



SOUTH UNIVERSITY

**ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE/ ASSOCIATE OF
APPLIED SCIENCE IN PHYSICAL
THERAPIST ASSISTANT**

STUDENT HANDBOOK

SOUTH UNIVERSITY

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE/ ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE IN PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT STUDENT HANDBOOK

Disclaimer:

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program reserves the right to make changes at any time to courses, curriculum, calendar, program policies, and any other requirement affecting students, as may be required by accreditors, administrative, federal, state, and/or student needs each year. Changes will include an effective date and may apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. All changes will be provided in writing to students.



Dear PTA Student,

I would like to take a moment to congratulate you on your acceptance and welcome you into the professional phase of the program. You are about to embark on a challenging and extremely rewarding journey and we are here to support you every step of the way.

This handbook has been designed to help guide you as you progress through the PTA program. You will find general program information, policies, and procedures applicable to PTA students, so please refer to it often. This document is used as a supplement to the Academic Catalog and South University Student Handbook.

Each student is responsible for the information contained in this handbook. Please read the entire document and sign the acknowledgement, indicating that you understand the contents you have read and were given an opportunity to inquire about this information.

I wish you the best on your journey and look forward to hearing about your accomplishments!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amanda Bryson, PTA". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Amanda Bryson, PTA, MBA, BS, AAS
Department Chair Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Table of Contents

Section 1: General Program Policies and Procedures	
Introduction	7
Accreditation Status	7
Mission Statement	8
Program Student Learning Outcomes	8
Program Learning Goals	9
Program Curriculum	
Technical Standards for Physical Therapist Assistant Students	9
Student Rights and Responsibilities	10
Disability Services	11
Academic Regulations and Policies	11
Non-Discrimination Policy	11
No Harassment Policy	11
Student Grievance Procedure	11
Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Violence Policy and Procedures	11
Student General Complaint Procedure	11
College of Health Professions Drug and Alcohol Policy	12
Tuition and Fees	12
Additional Fees	12
Transcript Fees	12
Payment of Tuition and Fees	12
Refund Policy	12
Financial Aid	12
Veterans Benefits	12
Student Records	12
Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP)	13
Associate of Science and Associate of Applied Science in Physical Therapist Assistant Program Progression Standards	13
PTA Professional Conduct Code	14
PTA Dismissal and Withdrawal Process	15

PTA Reinstatement Policy	16
Withