies. Clinical sites have the right to deny student access based on criminal background check or drug testing results. The inability to complete the clinical portion of the curriculum will prevent the student from progressing within the program. For more information please refer to the clinical education handbook.

### **E. Licensure Requirements to Work as a PTA**

After successful gradation of the PTA Program at NWFSC, students will be eligible to take the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) for PTAs. Per the Florida Board of Physical Therapy, applicants for licensure must have received a degree as a Physical Therapist Assistant from an institution that has been approved for the training of Physical Therapist Assistants by the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). If applicants have any affirmation answers in the Criminal, Personal, or Disciplinary sections of the application, submission of the personal statement and supporting documentation must be sent to the board. After completing the Florida licensure application, students may be eligible to sit for



the National Physical Therapist Assistant Examination and Florida Laws and Rules Exam at a Prometric testing center.

This national licensure exam entitles individuals to apply for licensure in a single state or in multiple states, if desired. Requirements for jurisprudence exams and continuing education requirements vary from state to state and should be researched for that state in which the graduate elects to apply for licensure. Requirements for licensure application and continuing education through the Florida Board of Physical Therapy can be found at <https://floridasphysicaltherapy.gov/>.

## **F. Professional Membership**

Students are required to maintain Student membership in the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) while enrolled in the program. By joining early as a student, they are assured delivery of the PT magazine and PT journal, access to vital information on the APTA's website, and a discount on membership for the first four years of their career. The NWFSC PTA program strongly encourages students to become involved and active in their profession and membership in the APTA is an excellent way to do this. APTA/FPTA Student Membership dues are approximately \$92 annually (based on 2020 APTA National and FL Chapter dues). For more information: <https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/explore-apta-membership/dues-and-payment>. Students are encouraged to become active members in the APTA and FPTA through local, state or national meeting attendance.

## **G. Community Service**

Students are required to perform 10 hours of community service during the technical portion of the program. Volunteer hours can be gained through service to the college (preview day, career day, etc.) or community activity/organization that are health care related. Proof of service will be turned into the student's program advisor and must be completed prior to graduation.

## **H. Occupational Exposure**

Program students must initial a statement acknowledging that exposure to various communicable/transferable diseases may occur during a clinical experience, and that the protection against these conditions (e.g. following safe health practices and becoming immunized) is the student's responsibility. The Handbook Acknowledgement form is located in the appendix.

Program students receive coursework regarding the use of universal precautions during the first semester of the technical portion of the program and continuing throughout their PTA coursework. Students must demonstrate an understanding of these concepts through written examinations and through utilization of universal precautions in all lab and clinical activities including but not limited to:

- Blood and airborne pathogens
- COVID-19
- Hepatitis B immunization
- Mechanism of pathogen transmission
- Appropriate disposal, labeling, and housekeeping measures
- Prevention of exposure to blood and airborne pathogens
- Universal precautions
- Exposure control, including determinations of exposure and post-exposure reporting and action

## **I. Malpractice Insurance**

All PTA students are covered by professional malpractice insurance through the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium. Fees will be assessed prior to the start of clinical practices. Students will be issued a handout during orientation outlining the program and process for reporting claims. Students must report any incidents to their clinical instructor and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. Students should follow the guidelines established at the clinical site and provide any documentation received to the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education and College's Risk Management Office.

## **J. CPR Requirement**

All PTA students are required to maintain CPR certification throughout the duration of the PTA Program. Certification course must be through the American Heart Association at the Healthcare Provider level. This must be completed prior to Physical Therapy Clinical Practice I.

# **BASIC PROGRAM INFORMATION**

## **A. Program Length and Degree Awarded**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is a two-year program with the first semester dedicated to general education/non-technical courses that need to be completed prior to full acceptance into the program. The technical phase covers four semesters including the remaining general education courses and 51 credit hours of PTA procedural and clinical education courses. Northwest Florida State College will award an Associate of Science degree in Physical Therapist Assistant to all students who successfully complete the academic and clinical requirements of the program.

## **B. Program Length Change for Charter Class**

The program is designed for students to graduate in August however initial accreditation decisions are not acted upon until the next regularly scheduled fall meeting of the Commission following an on-site visit, which must occur during the penultimate term when the charter class is enrolled. This would mean that students would complete their coursework in August and have their graduation delayed until after CAPTE's fall meeting.

In order to accommodate this delay, the program has received CAPTE authorization to split the summer coursework and extend into the fall semester in order for the charter class to finish after the accreditation decision has been made in October. This means the charter class will graduate in December 2022. CAPTE rules update in June 2020 states that all credits and degrees earned and issued by a program holding candidacy are considered to be from an accredited program. NWFSC PTA Program achieved candidate for accreditation status on November 3, 2020, thus students will graduate with an Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant and be able to sit for the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) licensure exam in January. See below for the variation in program sequence for the charter class. Students admitted to the charter class will be required to sign an acknowledgement of the extended program and delayed graduation (form located in the appendix).

## C. Program Sequence and Plan of Study

### Associate in Science in Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Curriculum

Semester	Course ID	Course Name	Credit Hours
First Year			
Fall Semester (2020)	MGF 1106	Practical Applications of Mathematics or higher level	3
	ENC 1101	English Composition I	3
	BSC 1085C	Anatomy and Physiology I	4
	HSC 1531	Medical Terminology	3
	PHI 2600	Introduction to Ethics	3
	Total		16
Spring Semester (2021)	BSC 1086C	Anatomy and Physiology II	4
	DEP 2004	Human Growth and Development	3
	PHT 1128	Functional Anatomy and Kinesiology	3
	PHT 1128L	Functional Anatomy and Kinesiology Lab	2
	PHT 1007	Topics in Physical Therapy	3
	Total		15
Second Year			
Fall Semester (2021)	PHT 1931	PTA Seminar	1
	PHT 1224	Therapeutic Techniques & Disabilities	3
	PHT 1224L	Therapeutic Techniques & Disabilities Lab	2
	PHT 1200	Basic Patient Care	2
	PHT 1200L	Basic Patient Care Lab	2
	PHT 2301	Pathological Conditions in PT	3
	PHT 1800L	Physical Therapy Clinical Practice I (2 weeks)	2
	Total		15
Spring Semester (2022)	PHT 1211	Physical Therapy Principles and Procedures	2
	PHT 1211L	Physical Therapy Principles and Procedures Lab	2
	PHT 2252	Orthopedic Disabilities & Treatment	2
	PHT 2252L	Orthopedic Disabilities & Treatment Lab	1
	PHT 2162	Neurological Disabilities & Treatment	2
	PHT 2162L	Neurological Disabilities & Treatment Lab	2
	PHT 2810L	Physical Therapy Clinical Practice II (4 weeks)	4
	Total		15
Summer Semester (2022)	PHT 2704	Advanced Rehab Concepts in PT	2
	PHT 2704L	Advanced Rehab Concepts in PT Lab	1
	PHT 2930	Trends in Physical Therapy	2
	PHT 2820L	Physical Therapy Clinical Practice III (8 weeks)	8
	Total		13
Total Hours			74

**General Education/Non-Technical Requirements: 23 credit hours**

**Technical Course Requirements: 51 credit hours**

**Total Credit Hours: 74**

**Total Off-Campus Clinical Hours: 560 clock hours**

## COURSE SEQUENCE CHANGE FOR CHARTER CLASS ONLY

(Summer semester courses split into fall semester to allow for CAPTE decision on accreditation)

Summer Semester (2022)	PHT 2704	Advanced Rehab Concepts in PT	2
	PHT 2704L	Advanced Rehab Concepts in PT Lab	1
	Total		3
Additional Semester			
Fall Semester (2022)	PHT 2930	Trends in Physical Therapy	2
	PHT 2820L	Physical Therapy Clinical Practice III (8 weeks)	8
	Total		10
Total Hours			74

### D. Program Course Descriptions

#### **MGF 1106     Practical Applications of Mathematics**

This course is designed for those students requiring on general education mathematics courses. It included systematic counting, probability, statistics, history of mathematics, geometry, set, and logic.

#### **ENC 1101     English Composition I**

Instruction and intensive practice in expository and argumentative writing including a documented paper. This is a Gordon Rule writing course and is part of the college's Writing-Across- the-Curriculum program.

#### **BSC 1085C    Human Anatomy & Physiology I**

A study of the human organism to include cells, tissues, skeleton and nervous system.

#### **HSC 1531     Medical Terminology**

An introduction to prefixes, suffixes, root words, combining forms, Latin and Greek forms, spelling and pronunciation, with emphasis on building a working medical vocabulary based on body systems.

#### **PHI 2600     Introduction to Ethics**

Ways to frame and resolve ethical issues are studied. Major historical theories including consequentialism, deontology, and virtue ethics are presented in moral arguments and narratives. This is a Gordon Rule writing course and is part of the college's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum program.

#### **BSC 1086C    Human Anatomy & Physiology II**

A study of the human organism to include the cardiovascular system, the fluid electrolyte balance, and the respiratory, excretory, endocrine, reproductive, gastrointestinal and immune systems.

#### **DEP 2004     Human Growth and Development**

A research oriented course in human development, covering the life span of the human being from conception to death. Special emphasis placed upon the interrelationships of the stages of development of the normal person.

#### **PHT 1007     Topics in Physical Therapy**

An introduction of the physical therapy profession, to include the history, ethics, settings, trends and professional issues. Delineation of the roles of the health care team, physical therapy personnel, and communication skills required as a healthcare provider. Various regulatory agencies, practice rules and regulations are also included. The student will also explore the psychological and sociological effects of disabilities, including the impact of culture and economics on the patient and family.

**PHT 1128      Functional Anatomy & Kinesiology**

An in-depth study of the structure and function of the musculoskeletal system, with emphasis on the biomechanical principles of human motion. To include the organization and function of the nervous system and how it interacts with the musculoskeletal system for control and balanced mobility of the human body. Foundations of functional motions will be covered, such as biomechanics of muscle action, levers and torques in relation to human body, and basic physics concepts that applies to physical therapy.

**PHT 1128L      Functional Anatomy & Kinesiology Lab**

In this course, the student will have the opportunity to practice and refine the concepts taught in PHT 1128. Students will develop basic physical therapy skills in palpation of bony landmarks, goniometry, gross manual muscle testing, and analysis of muscle function as it relates to the biomechanical principles of human motion.

**PHT 1200      Basic Patient Care Lecture**

Introduces the student to basic patient care skills, patient positioning and draping, treatment area preparation, transfers, wheelchair management, and data collection skills. Wound care principles are introduced including types of wounds/burns and other integumentary issues, stages of healing, treatment/dressings, and care/prevention of pressure ulcers. This course is intended to provide an in-depth exposure to the basic skills necessary in the clinic setting and appropriate professional behaviors.

**PHT 1200L      Basic Patient Care Lab**

This lab course allows the practice and refinement of the concepts learned in PHT 1200 lecture on simulated patients. Use of equipment commonly found in physical therapy settings, proper body mechanics in moving, lifting, and transferring patients, wheelchair management, aseptic techniques and principles of wound care.

**PHT 1224      Therapeutic Techniques & Disabilities Lecture**

An overview of principles and techniques of basic physical therapy interventions, with emphasis on physiological changes and effects in commonly seen disorders across the lifespan. Will include therapeutic exercises, gait training with assistive devices, manual therapy, postural analysis, aerobic conditioning and airway clearance techniques.

**PHT 1224L      Therapeutic Techniques & Disabilities Lab**

This lab course allows the practice and refinement of the concepts learned In PHT 1229 on simulated patients. Students will receive hands-on experience with a variety of exercise equipment and practice in performing, assisting, and teaching of therapeutic exercises. Selected tests and measures will be introduced in this course.

**PHT 1931      PTA Seminar**

An orientation to the physical therapy clinic environment. The course covers professional clinical expectations, treatment preparation, risk management, the medical record and medical documentation.

**PHT 2301      Pathological Conditions in PT**

This course introduces the pathophysiology of selected disease processes. Disease signs, symptoms, complications, as well as clinical, typical pharmacologic agents and laboratory findings are reviewed by body system. Emphasis will be placed on conditions typically encountered in the physical therapy setting.

**PHT 1800L      Physical Therapy Clinical Practice I**

A supervised clinical experience, 2 concurrent weeks of full time clinical education exposure for an introductory experience. Students observe and implement physical therapy services under the close supervision of a clinical instructor.

**PHT 1211 Physical Therapy Principles & Procedures Lecture**

Instructs the student in the theory, physiology and application of biophysical agents used for therapeutic treatment of tissue. Knowledge of the physical principles, physiological effects, medical physics, indications, and contraindications of heat, cold, light, traction, compression, electricity, and hydrotherapy. Selected tests and measures are taught related to the safe application of these agents.

**PHT 1211L Physical Therapy Principles & Procedures Lab**

This lab course allows the practice and refinement of the concepts learned in PHT 1217 on simulated patients. The application of biophysical agents and data collection skills required for safe application of these modalities.

**PHT 2252 Orthopedic Disabilities & Treatment Lecture**

Concepts of orthopedic physical therapy management as well as the therapeutic applications related to bone, cartilage, muscle and soft tissue healing processes. Various musculoskeletal diseases and orthopedic conditions will be introduced including their related pathology and treatment plans. Various surgical precautions, tests and measures, common orthotics, gait deviations, joint mobilizations, soft tissue techniques, and use of modalities for orthopedic conditions. Diagnostic tools such as plain film radiography, computed tomography, diagnostic ultrasound, and magnetic resonance imaging will be introduced.

**PHT 2252L Orthopedic Disabilities & Treatment Lab**

This lab course allows the practice and refinement of the concepts learned in PHT 2250. Clinical scenarios that require data collection and therapeutic applications for common orthopedic conditions. The development of critical thinking, clinical problem solving, and effective treatment plans for various orthopedic conditions.

**PHT 2162 Neurological Disabilities & Treatment Lecture**

A comprehensive review of the human nervous system and selected neurological disabilities encountered frequently in physical therapy practice. The course addresses knowledge and application of a variety of therapeutic techniques utilized with patients across the lifespan that have chronic neurological conditions. Stages of motor development and movement strategies are also discussed.

**PHT 2162L Neurological Disabilities & Treatment Lab**

This lab course allows the practice and refinement of the concepts learned in PHT 2163 on simulated patients. Clinical scenarios that require critical thinking skills to develop treatment, progress and follow-up plans for patients with various neurological conditions. Students will also learn about various assessment techniques including sensory, balance and coordination, reflexes, gait analysis, functional and environmental assessment, and perceptual and cognitive deficit assessment.

**PHT 2810L Physical Therapy Clinical Practice II**

A supervised clinical experience, 4 concurrent weeks of full time clinical education exposure for an integrated clinical education experience. Students implement physical therapy services under the close supervision of a clinical instructor. Students will be expected to perform specific therapeutic procedures covered in prior coursework.

**PHT 2704 Advanced Rehab Concepts in PT Lecture**

Designed to provide a variety of therapeutic principles and techniques utilized in the clinical setting to address special populations with advanced rehab needs. This includes accessibility to home and community for all patients, women's health, pediatric conditions, bariatrics, geriatrics, and advanced management of amputation and prosthetics. Patient education and the education of others about physical therapy are included.

**PHT 2704L Advanced Rehab Concepts in PT Lab**

This lab course allows the practice and refinement of the concepts learned in PHT 2700 on simulated patients. Students will engage in patient education and utilize appropriate teaching methods for their target audience.

## **PHT 2930 Trends in Physical Therapy**

This course broadens the scope of the student's understanding of the health care system. Topics include trends in healthcare and their influence on physical therapy, administrative procedures utilized in physical therapy, and ethical problem solving. Community service, citizenship and advocacy will be addressed. The course will include mock quizzes and a timed mock examination in preparation for the NPTE. Students will also develop skills necessary for employment including interview techniques and developing a resume and cover letter.

## **PHT 2820L Physical Therapy Clinical Practice III**

The final supervised clinical experience, 8 concurrent weeks of full time clinical education designed to prepare PTA students for entry into the profession of physical therapy. Student will have the opportunity to refine all treatment interventions and data collection skills, plus demonstrate professional behaviors throughout the clinical experience.

### **E. Course Enrollment Sequence**

Students are admitted to the program as a cohort after the completion of one semester of general education/non-technical coursework. They are required to complete the remaining coursework in four semesters. This allows for the degree to be completed in a total of five semesters. Each student will successfully complete all required course work prior to or during the semester each course is scheduled, according to the plan of study. General education/non-technical courses may be taken prior to the semester listed, but those listed for semester one are required to be completed for program admission. The remaining two general education courses must be completed prior to the start of the third semester. Failure to complete the general education courses in the provided timeline may delay graduation. The charter class will have an extra semester due to accreditation timeline. See the information listed above for program length change for charter class.

### **F. Cost of the Program**

Refer to Program Application Packet for estimated expenses.

### Equipment and Supplies

Students will be required to purchase/have the following items prior to the start of the technical phase:

1. Laptop or iPad for Testing – PTA Program uses ExamSoft Assessment Platform
  - a. [Minimum system requirements](#)
  - b. Must be Windows based, Mac or iPad; will not run on Chromebooks, Android, or Linux operating systems
2. Program Scrubs and name tag
3. Goniometer (available for purchase in the bookstore)
4. Appropriate lab attire:
  - a. Men: shorts and t-shirt
  - b. Women: shorts, t-shirt, and a sports bra, halter top, or swimsuit top
  - c. Students should also wear low heeled, closed toe shoes with rubber soles
5. Program polo shirt (available for purchase in the bookstore)
6. Khaki or black slacks
7. Analog watch with second hand or digital watch with seconds displayed
8. Lockers will be available for student use. Each student is required to provide their own lock to secure their supplies. Lockers must be cleaned out at the end of each term and locks removed.



## **G. Financial Services**

The mission of the Office of Student Financial Aid at Northwest Florida State College is to remove financial barriers; to promote the success of a diverse student body; and to increase opportunities for access in higher education. They seek to provide a premier experience for students, faculty and staff by providing timely communication and by providing courteous and efficient financial services while complying with all federal, state, and college policies. The Financial Aid Office is located on the second floor of the Student Services Building on the Niceville Campus. Please visit the college website for more information: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/financialaid/>

## **H. Facilities**

The PTA Program resides on NWFSC's Fort Walton Beach Campus, Bldg. 8. This building also houses the campus library. The Program has dedicated lecture and lab spaces, male and female locker rooms for changing clothes, and faculty offices.

Lecture Space: The PTA classroom is located in room 861, in Bldg. 8. It is located across from the lab space.

### Laboratory Space and Usage:

The PTA lab is located in room 851, in Bldg. 8. Expensive, state-of-the-art professional, clinical grade equipment has been purchased to be used in our lab. Students will be expected to take full responsibility for learning not only how to safely operate the equipment to complete successful and medically safe treatments on their peers, but also to keep it in a state of excellent repair and maintenance. If a machine is malfunctioning, becomes damaged while in use or a student becomes aware of damage to it, they are to stop using it, turn it off, and unplug it. Students will report the issue to a lab instructor immediately so appropriate medical equipment maintenance engineers can be contacted to provide needed repairs and monitoring. The lab will be made available for student use whenever a core faculty member is on premises. Students must make prior arrangement with a faculty member for direct supervision based on the criticality of the practice session. Students retain the responsibility for leaving the lab in the neat and orderly fashion it was found and check that the door is locked at departure.

The lab should be kept clean at all times. Dirty linens and equipment used should be properly stored before leaving. Students will be expected to assist with the laundering of linens using facilities located near the lab on a rotating basis as assigned by the instructor.

### Nursing Skills Lab:

NWFSC Nursing program skills lab is located on the Niceville Campus in Bldg. 420. PTA Program students will utilize this lab during some technical course work and skills check offs. Students are expected to follow the same guidelines for this space as outlined for the PTA lab space. There will be limited access to the space outside of class. Students must arrange with the instructor to schedule additional practice.

## **I. Academic Services and Campus Resources**

Student Success Navigators: Available to assist students with admission, registration, financial aid, and academic advising. They are available via phone, live video chat, and in-person at every campus and distance center. Please visit the college website for more information: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/advising/>

Learning Commons: A collaborative and engaging hub of academic support services for all students and faculty. IT is primarily home to the Library, Academic Success, Accommodations Resource Center, Tutoring and the Math Lab. The Learning Commons also comprises other academic support services as well as independent and group study areas, computers, whiteboards, and free printing services.

- Learning Resources Center: The Myers LRC (Niceville Campus, Bldg. 500) houses the NWF Library and the Academic Success Center. Students have access to computers, WiFi, books, newspapers, magazines, study spaces, group study rooms, and helpful staff. Please visit the college website for more information: <http://lrc.nwfsc.edu/>. Northwest Florida State College's Fort Walton Beach campus also offers students direct access to computers, WiFi, books, newspapers, magazines, study spaces, group study rooms, and helpful staff. All students have access to online resources to include ebooks, databases, and streaming videos.
- Academic Success and Tutoring: Northwest Florida State College is committed to student success and offers all its students free academic tutoring virtually and at various college locations in friendly, supportive environments. Many of our tutors are advanced students and graduates who have excelled in the subjects they tutor and who understand the stresses of college life; others have advanced degrees and provide expert academic assistance for our upper level classes. Tutors are available on the Niceville Campus at the Susan Myers Learning Resources Center (Building 500). Tutors also serve students at the Fort Walton Beach, Crestview, and DeFuniack locations. Please visit the college website for more information: <https://nwfsc.mywconline.com/>.
- Math Labs: All math lab services are free to NWFSC students. The math labs are open to all students and provide free walk-in and virtual tutoring for all mathematics courses. In-person tutoring is available to provide guidance and support for the various Math Lab resources which include computerized tutorials, videos, DVDs, and other materials to supplement course textbooks. Qualified tutors can help students navigate practice problems and provide tips for math success. There are Math Labs located at the Niceville Campus, Fort Walton Beach Campus, Sikes Center – Crestview, and Chautauqua Center – DeFuniack Springs.
- Accommodation Resource Center: The Accommodation Resource Center (ARC) at Northwest Florida State College is committed to providing equal access and opportunities for educational success to all students with disabilities as guided by the American Disabilities Act and other disability-related laws. Northwest Florida State College does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in any of our programs, services, or activities based on Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Please visit the college website for more information: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/accommodations/>

Blackboard: All NWFSC courses have an online classroom in Blackboard Learn where students can find a syllabus and grades for the class. They can also interact with other classmates and faculty.

Student Development & Campus Engagement: The mission of Student Development & Campus Engagement is to cultivate a campus environment that promotes equity and opportunities for all students, to develop extracurricular activities in which students may participate, and to allow students to experience an environment where they can learn and practice essential skills needed after college life. Student Development provides support to students, student organizations, community service projects, and community activities that will enhance the quality of educational life for students irrespective of campus or mode of delivery. Students attending at off-campus locations are given student ID cards that give them the same rights and privileges as students at the Niceville campus. Fitness centers are available for students at the Niceville Campus and Chautauqua Center; students who attend the College at any location may also utilize fitness facilities at any location. Vending machines and lounges are available at Fort Walton Beach and all off-campus locations. Students at all locations may start clubs and organizations so long as they meet the criteria for development of a recognized club or organization.

**Career Navigation:** Offers career counseling and computerized career exploration programs in addition to literature regarding national, state, and local job opportunities. They coordinate College-wide workshops on job preparedness, employability skills, job search techniques, interview strategies, and resume writing. Career Navigation works closely with CareerSource, a state job placement agency provided through the local Workforce Board, to assist students with job placement. Each year, the Career Navigation organizes multiple on-campus activities during which local employers come to the Niceville campus, providing the opportunity for students to apply for employment on the spot. Staff members are primarily based at the Niceville campus, but deploy to the Fort Walton Beach campus and the off-campus locations on a routine, scheduled basis. They also offer a variety of online tools. Staff members provide counseling through video chat or telephone as requested. Please visit the college website for more information: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/career-resource-center/>

**Veterans Success Center:** The Veterans Success Center provides a one-stop shop to expand educational opportunities, transitional services and career services for veterans and their families. The Center offers a tranquil, professional and respectful location, including state-of-the-art infrastructure and technology, where veterans and their family members can study or pursue other scholastic assignments. Additionally, the Veterans Success Center creates a cooperative community for veterans and provides resources for leadership, support, advisement and campus engagement.

**BayCare Health Partnership:** NWFSC has partnered with BayCare Health to provide mental health, counseling, and personal development resources to all actively enrolled students. All students are eligible to receive up to three sessions with a licensed therapist or personal coach at no cost to the student. Visit the [NWFSC + BayCare Dashboard](#) for a menu of services and resources.

**College Bookstore:** Barnes and Noble is the official store of the College. Items available for purchase include textbooks, school supplies, College clothing, and program uniforms. Barnes and Noble also provides textbook buy-back service at the end of each term and operates an online textbook service. The bookstore is located on the Niceville campus but employs a process that sends books by courier to the Fort Walton Beach campus and all off-campus locations.

## ACADEMIC STANDARDS

### A. Grading Policy

The general grading policy is outlined in the current Northwest Florida State College Catalog <https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4470> . All general education courses, or courses not designated as technical in nature, will be graded on the scale consistent with the college.

**Physical Therapist Assistant Program – Grading Scale:** All courses considered technical in nature (PTA specific courses) will be graded as indicated in the table below:

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	90 - 100
B	80 - 89
C	75 - 79
D	70 - 74
F	Below 70
I	Incomplete
Pass	Pass - applies to clinical courses only
Fail	Fail - applies to clinical courses only

**Note:** The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) has set the minimum passing score on the PTA NPTE as 600 out of a 200 to 800 point score. Thus, students enrolled in the PTA Program at NWFSC must achieve a minimum of 75% average in any PTA program technical course in order to pass that course.

Incomplete: In rare cases, a grade of "I" (incomplete) may be given at the discretion of the instructor(s) in a PTA course in the event that you have not completed course requirements during the prescribed time. You must have completed at least 70% of the coursework in order to be eligible for an incomplete. The incomplete is assigned only after you have made arrangements with the instructor and program director for fulfilling the course requirements. All work must be completed before classes begin the following semester or the grade automatically becomes an "F" and your progression in the program will be jeopardized. You must already be passing the course with a minimum grade of "C" in order to receive an incomplete. You should make every effort to prevent receiving an "I" grade in PTA courses. The problems associated with this are numerous and can include possible interruption of financial aid and forfeiture of your slot in the next class.

A grade of "I" may be considered for clinical experience courses at the discretion of the ACCE, having consultation with the clinical instructor, program faculty, and program director. If excessive absences or missing requirements cannot be made up in the allotted semester time frame, this may delay graduation.

Late Assignments: Any assignment received after the posted deadline will receive 10% off the final grade per day late. Exceptions can be made by individual instructors based on specific circumstances.

## **B. Didactic and Laboratory Examinations**

Quizzes: Quizzes can either be scheduled on the syllabus or given at the discretion of the course instructor. Any missed quiz will result in a grade of zero unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the course instructor and program director. Make-up quizzes will be rescheduled at the earliest convenience of the course instructor.

Written Examinations: Written examinations are an assessment of theoretic knowledge learned in a course. Dates of written examinations will be available to students on course syllabi. When unable to be present for a written exam, the student is responsible for contacting the course instructor as described in the attendance policy. Any missed written examination will result in a grade of zero unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the course instructor and program director. Make-up exams will be rescheduled at the earliest convenience of the course instructor.

If a student makes below 75% on an individual test they must meet with the instructor to review the tested material and to develop a plan for remediation within one week of the failure. The instructor will work with the student to develop additional assignments as needed. It is the student's responsibility to schedule remediation with the instructor and failure to do so will result in a behavioral warning. After a second failure in one course, students are given an academic warning and must follow the specific steps assigned. Failure to complete required steps will result in a behavioral warning.

Practical Examinations: Practical examinations are assessments of clinical skills learned in each laboratory course. Dates of practical examinations will be available to students on each laboratory course syllabi. When unable to be present for a practical exam, the student is responsible for contacting the course instructor as described in the attendance policy. Any missed practical examination will result in a grade of zero unless there are extenuating circumstances as determined by the course instructor and program director. Make-up exams will be rescheduled at the earliest convenience of the course instructor.

Students must pass all practical exams for advancement in the program. Failure of a practical exam (<75%) will result in:

**1st Failure:** The student will receive remediation by the course instructor or student mentor and allowed a second attempt under the administration of the course instructor and another member of program faculty. The second attempt must be completed within 3 academic instruction days of the first practical examination failure. If the student passes on the second attempt, the recorded score will only be a 75%.

**2nd Failure:** If a student is unable to pass checkout with entry level competence on the second check-out, the student will not meet criteria for successful completion of this course. Extenuating circumstances, outlined in writing and presented to the PTA Director and course instructor, will be taken into consideration.

**Laboratory Skills Competency:** This will be used to document that all skills have successfully been completed throughout the PTA Program. The Laboratory Skills Notebook will capture interventions and data collection techniques in which an entry-level PTA should be able to demonstrate proficiency. Students must successfully pass each competency in order to progress in the program and attend each clinical practice. The point value or grade given is as outlined in each course syllabi. The same policy listed above for lab practical failures will apply to skills competency check-offs.

The Minimum Required Skills of PTA Graduates at Entry Level document from the APTA, Florida Department of Education Curriculum Framework for Physical Therapist Assistants, and feedback from clinical instructors will be used to outline the specific items and skills level required. This policy is intended to protect the safety of the community, such that students will not be allowed to participate in clinical education until they have demonstrated proficiency in all lab procedures covered in the curriculum.

### **C. Program Progression**

Students will be made aware of their progress through formative and summative feedback. During the didactic portion of the program, formative feedback will be provided through verbal feedback from the instructors, grades on quizzes, written assignments and skill checks. Summative feedback will be given through practical and written exams.

Instructors are required to provide accurate and timely feedback for both formative and summative assessment. Feedback will be provided in a way that is compliant with privacy regulations. Grades will be posted in Blackboard LMS in a timely fashion. Students will be able to keep track of their academic progress by accessing Blackboard as frequently as they choose.

All students must achieve a "C" or higher in all PTA courses to meet the minimum academic standards of the program and have a semester grade point average of 2.8 or higher. All students must also earn a passing grade "P" in each clinical experience program.

If a student receives a final grade lower than a "C" in any PTA specific course or does not pass a clinical rotation, they are considered out of sequence and will be dismissed from the program. The student must follow PTA program policies and procedures regarding failure of a program course if they wish to seek readmission.

### **D. Academic Advising**

Each student in the program will be assigned an academic (faculty) advisor. Students will meet with their advisor at least once per semester. During these sessions, student success will be discussed and strategies for

improvement developed. Students will also perform a self-assessment of their Professional Behaviors using the Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool (located in the appendix). We also encourage students to schedule meetings with instructors as needed with questions, concerns, and ideas.

Students that have significant academic or behavioral concerns will meet with their advisor or instructor to develop a remediation plan. See Progress/Counseling Record Form (located in the appendix).

### **E. Attendance/Tardiness**

Regular and prompt attendance in all classes is expected. It is the student's responsibility to notify the instructor and arrange to complete any missed work. Make-up work is offered solely at the discretion of the instructor. Excessive absences can affect the success of course completion and financial aid funding. This general policy applies to the student absent from class traveling as a member of a college group, club or for personal reasons.

All classes and labs must be attended on time and for the complete time allotted. If tardiness occurs three times, this will equate into one full class absence. Students are considered tardy if they arrive after the time class is scheduled to begin. If they leave class early (prior to class dismissal) more than three times, this will equate into one full class absence.

Students are authorized two absences a semester without penalty. After three days missed, 10% value will be deducted from the overall grade applied at the end of the semester (after final). After four days missed, a student will receive no higher than a 75% as the final adjusted grade due to absences. More than four days missed will result in dismissal from the program for excessive absenteeism. As part of the standards for Professional Behaviors, students are expected to let the instructor know prior to class that they will be absent. If a student fails to notify the instructor, they will be given a behavioral warning. Multiple warnings (third offense after two previous warnings) will lead to behavioral probation.

An exception to this policy may be made for extended illness, hospitalizations, death of a family member, etc. Each individual circumstance will be reviewed by the Program Director who will have the authority to grant an exception as deemed appropriate.

#### **Religious Observance by Students:**

The College shall accommodate recognized religious observances of students under existing State directives. Provision shall be made for students to complete the following activities when their religious observances interfere with the following: Admission and registration, Attendance in class, class activities, examinations, and official ceremonies, and Class work assignments. Students wishing to participate in any recognized religious holiday observances are to let the instructor know, in advance, of their absence. Students will be excused for such absences without penalty. Students are responsible for any material covered during their excused absence. A reasonable amount of time will be allowed to complete make up assignments. Students who believe they have been denied an education benefit because of their religious belief or practice may seek redress as outlined in the Student Grievance Procedures.

### **F. Rescheduling Classes/Changes in Schedule**

Occasionally classes may need to be rescheduled. Efforts will be made to reschedule at a time that the majority of students can attend. Each instructor reserves the right to change the class schedule, due dates for

assignments, and all other dates and times related to the course and /or program at his or her discretion. The instructor will make every effort to give adequate notice of any scheduling changes that may occur.

## **G. Academic Integrity**

PTA program students are expected to follow the College's Code of Conduct. This can be found at:

[https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4467&hl=attendance&returnto=search#Student\\_code\\_of\\_conduct](https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4467&hl=attendance&returnto=search#Student_code_of_conduct).

The PTA Program follows the standards set forth by the College. Please use the link above to review the following: Academic Offenses, Non-Academic Offenses, Disciplinary Procedures, Disciplinary Sanctions, and Due Process. Information for filing a grievance is listed below.

Statement on scholastic dishonesty: A student attending NWFSC assumes responsibility for conduct compatible with the mission of the college as an educational institution. Students have the responsibility to submit coursework that is the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. Students must follow all instructions given by faculty or designated college representatives when taking examinations, placement assessments, tests, quizzes, and evaluations. Actions constituting scholastic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, collusion, and falsifying documents.

Penalties for scholastic dishonesty: will depend upon the nature of the violation and may range from lowering a grade on one assignment, to an "F" in the course and/or expulsion from the college. See the College Student Handbook for more information.

## **H. Student Withdrawal**

Withdrawing from the program is a voluntary action taken by the student. If a student withdraws, there may or may not be a possibility of readmission (please see the readmission policy below). In order to be considered for readmission, students must withdraw in writing to the Program Director and include a reason for the withdrawal (located in the appendix). The student must also complete a withdrawal paperwork through Student Services.

## **I. Student Probation and Dismissal**

The purpose of probation is to be a constructive means of identifying and correcting areas of deficient student performance.

**Academic Probation:** An overall semester grade point average of 2.8 on all physical therapist assistant courses attempted at NWFSC must be maintained. At the end of any academic term in which a student's NWFSC cumulative grade point average falls below 2.8, the student will be placed on "Academic Probation". PTA students must regain satisfactory academic status in the semester following academic probation in order to continue in the PTA program. Students are given an academic warning and remediation plan after failing their second exam in an individual course.

**Behavioral Probation:** Any student found to be engaging in unprofessional/inappropriate behavior occurring in the classroom, laboratory or clinical settings will result in behavioral probation for one semester. These behaviors are outlined in the NWFSC Student Code of Conduct, the program handbook and the clinical education handbook. Any subsequent such behavior may result in dismissal from the program. Students will be given behavioral warnings for minor issues and develop a plan for remediation. More information about behavioral expectations is located in the Non-Academic section of the handbook.



## Dismissal

Students may be dismissed from the Physical Therapist Assistant Program for the following reasons, but not limited to:

1. Failure to achieve a semester grade point average of 2.8 or greater in the semester following academic probation.
2. Inability to progress – If a student does not receive a “C” in all technical courses.
3. If a student falls below a 75 on a lab practical/skills check and is unable to successfully pass with the retake policy listed above.
4. Failure of a clinical practice will require the student to complete another comparable experience or remediation determined by the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. Failure of the second clinical practice or remediation will result in dismissal.
5. All general education courses taken in which the student receives below a “C” must be repeated. Failure to repeat such courses within one academic semester shall result in the student being dismissed from the program.
6. Successful completion of all required course work and graduation from the program must occur within 3 years of initial enrollment in PTA courses. Failure to do so will create ineligibility for further participation and will require re-application to the program as a new student. Extenuating circumstances will be reviewed by the Program Director.
7. Academic Dishonesty – If a student breaks the Northwest Florida State College Academic Integrity policy, disciplinary actions will be taken per that policy and may result in dismissal from the program.
8. Behavioral Probation: any behavioral probation exceeding one semester.
9. Attendance Policy: If a student does not comply with the program attendance policy.

If a student is dismissed from the program, the program director will administratively withdraw that student from all program classes in which they are currently enrolled. Students remain subject to the Student Code of Conduct set out in the College Catalog and Student Handbook.

## J. Readmission

### Eligibility:

Students considered to be in Good Standing may seek readmission within two years of initial dis-enrollment from the NWFSCT PTA Program. "Good Standing" is defined as students who have not been dismissed for poor academic performance, behavioral issues or specific critical incident infractions. Students need to notify the program director in writing of their intent to reapply to the program. Additionally, the GPA requirement of 2.8 minimum is still in effect. Students are required to successfully pass all skills competencies and a practical examination that is reflective of the material satisfactorily met prior to initial withdrawal from the PTA Program. If a student is selected for readmission, they must complete a drug screen if there has been a gap in the program of study of 3 months or more (not inclusive of normally scheduled College breaks), or if mandated by the Program Director.

Students dismissed from the program due to failure to meet academic standards or those who choose to withdraw due to poor academic performance may seek readmission to the program one time within two years of initial dis-enrollment. They will be required to submit a formal request and meet with the Program Director. Readmission is not guaranteed and will be considered on a case by case basis. If it has been longer than two years since last enrolled, a student will not be eligible for readmission and must apply as a new student. Courses completed with a grade below “C” must be completed for course credit and students must achieve a final grade of B or above in that course. Because the program curriculum is sequential, students who re-enter will be required to successfully pass all skills competencies and a practical examination that is reflective of the

material satisfactorily met prior to the course failure. It is highly recommended that students audit previously completed technical courses and labs. For more information please refer to the college catalog:

<https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4470>

Students may only be readmitted to the PTA Program one time regardless of the reason for re-entry. Please note that readmission is not guaranteed.

**Exceptions to all points above:** If you are in good standing with the College and the PTA Program and are forced to withdraw due to profound illness, serious accident, pregnancy, family crisis, or extended military duty.

If a student has been dismissed from the PTA Program for a critical incident, such as a serious breach of ethics, safety violation or endangering the health or welfare of a patient, or any other behavior that jeopardizes the reputation of the PTA Program and/or the College, they will not be readmitted.

If a student has exhibited unprofessional behaviors towards faculty, clinical facility personnel or patients, or other students and do not accept correction; if they display an unteachable, critical attitude towards faculty; if they are rude or disruptive and do not accept correction, they will not be readmitted.

## **K. Grievance Process**

If a student believes they have suffered an injustice through the action of another student or instructor, they may seek assistance using the procedures cited in the College Catalog. Student grievances fall into two categories: academic and all other. While the grievance process is similar for both, different college offices are responsible for each category. NWF State College prohibits any form of retaliation against any student filing a grievance, academic or non-academic.

### Academic Grievances/Due Process

The student should first request a meeting with his or her instructor. If the matter is not resolved to the student's satisfaction, the matter can then be discussed with the Program Director. If the grievance is not satisfactorily resolved informally, the student may then proceed with the formal process as outlined in the NWFSC Student Handbook

([http://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4467#Grievance\\_Procedures](http://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4467#Grievance_Procedures)).

### Non-Academic Grievances

Non-Academic grievances must be initiated within 30 days of the incident being grieved. These procedures apply to all non-academic student grievances, including those alleging discrimination and harassment. Please refer to the NWF State College Student Handbook for guidance on handling both informal and formal non-academic grievances ([http://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4467#Grievance\\_Procedures](http://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4467#Grievance_Procedures)).

## **L. Complaints**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at NWFSC engages in continuous and systematic evaluation and improvement. We welcome all comments, suggestions, ideas, and constructive criticism as part of that process. The Appeals Process that is outlined in the Academic Catalog provides a voice for current and prospective students, employees, and other affiliated persons. However, individuals in the community who do not have a formal affiliation with this institution or program are also welcomed to provide comments according to the policy listed in the PTA Program Policies and Procedures Manual and the PTA Program website.

## NON-ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### A. Student Rights and Responsibilities

PTA Program students are afforded the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as all other college students. They must also abide by College policies and regulations as published in policy statements, in the current College Catalog, official manuals, and publications. Please refer to the Student Handbook in the current NWFSC Catalog: <https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/>. Additional rules and responsibilities are included in this handbook and in other PTA Program publications such as course syllabi.

PTA Program students are also expected to abide by the APTA *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant* and the *Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant*. Copies of these documents can be found in the appendix and for more information refer to the APTA website: <https://www.apta.org/your-practice/ethics-and-professionalism>.

### B. Professional Behavior

While enrolled in the program professional behaviors are expected in all settings, directly or indirectly related to the program. Students are expected to take ownership of their learning experience. This includes maintaining regular attendance, being prepared for class, completing all assignments in a timely manner, asking for clarification or assistance when needed, and being receptive to feedback provided by the faculty. Students are encouraged to participate in classroom discussions related to the lecture content. Discussion should remain professional; arguing and disruptive/unprofessional behavior will not be tolerated. Extraneous conversations in the classroom keep other students from listening to the instructor causing them to miss valuable lecture content and should be kept to a minimum. Sleeping will not be tolerated during classroom, laboratory, clinical education, or program activities.

Students must follow professional standards set forth by the program and in line with the APTA *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant* when in the classroom, laboratory and clinical education settings and other program activities.

Behavioral Warning Policy: Student will be given a behavioral warning for minor issues such as not notifying the instructor prior to class about tardiness or absence, not scheduling remediation after failing a test, and not following through on a remediation plan. Students are given two warnings and will be placed on behavioral probation on the third offense.

A Professional Behaviors Assessment tool will be utilized to assess student professionalism throughout enrollment in the program and will be required to be completed once a semester prior to meeting with their advisor. Guidelines for these standards are as follows:

1. Professional Behaviors (located in appendix): Ten specific "Professional Behaviors" are assessed throughout the PTA Program curriculum. PTA program faculty will assess the Professional Behaviors once per semester with students also performing a self-assessment once per semester.

Expected Professional Behavior levels are:

- End of Semester III: All Professional Behaviors at least beginning level
- End of Semester IV: 50% of Professional Behaviors at intermediate level or higher
- End of Semester V: all Professional Behaviors at entry level

Faculty will provide both oral and written feedback regarding professional behaviors each semester. Copies of this feedback will be placed in the student's file (located in appendix). Students are expected to change unsatisfactory behaviors after receiving feedback from faculty. If a student is not demonstrating professional behaviors at an appropriate level, students will develop a plan for improvement with faculty. Serious deficits in professional behavior with no improvement may result in behavioral probation or dismissal from the program.

2. American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant*: <https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/leadership-and-governance/policies/standards-of-ethical-conduct-for-the-physical-therapist-assistant>

### **C. Dress Code**

General PTA Program Dress Code: Students are required to wear program scrubs for all PTA technical classes and need to maintain a professional appearance.

Laboratory Attire: Laboratory attire is required for all classes and skill demonstrations in which the student will play the role of a simulated patient. Lab clothes must be kept clean. Appropriate lab dress for men include: shorts and t-shirts. Women will wear shorts, t-shirt, and a sports bra, halter top, or swimsuit top. Students should also wear low heeled, closed toe shoes with rubber soles. During laboratory classes and practical examinations, a student is only permitted to wear wedding rings, a watch, and small post earrings. Students cannot wear hoop or dangling earrings, necklaces, bracelets, facial piercings/studs and/or tongue studs. Students with hair longer than shoulder length must keep his/her hair tied back at all times during laboratory classes and practical examinations.

Program Polo Shirt: Students will be required to wear their program polo shirt and khaki or black slacks at specific events and field trips.

Hygiene: Hands are to be kept clean and fingernails are not to extend beyond the fingertips. Body odor, bad breath, visible dirtiness, cigarette odor and strong perfumes or aftershave will not be tolerated. Visible tattoos containing lewd or offensive pictures, words or phrases must be covered at all times during didactic, laboratory and practical examinations.

Clinical Affiliations: Please refer to the PTA Clinical Education Handbook

### **D. Privacy/Confidentiality**

Student Privacy Policies: The PTA faculty/staff will abide by the NWFSC Board of Trustees Policy SS 2.00, FERPA and Student Records, pages 125-128. Please visit the college website for more information: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/about/leadership/board-of-trustees/>

Human Subjects: Students should understand that they will be required to be a subject for simulated treatment by other students and faculty members. This is necessary in order to learn safe and competent manual physical therapy procedures. In every instance the simulation will be professional, discrete, and directed towards the understanding of a specific treatment and/or intervention. Each student will be required to sign an informed consent form prior to the first day of their first lab class. Consent will remain active throughout the student's matriculation. Signed consent forms will be placed in the student's academic file in the office of the program director. A copy of the consent form is located in the appendix.

Maintenance of Student Records: Student academic and personal information will be handled in accordance with The Health Insurance Portability & Accountability Act (HIPPA), the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) guidelines.

Instructors will keep all grades in the College Learning Management System, i.e. Blackboard Learn. Faculty must abide by the Instructional Record Keeping Guidelines, also provided in this handbook. Furthermore, electronic record-keeping must conform to FERPA guidelines protecting privacy and must be password protected. Grades must be submitted in a timely manner according to the College calendar and established processes.

Academic records (final exams, final projects, student papers, forms signed by students) will be maintained by the Program Director and remain locked in the director's office. Health Information and clinical education records will be managed by the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education and any hard copies made will remain locked in the ACCE's office. NWFSC uses Exxat/Universal Background to manage immunization records, background checks, drug testing, proof of medical insurance and any other personal information required for a clinical affiliation site. Students are also required to maintain a copy for their own records.

Following the student withdrawal, dismissal or graduation from the program, academic records from the Program Director's office and health and clinical education records from the ACCE's office will be compiled. These records will be kept in a secured/locked location for a period of 3 years and records older than 3 years will be shredded.

Audio/Videotaping, Photographing and Imaging: Students should understand that audio/videotaping, photography, and imaging are the property of NWFSC and may be viewed by community partners for marketing purposes and for instructional purposes.

Each student will be asked to sign an informed consent form at orientation and prior to beginning the program. The consent will remain active throughout the student's matriculation. Signed consent forms will be placed in the student's academic file in the office of the program director (located in appendix). Students have the right to refuse.

## **E. Health Related Policies**

### Communicable Disease Policy:

#### **Personal Assumption of Responsibility for Disease and/or Injury:**

Northwest Florida State College PTA Program students must comply with OSHA standards for hazardous materials control, infection control and exposure to harmful substances, including, but not limited to, blood or other body fluids. Students are responsible for their own health care. Should they contract a communicable disease or be exposed to same via body fluids or other means, they must report such exposure or condition to their clinical instructor or preceptor immediately. Should immediate assessment and treatment be deemed necessary (including emergency care), they must comply with all agency and college policies regarding the occurrence, which includes payment for any treatment or other required exposure procedures. Further, they must complete all documents regarding the occurrence via agency/site incident as well as appropriate college incident reporting. [https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NorthwestFloridaSC&layout\\_id=3](https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?NorthwestFloridaSC&layout_id=3)

Accident: Should a student become injured in a clinical facility or traveling to/from a clinical facility, they must assume the costs and responsibility for diagnosis, treatments (including emergency care), and/or appropriate interventions as a result of the accident. Further, they must complete all documents regarding the occurrence in accordance with agency policy.

NWFSC carries Student Accident Coverage, which works with a student's primary insurance carrier or independently if they do not have insurance. This student accident program provides coverage for college students injured while participating in covered college classes, labs and/or training. Once the course or program of study ends, coverage ends. Please note that the policy only provides coverage for an injury to the student. An injury must be as a direct result of the accident which occurred during the covered activity and not from sickness or disease.

### **Reporting:**

1. Students should report to their instructor any complaint of injury as a direct result of an accident which occurred during clinical, lab, or classroom activity. Instructors will file Incident/Injury Report using the Maxient Reporting system. The link to the form can be found in RaiderNet under the FORMS tab.
2. Students MUST check their college email or contact the college Risk Management Coordinator directly within 30 calendar days of the incident/injury to file an insurance claim. Students have 20 calendar days from the date of the injury/accident to file an insurance claim with the college by directly contacting the Risk Management Coordinator.
3. Failure to comply with this deadline may result in denial of claim.
4. Students should never give bills or invoices to instructors, the PTA Program Director, or staff assistant. All documentation must be submitted directly to the college Risk Management Coordinator.
5. If a student seeks medical attention, they must provide a written medical clearance to their instructor or the PTA Program Director prior to returning to the clinical experience.

### **Risk Management Coordinator**

Questions about insurance, reimbursement, or claims can be directed to:

Zakary Stephens, Risk Management Coordinator

Email: [stephenz@nwfsc.edu](mailto:stephenz@nwfsc.edu)

Phone: (850) 729-5364

Illness: It is recommended that all students have insurance to cover personal illness while in the program. The college does not discriminate against any type of medical condition. All students must comply with the Essential Functions/Performance Standards for the Associate Degree Physical Therapist Assistant course of study. The student must report any health condition which may potentially harm a client (for example, a febrile illness or infectious skin lesion) or otherwise render the student unfit for duty. Upon resolution of said condition, the student must bring a note from their medical provider (MD, DO, NP or PA), which verifies the student is able to meet all standards with no restrictions.

If health status (physical or mental) is, in the opinion of the clinical instructor, impaired in the delivery of care, students will be required to leave the patient care area and must arrange for someone to pick them up and take them home or to see a healthcare provider. Students may be required to submit proof of medical assessment and/or interventions as determined by the PTA Program Director. Should a student be unable to meet the program standards with or without reasonable accommodations, they may be dismissed from the program. The dismissal may be appealed through the appropriate channels within 24 hours.

Applicants for the PTA Program have been selected according to the established admission criteria and selection procedure. Once selected, admission to the Program will be provisional, with enrollment and progression in PTA courses contingent upon completing all pre-enrollment requirements. These requirements include, but are not limited to, a criminal background check and a drug screen. A positive result in either requirement may result in the student's need to withdraw from the program because clinical agencies prohibit students with certain criminal offenses and positive drug screens from receiving clinical instruction in their facility. If withdrawn from the program, students must re-apply and are not guaranteed selection.

Immunizations: Please refer to the PTA Student Application Handbook

Health Services: Please refer to the Northwest Florida State College Student Handbook for information about Mental Health Counseling Services:

<https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/content.php?catoid=21&navoid=5825#Mental%20Health>

Substance Use and/or Abuse: Substance abuse is inconsistent with the ethics of the physical therapy assistant profession, the PTA Program, and Northwest Florida State College.

Substance use/abuse adversely affects cognitive, sensory, affective and psychomotor behaviors which can be life threatening to self and others. Students may be asked by the PTA Program, Northwest Florida State College, or the affiliating clinical agency to submit to individual, group, and/or random drug screening at any time. The College reserves the right to determine the agency to conduct the drug screening.

Students will be asked to submit to drug screening as a component of the admission or readmission procedure, and as required for clinical rotations at various health care facilities or community agencies. Dilute negative results require rescreening. Students are responsible for drug screening costs for individual screening required for initial admission, dilute negative results, random screenings, or for readmission. Refusal to comply with requested screening within the time frame directed (usually 12-24 hours) will result in dismissal from the PT Program.

“NWF State College is alcohol and drug free in accordance with Public Law 100-690, The Anti-Drug Abuse Act of 1988. The unlawful manufacture, distribution, dispensation, possession, or use of alcohol or a controlled substance is prohibited in and on NWF State College owned and controlled property. This policy applies to employees, students, and visitors.” Any violation of this policy the individual may be subject to disciplinary action” (NWF State College Catalog, Student Handbook section, Substance Abuse section).

Once admitted, students must also remain drug-free throughout their tenure in this program. Failure to do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. Students are required to be drug and/or alcohol free when reporting to school and while at affiliating agencies (including parking lots and grounds). For all affiliating agencies which require them to be subject to the agency’s drug testing policies, including but not limited to reasonable suspicion that they may be impaired or are using or have used illegal drugs and/or alcohol, they may be tested in accordance with the affiliating agency’s policies. Prior to being assigned to an affiliating agency, students will sign consent to allow the affiliating agency to release any drug testing results to the College. If tested by an affiliating agency, they will provide the PTA Program Director with a copy of any test results. Failure to promptly do so shall be grounds for dismissal from the program. A positive drug or alcohol test result shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.

#### Pregnancy Guidelines and Procedures:

This policy has been adopted for those pregnant students enrolled in a program. Northwest Florida State College is very interested in the protection of the unborn child and will take every reasonable step to ensure the safety of the mother and the unborn child throughout the pregnancy. Current infection control protection standards have demonstrated that, with proper protection, the student may work safely throughout the term of the pregnancy. The purpose of this policy is to provide the pregnant student with necessary protection in accordance with all standards and regulations while at the same time assuring the performance of assigned tasks throughout the pregnancy.

When a student confirms they are pregnant, they have two primary choices:



OPTION 1: Choose to NOT declare the pregnancy, it is expected the student will fully participate in all classroom, lab and clinical experiences without any restrictions or modifications.

OPTION 2: Declare the pregnancy, which must be done in writing. (Once the student completes a “Declaration of Pregnancy” (form located in appendix), they must meet with the Program Director to discuss options. These include the following:

- The student may choose to withdraw from the program and re-enter with the next cohort after delivery to complete the PTA Program.
- The student may choose to continue the program without interruption of the routine clinical rotations. The student will work with their lab and clinical instructors to arrange an alternate schedule to accommodate the expected delivery date and take appropriate precautions while caring for patients. If a student develops complications during the pregnancy that requires prolonged absences, they will have to withdraw from the program and re-enter after delivery.

If a student wishes to remain in the program after voluntarily disclosing pregnancy, a current letter from the student’s physician or other health care professional must be on file and updated as the pregnancy progresses. The letter must indicate any restrictions and recommendations of the healthcare professional regarding participation in class or clinical. A “return to clinical care and class” is required for “fitness to return to duty” following delivery. A student may withdraw the Declaration of Pregnancy in writing at any time if they believe that it is in their best interest to do so.

## **F. Safety and Security**

Northwest Florida State College Campus Police: It is the policy of NWF State College that all students and employees of NWF State College campuses are to report criminal acts and safety hazards or occurrences known to them. The proper reporting procedure is to contact the NWF State College Police Department, (850) 729-6888. PTA Program Students will be directed to the **Raider Connect App**, the official campus safety app of Northwest Florida State College. Through this app, students have access to a Mobile BlueLight, Emergency Contacts, Campus Map, Safety Toolbox and Emergency Plans. The College’s Annual Safety and Fire Report and Emergency Action Guide can be found through the following link: <https://www.nwfsc.edu/students/campus-services/safety/>

Emergency Closing: If NWFSC cancels classes, the student is not to attend clinical education or on-campus classes. Program course material will be covered at a later date. If classes have returned to their regular schedule and the student believes he/she cannot make it to the clinical site due to road conditions, it will be treated as an absence.

## **G. Student – Faculty Communication**

All students are expected to maintain current and up-to-date communication information in RaiderNet. This includes, but is not limited to, name changes, home address, home phone number, cell phone number, alternate phone numbers, and secured NWFSC email address. Occasionally, instructors and course administrators will need to contact students about clinical assignments, classroom changes, and other pertinent information related to the program. They make communication efforts by using the information available in RaiderNet. This information is also vital for student communication in the event of school emergencies such as inclement weather reports, campus closings, and other drills.

## **H. Cell Phones/Portable Devices**

Cell phones and other such electronic devices must be kept on silent or vibrate during class. Communications by electronic devices, including but not limited to instant messaging, text messaging, and telephone calls, during class is prohibited unless expressly designated as part of the learning activities. In certain situations (e.g. during exams, etc.), cell phones and other electronic communication devices are not permitted in the room. Where emergency situations require access to electronic communication services, arrangements may be made in advance with the instructor. Cell phones are not allowed in the Testing Center.

## **I. Social Media/Networking**

The use of social networking by students and health care professionals should be done with careful consideration. In order to avoid any potential biases, students are **STRONGLY** discouraged from initiating or accepting friend requests from anyone associated with the clinical experience or PTA program faculty. This includes but is not limited to clinical instructors, professional staff, patients, and/or family members of patients or staff. This allows students to be evaluated solely on clinical performance and not on personal information from social networking sites.

As both a professional ethic and legal requirement, students are expected to maintain patient confidentiality. Due to the public nature of social networking sites, privacy and professionalism may potentially be compromised. Students may not post anything that compromises patient or peer confidentiality. This includes, but is not limited to, names, references to the clinical site or clinical staff, classmates, instructors, pictures of any part of the patient's body, and any information that may identify the patient or peer. No photographs should be taken or posted of any patients, staff, or the facility. Students should refrain from posting any comments about their clinical experience, site, clinical instructor, patients, instructors, classmates, or any other staff member on their personal social networking profile, via text messaging, Twitter feed or any other electronic networking medium. Failure to comply with the policy stated above may result in the student being removed from the program immediately.

## **J. Food and Beverages**

Food and beverages with closed lids will be allowed in the lecture classroom. The area must be left clean and all trash removed at the end of class-time or the permission for food will be revoked. There will be no food in the laboratory space. Beverages with closed lids will be allowed at the discretion of the instructor.

## **K. Off-Site Learning Experiences/Fieldtrips**

Students are responsible for their own transportation to off-site learning experiences/field trips, as well as clinical sites. It is the responsibility of the student to follow the parking regulations at the facility. Since students are responsible for the costs, car-pooling is encouraged.

Student safety and accountability is paramount in off-campus learning experiences as it is in on-campus learning experiences. A faculty member will accompany students to all off-campus laboratory or field trips events. The faculty member will evaluate the situation and remove all students if the environment is found to be unsafe or inappropriate. Field trips will be submitted to the Dean for approval at least one week in advance. Attendance will be taken at the event to ensure that the students have made it safely to the event. The attendance list will include emergency contact information in the event of an accident. Students are required to sign an Off-site acknowledgment form (located in appendix).

## **L. Graduate Follow Up**

Graduates of the program may expect to be contacted regarding their employment situation and related topics in periodic surveys from the Program Director. It is a professional responsibility of the graduate to respond to these inquiries in order to assist with further evaluation and development of this program.

## APPENDIX

**Handbook Acknowledgement Form**  
**Please initial each for declaration of understanding:**

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and will comply with all college, clinical and didactic requirements throughout the PTA Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand and acknowledge that the inability to meet the physical, psychological, or other requirements will result in removal from the clinical site which, in turn, will result in a failing grade in clinical.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that individual physical clinical requirements include but are not limited to, walking, standing, balancing, lifting/transferring patients, bending, manual techniques with hands and other tasks associated with patient care.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that that exposure to various communicable/transferable diseases may occur during a clinical experience, and that the protection against these conditions (e.g., following safe health practices and becoming immunized) is the student's responsibility.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that other clinical requirements include, but are not limited to, competency requirements, safety of self and patients (also a part of physical and psychological requirements), following the Program Handbook, clinical syllabus, health and safety requirements, and the College Handbook and rules therein.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that much of patient documentation is computer based and I will be responsible for learning the use of computer documentation software to access patient information and document patient care.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand the information in the Student Handbook and course syllabi is subject to change. I will be held accountable for these changes. Any changes will be provided to me in electronic form.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I may be dismissed from the PTA Program for failure to follow any of the policies outlined in the College Catalog, College Student Handbook, and the PTA Program Student Handbook.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that if I have any questions about the College or PTA Student Handbook, I need to personally address the concerns with the appropriate parties using proper chain of command.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the minimum grade for a PTA technical course is a 75% and failure to meet that score will remove me from the PTA Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I must remediate for any examination or practical score below a 75%; failure to remediate will result in a behavioral warning, and multiple warnings may result in dismissal from the program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I must maintain a 2.8 average GPA each semester or be placed on academic probation. Students on academic probation must achieve a 2.8 the following semester or will be dismissed from the PTA program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that dismissal from the clinical site may result in a failing grade ("F") for the clinical course and dismissal from the PTA Program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that readmission to the PTA Program is not guaranteed and that I will only be offered one readmission attempt based on the guidelines in the student handbook.

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Northwest Florida State College**  
**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**  
**Essential Functions of a Physical Therapist Assistant Student**

Students of Northwest Florida State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program must be able to meet these minimum standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, for successful completion of program requirements (separate from the academic standards for admission).

<b>MOBILITY/MOTOR SKILLS</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>KNEEL OR STOOP FREELY:</b> To floor to adjust patient position or assist with equipment; inspect feet, apply shoes or prosthetics</li><li>• <b>KNEEL, HALF-KNEEL, CRAWL:</b> On an exercise table to assist with patient activities</li><li>• <b>REACH ABOVE HEAD:</b> In standing, to adjust and position equipment</li><li>• <b>LIFT; PULL; GUIDE; TRANSFER:</b> A patient of up to 150 lbs and up to 250 lbs using a two-man technique</li><li>• <b>BEND, STAND, KNEEL, SIT, WALK OR CRAWL FOR 90 MINUTES WITHOUT REST:</b> To administer emergency care (CPR); to perform lab activities and administer patient interventions</li><li>• <b>GUIDE; RESIST AND ASSIST:</b> Adult patients (or classmates) during Physical Therapist transfers, ambulation, interventions and exercises; using your arms, legs or trunk to provide the necessary stabilization for a patient during therapy</li><li>• <b>PUSH/PULL:</b> Large wheeled equipment; whirlpools, tilt tables and patients on stretchers or in wheelchairs</li><li>• <b>WALK:</b> For extended periods of time to all areas of a hospital</li><li>• <b>CLIMB:</b> Stairs &amp; inclines while safely guarding an unstable patient</li><li>• <b>BILATERAL DEXTERITY:</b> To adjust and fine tune controls on electrical and heat modalities; demonstrate ADL activities and exercises to patients; To carry out stretching, massage and exercise programs; adjust and use Physical stretching, massage and exercise programs; adjust and use Physical Therapist devices like goniometers and crutch/cane/walkers, carry out splinting techniques, guard patients</li><li>• <b>COORDINATION:</b> To perform different tasks with different limbs simultaneously</li><li>• <b>SPEED AND AGILITY:</b> To protect a walking or moving unstable patient from falling</li><li>• <b>ASSUME A WIDE BASE OF SUPPORT, BALANCE:</b> To guard, maintain and correct balance of an unstable patient on flat surfaces, inclines and stairs</li><li>• <b>PERFORM:</b> patient physical assistance using safe and proper body mechanics</li><li>• <b>WORK CAPACITY:</b> To perform all essential skills and standards to complete eight-hour days, and a 40 hour work week during PTA Program enrollment</li></ul>

### **SENSORY ABILITIES AND OBSERVATIONAL SKILLS**

- **DEPTH PERCEPTION:** For judging distance, surface changes, level changes while ambulating patients
- **SEE (WITH OR WITHOUT CORRECTIVE LENSES):** Patient skin, discriminate color changes, facial expressions and non-verbal communications, normal and abnormal patterns of movement; the environment for up to 20 feet; to read and set parameters on Physical Therapist equipment, detect small calibrations on measuring instruments
- **FEEL:** To discriminate small and large temperature differences; palpate pulses; assess body segment contour; to assess muscle tone; joint movement, discriminate sharp and dull, light touch and deep pressure sensation
- **HEAR:** Soft voices, masked voices, patient call systems, alarms, timers, blood pressure sounds using a stethoscope; demonstrate active listening skills
- **SMELL:** To detect odors related to patient assessment
- **POSITION, MOVEMENT AND BALANCE SENSATION:** To feel where your individual body segments are located and to know when and how they are moving even when you cannot see them

### **COMMUNICATION STANDARDS**

- **SPEAK AND EXPRESS:** Clearly and understandably in the English language; information to peers, faculty, patients, their families and other health care providers; to explain conditions and procedures and teach home programs
- **READ:** Typed, handwritten, chart data and computer-generated documents in the English language; at a level of competency that allows safe and timely execution of essential tasks or assignments
- **UNDERSTAND; INTERPRET:** Medical terminology and information given regarding status, progress and safety of a patient; to follow simple and complex instructions (oral or written) given by a PT regarding patient care; and respond to non-verbal communication/behaviors of self and others
- **FOLLOW DIRECTIONS:** Accurately and efficiently, seeking clarification where necessary
- **WRITE:** To produce legible handwritten or computer word processed documents; use correct medical terminology, spelling, grammar and punctuation; organize and express thoughts in written form in the English language; to prepare accurate, thorough, legally defensible patient documentation
- **INTERPERSONAL SKILLS:** To work collaboratively; interact professionally; to establish rapport with patients, colleagues and classmates; to resolve conflicts; with individuals from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds; maintain confidentiality in all interactions

### **COGNITIVE AND INTELLECTUAL STANDARDS**

- **THINK CRITICALLY:** To identify and solve problems; identify cause/effect relationships; to apply reading, lecture and laboratory information to case study preparation; to employ effective teaching, learning and test taking strategies
- **COMPREHEND:** Relevant information regarding patient diagnoses, Physical Therapist interventions, indications and contraindications, human pathology and impairments from textbooks, medical records and professional literature



- **PRIORITIZE:** Events to provide for patient safety; appropriate patient interventions; multiple tasks; integrate information and make decisions about sequence and progression
- **CALCULATE:** To collect and/or interpret accurate patient data
- **MAKE CLINICAL DECISIONS:** To respond quickly and appropriately to changes in patient status; to analyze written, observed or verbal data about patients and make decisions to terminate, modify, progress or cancel patient treatment; act safely and ethically in the Physical Therapist lab and clinic
- **SHORT-TERM AND LONG-TERM MEMORY:** To accurately and quickly remember data from the chart and information relayed in verbal exchanges with the PT and other members of the health care team; to access learned knowledge to include but not limited to diagnoses, weight-bearing status, indications, contraindications for interventions, safety precautions, subjective reports of patients, emergency procedures; safety procedures; to participate successfully in the learning and evaluation of knowledge within the Physical Therapist Assistant curriculum
- **THINK QUICKLY AND CLEARLY:** To execute all duties unimpaired by any condition or substance that alters mental processing, speed or quality of thought processes or judgment

#### **BEHAVIORAL/PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

- **FLEXIBILITY:** To adjust to a constantly changing and very demanding full-time schedule
- **COMPASSION:** To respect and show empathy for patients and their families; for people of all personality types, backgrounds, ethnic, race or socioeconomic backgrounds including but not limited to individuals with neurological disorders, physical disfigurement, mental health or complex medical problems
- **COOPERATION:** To work as a member of a team; develop positive and effective relationships with faculty, clinicians, peers and patients
- **RECOGNIZE LIMITATIONS:** To request assistance when needed; accept correction and constructive suggestions; assume responsibility for personal development; utilize resources effectively
- **TOLERANCE:** For close physical contact with patients, peers and classmates during the provision of interventions and in lab; for close proximity and physical contact with patients that require use of standard precautions during therapy due to open wounds, incontinence or other potential exposure to bodily fluids or pathogens during treatment
- **WILLINGNESS:** To wear scrub top/pants as the assigned uniform for fieldwork assignments; To wear required lab attire that will allow for visualization of body contours and exposure of all major joints and muscles; to participate in lab activities that require palpation, measurement, massage and other forms of therapeutic touching of joints, muscles and bony landmarks; to serve as both the patient model and clinician during patient simulations that allow classmates to practice and perfect Physical Therapist Assistant skills
- **POSITIVE ATTITUDE:** To demonstrate initiative, enthusiasm and appropriate peer and patient interactions
- **WORK ETHIC:** To attend class and clinic promptly and regularly; to stay focused and on task in lecture and laboratory instructional time; to submit work products promptly when due; to display industrious behavior; to submit to all classroom and clinical rules/policies; to demonstrate respect for other health care providers and the profession of Physical Therapist Assistant; to comply with all legal and ethical standards of practice

- **STRESS MANAGEMENT:** Coping skills for fast-paced clinical situations; to manage multiple academic deadlines; deal effectively with psychosocial issues of catastrophic illness, disability and death; respond appropriately in a stressful environment and during impending deadlines; manage personal matters outside of class/workday
- **PLANNING AHEAD:** To arrange transportation and living accommodations for/during off campus clinical assignments to foster timely reporting to the classroom and clinical center
- **SELF CARE:** To maintain general good health and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with whom one interacts in the academic and clinical settings

#### Reasonable Accommodation for Disabilities

The Accommodation Resource Center (ARC) at Northwest Florida State College is committed to providing equal access and opportunities for educational success to all students with disabilities as guided by the American Disabilities Act and other disability-related laws. Northwest Florida State College does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in any of our programs, services, or activities based on Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students who wish to request reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the ARC to start the process for documenting their disability and determining eligibility for services prior to the start of the program.

By signing below, I am indicating that I have read and understand the PTA Essential Functions and affirm that I have the ability to meet all of the above Essential Functions with or without reasonable accommodations. I authorize the program to share my request for reasonable accommodation(s) with a clinical site if deemed necessary for safety or successful completion of the clinical experience.

---

Name

Student ID #

Date

**Northwest Florida State College  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program  
Charter Class Acknowledgement Form**

Graduation from a physical therapist assistant education program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22305-3085; phone; 703-706-3245; accreditation@apta.org is necessary for eligibility to sit for the licensure examination, which is required in all states.

Northwest Florida State College is seeking accreditation of a new physical therapist assistant education program from CAPTE. The program is planning to submit an Application for Candidacy, which is the formal application required in the pre-accreditation stage, on June 1, 2020. Submission of this document does not assure that the program will be granted Candidate for Accreditation status. Achievement of Candidate for Accreditation status is required prior to implementation of the professional/technical phase of the program; therefore, no students may be enrolled in professional/technical courses until Candidate for Accreditation status has been achieved. Further, though achievement of Candidate for Accreditation status signifies satisfactory progress toward accreditation, it does not assure that the program will be granted accreditation.

The NWFSC PTA program is designed for students to graduate in August however initial accreditation decisions are not acted upon until the next regularly scheduled fall meeting of the Commission following an on-site visit, which must occur during the next to last term (spring 2022) when the charter class is enrolled. This would mean that students would complete their coursework in August and have their graduation delayed until after CAPTE's fall meeting.

In order to accommodate this delay, the program has received CAPTE authorization to split the summer coursework and extend into the fall semester in order for the charter class to finish after the accreditation decision has been made in October 2022. This means the charter class will graduate in December 2022. If granted accreditation, students will graduate with an Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant from an accredited program and be able to sit for the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) licensure exam in January 2023.

**I understand that and agree to the information listed above.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Off Campus Trip Release Form

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Northwest Florida State College endorses a number of off campus trip experiences for you, the adult students. These trips are planned to be an educational experience and are sponsored by a number of organizations related to the PTA curriculum. Any student who participates in a field trip becomes a representative of NWFSC. Since your behavior is a reflection on your curriculum you are expected to conduct yourself in a mature manner that would favorably reflect your chosen profession.

A NWFSC PTA student must be ever mindful of HIPAA and the Physical Therapy Standard of Ethics and professional conduct.

I, (print name) \_\_\_\_\_ understand that every effort will be taken to ensure my safety and welfare on any field trip endorsed by my curriculum. I will not hold any PTA Program faculty or NWFSC employee responsible for any accident or injury incurred to, from or on any field trip. This includes travel by private vehicle which I operate as a licensed driver, is driven by a licensed classmate or by a licensed NWFSC employee.

Print name of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of student: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Northwest Florida State College**  
**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**  
**Informed Consent Form**

If you have any cultural or individual differences that require modification of this form before signing, please speak with the PTA Program Director prior to signing the form.

**Your Treatment**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print your name here), agree to be treated by my instructors, guest lecturers or classmates during any or all mock lab and treatment sessions for the duration of my stay in the program. I understand that all efforts are made to provide modesty and safe conditions for me and that if I feel I am uncomfortable with any draping, manner of touch, or treatment activity or intervention, that I will carefully confront the person regarding this issue. If I still do not feel that the issue is resolved by this action, I will bring my concerns to the instructor and Program Director. I will follow the established dress code for lab classes as detailed in the course syllabus and the PTA Student Handbook. I will give notice to faculty of any relevant allergies, or other conditions prior to the lab session. I will notify the course instructor and the PTA Program Director prior to lab class if there is any significant change in my health status or history that would create a potential contraindication for any treatment intervention.

It is the responsibility of the individual signing below, who is participating in PTA Program activities, to inform the PTA faculty and/or competency proctors of any personal health diagnoses that exist that could be contraindications to the treatment interventions or activities.

**Contraindications**

In order to participate in lab class, as a competency patient, or as a lab practicum patient, I have informed the PTA faculty and/ or competency proctors of the presence of any health conditions and/or potential contraindications that a reasonable person would believe may be impacted by participation in the mock treatment. I recognize that I am responsible for advising the faculty and/or proctor of any concern that I may have regarding participation in the mock treatment.

**Treating Others**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (print your name here), will endeavor to follow the APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA, along with all other posted lab rules. I agree to drape my classmates, guests or instructors in a way that protects the modesty and maintain the safety of all "patients" treated. I will practice considerate and respectful non-verbal and verbal communication during all classroom and lab activities. I will promptly report any malfunctioning equipment to faculty as soon as I become aware of the malfunctioning equipment.

**Printed name** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** \_\_\_\_\_

**Northwest Florida State College**  
**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**  
**Permission to Use Photographs and/or Other Personal Information**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, of  
(Name of Student/Participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Address) (City) (State) (ZIP)

give Northwest Florida State College the absolute and irrevocable right to use my photograph(s) as recorded on film, video or other medium, and to identify me by name, if deemed appropriate by the college, in all forms, manner and media, including but not limited to, display, illustration, advertising, promotion, electronic transmission, for other college purposes. For these purposes, I relinquish my personal rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Laws and release NWF State College from any liability for the aforesaid use.

I understand that said photograph(s) shall be the sole property of NWF State College and may be copyrighted in its own name or any other name it may choose.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name Signature Date

**Northwest Florida State College  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program  
Student Pregnancy Declaration/Withdrawal Form**

**Declaration of Pregnancy**

To Whom It May Concern:

In accordance with current regulations, I wish to declare that I am pregnant.

In making this declaration, I understand that I must submit to the PTA Program Director a letter from my physician or other health care professional indicating any restrictions and recommendations regarding my participation in theory or clinical coursework. This letter must be updated as I progress through my pregnancy. I also understand that I must submit a "return to clinical care and class" documenting my "fitness to return to duty" following delivery.

---

Student Name

Signature

Date

---

**Withdrawal of Declaration of Pregnancy**

To Whom It May Concern,

Effectively immediately, I am withdrawing my previous declaration of pregnancy. I understand that, by submitting this form, I agree to the removal of any clinical scheduling changes due to my declaration of pregnancy.

---

Student Name

Signature

Date

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**Northwest Florida State College  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

**Statement of Withdrawal**

This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_ was accepted  
Student's Name (First and Last)

to the Northwest Florida State College Physical Therapist Assistant program on

\_\_\_\_\_ and withdrew from the program on  
Date Accepted

\_\_\_\_\_ for the following reason(s):  
Date Withdrew

Check all that apply:

\_\_\_\_\_ Personal or health reasons

\_\_\_\_\_ Financial status

\_\_\_\_\_ Transferring to another program

\_\_\_\_\_ Program is too intense for me

\_\_\_\_\_ Violation of program rules

\_\_\_\_\_ Academic failure

\_\_\_\_\_ Relocating

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

If you choose OTHER, please explain under the comment section.

Comments:

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Student name (print)

Signature

Date

Program Director Signature

Date



**Northwest Florida State College  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

**Midterm Evaluation**

Fall    Spring    Summer    20\_\_\_\_\_

**Student:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Student ID #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Strengths:**

**Areas for Improvement:**

**Comments:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Northwest Florida State College  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

**Progress/Counseling Record**

This form will serve as documentation that the student has been notified of the issue(s) that the student is being counseled on. This form will also document the period of time permitted to correct or improve the situation. The student will abide by all student policies, particularly regarding attendance, and follow up on conferences with program staff. Failure to comply with the terms can result in probation and/or dismissal from the program.

**Student Name:**

**Student ID#:**

**Date:**

**Description of Incident or Circumstance:**

**Recommendations/Actions:**

**Student Comments:**

**Remediation Plan with Timelines:**

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**Advisement:** Academic Warning\_\_\_\_ Probation\_\_\_\_, Behavioral Warning\_\_\_\_ Probation\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read and understand the counseling offense report. I will exercise my right to appeal procedures if it is necessary.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Advisor/Instructor's Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Professional Behaviors Assessment**  
**Physical Therapy Program**  
Original developed at Marquette University – Milwaukee, WI  
(Edited for use by the NWF State College PTA Program)

Student Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Semester: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Advisor Name: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Date: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Directions:

1. Read the description of each Professional Behavior.
2. Become familiar with the behavioral criteria described in each of the levels.
3. Self-assess your current performance, relative to the Professional Behaviors, using the behavioral criteria.
4. To complete this form:
  - a) **Highlight in green** all criteria that describes behaviors you demonstrate in Beginning (column 1), Intermediate (column 2), Entry Level (column 3) or Post-Entry Level Professional Behaviors for each criteria.
  - b) **Highlight in green** the level within which you predominately function (beginning, intermediate, entry, post-entry).
  - c) Document ***specific examples*** of when you demonstrated behaviors from the *highest level* highlighted, or the one in which you predominately function. You may use examples from any and all experiences that you have had previously, taking into consideration the level of this experience related to one in professional practice when rating yourself.
  - d) For each Professional Behavior, list the areas in which you wish to improve. And, **highlight in yellow** the areas that you have as current goals for yourself. Areas that are *not highlighted* are your long-term goals for yourself.
  - e) Complete the final section, reflecting on the areas that you have highlighted in yellow, and describe specific actions that you will take to work toward and achieve these goals.

**\*\*Professional Behaviors were *originally* developed by Warren May, Laurie Kontney and Annette Iglarsh (2010) as an update to the Generic Abilities.**

**1. Critical Thinking** - The ability to question logically; identify, generate and evaluate elements of logical argument; recognize and differentiate facts, appropriate or faulty inferences, and assumptions; and distinguish relevant from irrelevant information. The ability to appropriately utilize, analyze, and critically evaluate scientific evidence to develop a logical argument, and to identify and determine the impact of bias on the decision making process.

<b>Beginning Level:</b>	<b>Intermediate Level:</b>	<b>Entry Level:</b>	<b>Post-Entry Level:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Raises relevant questions</li> <li>❖ Considers all available information</li> <li>❖ Articulates ideas</li> <li>❖ Understands the scientific method</li> <li>❖ States the results of scientific literature but has not developed the consistent ability to critically appraise findings (i.e. methodology and conclusion)</li> <li>❖ Recognizes holes in knowledge base</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates acceptance of limited knowledge and experience in knowledge base</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Feels challenged to examine ideas</li> <li>❖ Critically analyzes the literature and applies it to patient management</li> <li>❖ Utilizes didactic knowledge, research evidence, and clinical experience to formulate new ideas</li> <li>❖ Seeks alternative ideas</li> <li>❖ Formulates alternative hypotheses</li> <li>❖ Critiques hypotheses and ideas at a level consistent with knowledge base</li> <li>❖ Acknowledges presence of contradictions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Distinguishes relevant from irrelevant patient data</li> <li>❖ Readily formulates and critiques alternative hypotheses and ideas</li> <li>❖ Infers applicability of information across populations</li> <li>❖ Exhibits openness to contradictory ideas</li> <li>❖ Identifies appropriate measures and determines effectiveness of applied solutions efficiently</li> <li>❖ Justifies solutions selected</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Develops new knowledge through research, professional writing and/or professional presentations</li> <li>❖ Thoroughly critiques hypotheses and ideas often crossing disciplines in thought process</li> <li>❖ Weighs information value based on source and level of evidence</li> <li>❖ Identifies complex patterns of associations</li> <li>❖ Distinguishes when to think intuitively vs. analytically</li> <li>❖ Recognizes own biases and suspends judgmental thinking</li> <li>❖ Challenges others to think critically</li> </ul>

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.

**2. Communication** - The ability to communicate effectively (i.e. verbal, non-verbal, reading, writing, and listening) for varied audiences and purposes.

<b>Beginning Level:</b>	<b>Intermediate Level:</b>	<b>Entry Level:</b>	<b>Post Entry Level:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates understanding of the English language (verbal and written): uses correct grammar, accurate spelling and expression, legible handwriting</li> <li>❖ Recognizes impact of non-verbal communication in self and others</li> <li>❖ Recognizes the verbal and non-verbal characteristics that portray confidence</li> <li>❖ Utilizes electronic communication appropriately</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Utilizes and modifies communication (verbal, non-verbal, written and electronic) to meet the needs of different audiences</li> <li>❖ Restates, reflects and clarifies message(s)</li> <li>❖ Communicates collaboratively with both individuals and groups</li> <li>❖ Collects necessary information from all pertinent individuals in the patient/client management process</li> <li>❖ Provides effective education (verbal non-verbal written)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates the ability to maintain appropriate control of the communication exchange with individuals and groups</li> <li>❖ Presents persuasive and explanatory verbal, written or electronic messages with logical organization and sequencing</li> <li>❖ Maintains open and constructive communication</li> <li>❖ Utilizes communication technology effectively and efficiently</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Adapts messages to address needs, expectations, and prior knowledge of the audience to maximize learning</li> <li>❖ Effectively delivers messages capable of influencing patients, the community and society</li> <li>❖ Provides education locally, regionally and/or nationally</li> <li>❖ Mediates conflict</li> </ul>

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**3. Problem Solving** – The ability to recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions, and evaluate outcomes.

**Beginning Level:**

- ❖ Recognizes problems
- ❖ States problems clearly
- ❖ Describes known solutions to problems
- ❖ Identifies resources needed to develop solutions
- ❖ Uses technology to search for and locate resources
- ❖ Identifies possible solutions and probable outcomes

**Intermediate Level:**

- ❖ Prioritizes problems
- ❖ Identifies contributors to problems
- ❖ Consults with others to clarify problems
- ❖ Appropriately seeks input or guidance
- ❖ Prioritizes resources (analysis and critique of resources)
- ❖ Considers consequences of possible solutions

**Entry Level:**

- ❖ Independently locates, prioritizes and uses resources to solve problems
- ❖ Accepts responsibility for implementing solutions
- ❖ Implements solutions
- ❖ Reassesses solutions
- ❖ Evaluates outcomes
- ❖ Modifies solutions based on the outcome and current evidence
- ❖ Evaluates generalizability of current evidence to a particular problem

**Post Entry Level:**

- ❖ Weighs advantages and disadvantages of a solution to a problem
- ❖ Participates in outcome studies
- ❖ Participates in formal quality assessment in work environment
- ❖ Seeks solutions to community health-related problems
- ❖ Considers second and third order effects of solutions chosen

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**4. Interpersonal Skills** – The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other health care professionals, and the community in a culturally aware manner.

<b><i>Beginning Level:</i></b>	<b><i>Intermediate Level:</i></b>	<b><i>Entry Level:</i></b>	<b><i>Post Entry Level:</i></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Maintains professional demeanor in all interactions</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates interest in patients as individuals</li> <li>❖ Communicates with others in a respectful and confident manner</li> <li>❖ Respects differences in personality, lifestyle and learning styles during interactions with all persons</li> <li>❖ Maintains confidentiality in all interactions</li> <li>❖ Recognizes the emotions and bias that one brings to all professional interactions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognizes the non-verbal communication and emotions that others bring to professional interactions</li> <li>❖ Establishes trust</li> <li>❖ Seeks to gain input from others</li> <li>❖ Respects role of others</li> <li>❖ Accommodates differences in learning styles as appropriate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates active listening skills and reflects back to original concern to determine course of action</li> <li>❖ Responds effectively to unexpected situations</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates ability to build partnerships</li> <li>❖ Applies conflict management strategies when dealing with challenging interactions</li> <li>❖ Recognizes the impact of non-verbal communication and emotional responses during interactions and modifies own behaviors based on them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Establishes mentor relationships</li> <li>❖ Recognizes the impact that non-verbal communication and the emotions of self and others have during interactions and demonstrates the ability to modify the behaviors of self and others during the interaction</li> </ul>

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.

**5. Responsibility** – The ability to be accountable for the outcomes of personal and professional actions and to follow through on commitments that encompass the profession within the scope of work, community and social responsibilities.

<b>Beginning Level:</b>	<b>Intermediate Level:</b>	<b>Entry Level:</b>	<b>Post Entry Level:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates punctuality</li> <li>❖ Provides a safe and secure environment for patients</li> <li>❖ Assumes responsibility for actions</li> <li>❖ Follows through on commitments</li> <li>❖ Articulates limitations and readiness to learn</li> <li>❖ Abides by all policies of academic program and clinical facility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Displays awareness of and sensitivity to diverse populations</li> <li>❖ Completes projects without prompting</li> <li>❖ Delegates tasks as needed</li> <li>❖ Collaborates with team members, patients and families</li> <li>❖ Provides evidence-based patient care</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Educates patients as consumers of health care services</li> <li>❖ Encourages patient accountability</li> <li>❖ Directs patients to other health care professionals as needed</li> <li>❖ Acts as a patient advocate</li> <li>❖ Promotes evidence-based practice in health care settings</li> <li>❖ Accepts responsibility for implementing solutions</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates accountability for all decisions and behaviors in academic and clinical settings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognizes role as a leader</li> <li>❖ Encourages and displays leadership</li> <li>❖ Facilitates program development and modification</li> <li>❖ Promotes clinical training for students and coworkers</li> <li>❖ Monitors and adapts to changes in the health care system</li> <li>❖ Promotes service to the community</li> </ul>

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.



**6. Professionalism** – The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively while promoting the growth/development of the Physical Therapy profession.

<b>Beginning Level:</b>	<b>Intermediate Level:</b>	<b>Entry Level:</b>	<b>Post Entry Level:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Abides by all aspects of the academic program honor code and the APTA Code of Ethics</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates awareness of state licensure regulations</li> <li>❖ Projects professional image</li> <li>❖ Attends professional meetings</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates cultural/generational awareness, ethical values, respect, and continuous regard for all classmates, academic and clinical faculty/staff, patients, families, and other healthcare providers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Identifies positive professional role models within the academic and clinical settings</li> <li>❖ Acts on moral commitment during all academic and clinical activities</li> <li>❖ Identifies when the input of classmates, co-workers and other healthcare professionals will result in optimal outcome and acts accordingly to attain such input and share decision making</li> <li>❖ Discusses societal expectations of the profession</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates understanding of scope of practice as evidenced by treatment of patients within scope of practice, referring to other healthcare professionals as necessary</li> <li>❖ Provides patient/family centered care at all times as evidenced by provision of patient/family education, seeking patient input and informed consent for all aspects of care and maintenance of patient dignity</li> <li>❖ Seeks excellence in professional practice by participation in professional organizations and attendance at sessions or participation in activities that further education/professional development</li> <li>❖ Utilizes evidence to guide clinical decision making and the provision of patient care, following guidelines for best practices</li> <li>❖ Discusses role of physical therapy within the healthcare system and in population health</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates leadership in collaboration with both individuals and groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Actively promotes and advocates for the profession</li> <li>❖ Pursues leadership roles</li> <li>❖ Supports research</li> <li>❖ Participates in program development</li> <li>❖ Participates in education of the community</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates the ability to practice effectively in multiple settings</li> <li>❖ Acts as a clinical instructor</li> <li>❖ Advocates for the patient, the community and society</li> </ul>

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.

**7. Use of Constructive Feedback** – The ability to seek out and identify quality sources of feedback, reflect on and integrate the feedback, and provide meaningful feedback to others.

<b>Beginning Level:</b>	<b>Intermediate Level:</b>	<b>Entry Level:</b>	<b>Post Entry Level:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates active listening skills</li> <li>❖ Assesses own performance</li> <li>❖ Actively seeks feedback from appropriate sources</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates receptive behavior and positive attitude toward feedback</li> <li>❖ Incorporates specific feedback into behaviors</li> <li>❖ Maintains two-way communication without defensiveness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Critiques own performance accurately</li> <li>❖ Responds effectively to constructive feedback</li> <li>❖ Utilizes feedback when establishing professional and patient related goals</li> <li>❖ Develops and implements a plan of action in response to feedback</li> <li>❖ Provides constructive and timely feedback</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Independently engages in a continual process of self evaluation of skills, knowledge and abilities</li> <li>❖ Seeks feedback from patients/clients and peers/mentors</li> <li>❖ Readily integrates feedback provided from a variety of sources to improve skills, knowledge and abilities</li> <li>❖ Uses multiple approaches when responding to feedback</li> <li>❖ Reconciles differences with sensitivity</li> <li>❖ Modifies feedback given to patients/clients according to their learning styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Engages in non-judgmental, constructive problem-solving discussions</li> <li>❖ Acts as conduit for feedback between multiple sources</li> <li>❖ Seeks feedback from a variety of sources to include students/supervisees/peers/supervisors/patients</li> <li>❖ Utilizes feedback when analyzing and updating professional goals</li> </ul>

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.

**8. Effective Use of Time and Resources** – The ability to manage time and resources effectively to obtain the maximum possible benefit.

<p><b>Beginning Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Comes prepared for the day's activities/responsibilities</li> <li>❖ Identifies resource limitations (i.e. information, time, experience)</li> <li>❖ Determines when and how much help/assistance is needed</li> <li>❖ Accesses current evidence in a timely manner</li> <li>❖ Verbalizes productivity standards and identifies barriers to meeting productivity standards</li> <li>❖ Self-identifies and initiates learning opportunities during unscheduled time</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Utilizes effective methods of searching for evidence for practice decisions</li> <li>❖ Recognizes own resource contributions</li> <li>❖ Shares knowledge and collaborates with staff to utilize best current evidence</li> <li>❖ Discusses and implements strategies for meeting productivity standards</li> <li>❖ Identifies need for and seeks referrals to other disciplines</li> </ul>	<p><b>Entry Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Uses current best evidence</li> <li>❖ Collaborates with members of the team to maximize the impact of treatment available</li> <li>❖ Has the ability to set boundaries, negotiate, compromise, and set realistic expectations</li> <li>❖ Gathers data and effectively interprets and assimilates the data to determine plan of care</li> <li>❖ Utilizes community resources in discharge planning</li> <li>❖ Adjusts plans, schedule etc. as patient needs and circumstances dictate</li> <li>❖ Meets productivity standards of facility while providing quality care and completing non-productive</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post Entry Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Advances profession by contributing to the body of knowledge (outcomes, case studies, etc)</li> <li>❖ Applies best evidence considering available resources and constraints</li> <li>❖ Organizes and prioritizes effectively</li> <li>❖ Prioritizes multiple demands and situations that arise on a given day</li> <li>❖ Mentors peers and supervisees in increasing productivity and/or effectiveness without decrement in quality of care</li> </ul>
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I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.

**9. Stress Management** – The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop and implement effective coping behaviors; this applies for interactions for: self, patient/clients and their families, members of the health care team and in work/life scenarios.

<p><b>Beginning Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognizes own stressors</li> <li>❖ Recognizes distress or problems in others</li> <li>❖ Seeks assistance as needed</li> <li>❖ Maintains professional demeanor in all situations</li> </ul>	<p><b>Intermediate Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Actively employs stress management techniques</li> <li>❖ Reconciles inconsistencies in the educational process</li> <li>❖ Maintains balance between professional and personal life</li> <li>❖ Accepts constructive feedback and clarifies expectations</li> <li>❖ Establishes outlets to cope with stressors</li> </ul>	<p><b>Entry Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Demonstrates appropriate affective responses in all situations</li> <li>❖ Responds calmly to urgent situations with reflection and debriefing as needed</li> <li>❖ Prioritizes multiple commitments</li> <li>❖ Reconciles inconsistencies within professional, personal and work/life environments</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates ability to defuse potential stressors with self and others</li> </ul>	<p><b>Post Entry Level:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Recognizes when problems are unsolvable</li> <li>❖ Assists others in recognizing and managing stressors</li> <li>❖ Demonstrates preventative approach to stress management</li> <li>❖ Establishes support networks for self and others</li> <li>❖ Offers solutions to the reduction of stress</li> <li>❖ Models work/life balance through health/wellness behaviors in professional and personal life</li> </ul>
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I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: Click here to enter text.

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: Click here to enter text.

**10. Commitment to Learning** – The ability to self direct learning to include the identification of needs and sources of learning; and to continually seek and apply new knowledge, behaviors, and skills.

**Beginning Level:**

- ❖ Prioritizes information needs
- ❖ Analyzes and subdivides large questions into components
- ❖ Identifies own learning needs based on previous experiences
- ❖ Welcomes and/or seeks new learning opportunities
- ❖ Seeks out professional literature
- ❖ Plans and presents an in-service, research or cases studies

**Intermediate Level:**

- ❖ Researches and studies areas where own knowledge base is lacking in order to augment learning and practice
- ❖ Applies new information and re-evaluates performance
- ❖ Accepts that there may be more than one answer to a problem
- ❖ Recognizes the need to and is able to verify solutions to problems
- ❖ Reads articles critically and understands limits of application to professional practice

**Entry Level:**

- ❖ Respectfully questions conventional wisdom
- ❖ Formulates and re-evaluates position based on available evidence
- ❖ Demonstrates confidence in sharing new knowledge with all staff levels
- ❖ Modifies programs and treatments based on newly-learned skills and considerations
- ❖ Consults with other health professionals and physical therapists for treatment ideas

**Post Entry Level:**

- ❖ Acts as a mentor not only to other PT's, but to other health professionals
- ❖ Utilizes mentors who have knowledge available to them
- ❖ Continues to seek and review relevant literature
- ❖ Works towards clinical specialty certifications
- ❖ Seeks specialty training
- ❖ Is committed to understanding the PT's role in the health care environment today (i.e. wellness clinics, massage therapy, holistic medicine)
- ❖ Pursues participation in clinical education as an educational opportunity

I function predominantly in the **beginning/intermediate/entry/post entry** level (highlight your rating)

Examples of **specific** behaviors to support my self-assessment: [Click here to enter text.](#)

Regarding this Professional Behavior, I would like to improve in the following ways: [Click here to enter text.](#)

**Professional Development Plan:**

**Based on my self assessment of my Professional Behaviors and the areas I have identified for improvement, I am setting the following goals:**[Click here to enter text.](#)

**To accomplish these goals, I will take the following specific actions:**[Click here to enter text.](#)

By my signature below, I indicate that I have completed this self-assessment consideration of my professional abilities and goals for development.

Student Signature: [Click here to enter text.](#) Date: [Click here to enter text.](#)

## Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant

HOD S06-19-47-68 [Amended HOD S06-09-20-18;  
HOD S06-00-13-24; HOD 06-91-06-07; Initial HOD 06-  
82-04-08] [Standard]



### Preamble

The Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant (Standards of Ethical Conduct) delineate the ethical obligations of all physical therapist assistants as determined by the House of Delegates of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). The Standards of Ethical Conduct provide a foundation for conduct to which all physical therapist assistants shall adhere. Fundamental to the Standards of Ethical Conduct is the special obligation of physical therapist assistants to enable patients and clients to achieve greater independence, health and wellness, and enhanced quality of life.

No document that delineates ethical standards can address every situation. Physical therapist assistants are encouraged to seek additional advice or consultation in instances where the guidance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct may not be definitive.

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### Standards

**Standard #1:** Physical therapist assistants shall respect the inherent dignity, and rights, of all individuals.

- 1A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in a respectful manner toward each person regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, religion, ethnicity, social or economic status, sexual orientation, health condition, or disability.
- 1B. Physical therapist assistants shall recognize their personal biases and shall not discriminate against others in the provision of physical therapist services.

**Standard #2:** Physical therapist assistants shall be trustworthy and compassionate in addressing the rights and needs of patients/clients.

- 2A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in the best interests of patients/clients over the interests of the physical therapist assistant.
- 2B. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapy interventions with compassionate and caring behaviors that incorporate the individual and cultural differences of patients/clients.
- 2C. Physical therapist assistants shall provide patients/clients with information regarding the interventions they provide.
- 2D. Physical therapist assistants shall protect confidential patient/client information and, in collaboration with the physical therapist, may disclose confidential information to appropriate authorities only when allowed or as required by law.

**Standard #3:** Physical therapist assistants shall make sound decisions in collaboration with the physical therapist and within the boundaries established by laws and regulations.

- 3A. Physical therapist assistants shall make objective decisions in the patient's or client's best interest in all practice settings.
- 3B. Physical therapist assistants shall be guided by information about best practice regarding physical therapy interventions.
- 3C. Physical therapist assistants shall make decisions based upon their level of competence and consistent with patient and client values.

- 3D. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in conflicts of interest that interfere with making sound decisions.
- 3E. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist and shall communicate with the physical therapist when patient or client status requires modifications to the established plan of care.

**Standard #4:** Physical therapist assistants shall demonstrate integrity in their relationships with patients and clients, families, colleagues, students, research participants, other health care providers, employers, payers, and the public.

- 4A. Physical therapist assistants shall provide truthful, accurate, and relevant information and shall not make misleading representations.
- 4B. Physical therapist assistants shall not exploit persons over whom they have supervisory, evaluative or other authority (eg, patients and clients, students, supervisees, research participants, or employees).
- 4C. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in any sexual relationship with any of their patients and clients, supervisees, or students.
- 4D. Physical therapist assistants shall not harass anyone verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually. 4E. Physical therapist assistants shall discourage misconduct by physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and other health care professionals and, when appropriate, report illegal or unethical acts, including verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual harassment, to an appropriate authority with jurisdiction over the conduct.
- 4F. Physical therapist assistants shall report suspected cases of abuse involving children or vulnerable adults to the appropriate authority, subject to law.

**Standard #5:** Physical therapist assistants shall fulfill their legal and ethical obligations.

- 5A. Physical therapist assistants shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- 5B. Physical therapist assistants shall support the supervisory role of the physical therapist to ensure quality care and promote patient and client safety.
- 5C. Physical therapist assistants involved in research shall abide by accepted standards governing protection of research participants.
- 5D. Physical therapist assistants shall encourage colleagues with physical, psychological, or substance-related impairments that may adversely impact their professional responsibilities to seek assistance or counsel.
- 5E. Physical therapist assistants who have knowledge that a colleague is unable to perform their professional responsibilities with reasonable skill and safety shall report this information to the appropriate authority.

**Standard #6:** Physical therapist assistants shall enhance their competence through the lifelong acquisition and refinement of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

- 6A. Physical therapist assistants shall achieve and maintain clinical competence.
- 6B. Physical therapist assistants shall engage in lifelong learning consistent with changes in their roles and responsibilities and advances in the practice of physical therapy.
- 6C. Physical therapist assistants shall support practice environments that support career development and lifelong learning.

**Standard #7:** Physical therapist assistants shall support organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients and clients and society.



- 7A. Physical therapist assistants shall promote work environments that support ethical and accountable decision-making.
- 7B. Physical therapist assistants shall not accept gifts or other considerations that influence or give an appearance of influencing their decisions.
- 7C. Physical therapist assistants shall fully disclose any financial interest they have in products or services that they recommend to patients and clients.
- 7D. Physical therapist assistants shall ensure that documentation for their interventions accurately reflects the nature and extent of the services provided.
- 7E. Physical therapist assistants shall refrain from employment arrangements, or other arrangements, that prevent physical therapist assistants from fulfilling ethical obligations to patients and clients.

**Standard #8:** Physical therapist assistants shall participate in efforts to meet the health needs of people locally, nationally, or globally.

- 8A. Physical therapist assistants shall support organizations that meet the health needs of people who are economically disadvantaged, uninsured, and underinsured.
- 8B. Physical therapist assistants shall advocate for people with impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and disabilities in order to promote their participation in community and society.
- 8C. Physical therapist assistants shall be responsible stewards of health care resources by collaborating with physical therapists in order to avoid overutilization or underutilization of physical therapist services.
- 8D. Physical therapist assistants shall educate members of the public about the benefits of physical therapy.

Effective June 2019

For more information, go to [www.apta.org/ethics](http://www.apta.org/ethics).

## **CORE VALUES FOR THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST AND PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT**

**HOD P06-19-48-55** [Amended: HOD P06-18-25-33; Initial HOD P05-07-19-19;] [Previously Titled: Core Values: for the Physical Therapist] [Position]

The core values guide the behaviors of physical therapists (PTs) and physical therapist assistants (PTAs) to provide the highest quality of physical therapist services. These values imbue the scope of PT and PTA activities. The core values retain the PT as the person ultimately responsible for providing safe, accessible, cost-effective, and evidence-based services; and the PTA as the only individual who assists the PT in practice, working under the direction and supervision of the PT. The core values are defined as follows:

- **Accountability**  
Accountability is active acceptance of the responsibility for the diverse roles, obligations, and actions of the physical therapist and physical therapist assistant including self-regulation and other behaviors that positively influence patient and client outcomes, the profession, and the health needs of society.
- **Altruism**  
Altruism is the primary regard for or devotion to the interest of patients and clients, thus assuming the responsibility of placing the needs of patients and clients ahead of the physical therapist's or physical therapist assistant's self-interest.
- **Collaboration**  
Collaboration is working together with patients and clients, families, communities, and professionals in health and other fields to achieve shared goals. Collaboration within the physical therapist-physical therapist assistant team is working together, within each partner's respective role, to achieve optimal physical therapist services and outcomes for patients and clients.
- **Compassion and Caring**  
Compassion is the desire to identify with or sense something of another's experience; a precursor of caring.  
  
Caring is the concern, empathy, and consideration for the needs and values of others.
- **Duty**  
Duty is the commitment to meeting one's obligations to provide effective physical therapist services to patients and clients, to serve the profession, and to positively influence the health of society.
- **Excellence**  
Excellence in the provision of physical therapist services occurs when the physical therapist and physical therapist assistant consistently use current knowledge and skills while understanding personal limits, integrate the patient or client perspective, embrace advancement, and challenge mediocrity.
- **Integrity**  
Integrity is steadfast adherence to high ethical principles or standards, being truthful, ensuring fairness, following through on commitments, and verbalizing to others the rationale for actions.
- **Social Responsibility**  
Social responsibility is the promotion of a mutual trust between the profession and the larger public that necessitates responding to societal needs for health and wellness.

**Explanation of Reference Numbers:**

HOD P00-00-00-00 stands for House of Delegates/month/year/page/vote in the House of Delegates minutes; the "P" indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, HOD P06-17-05-04 means that this position can be found in the June 2017 House of Delegates minutes on Page 5 and that it was Vote 4.

P: Position | S: Standard | G: Guideline | Y: Policy | R: Procedure



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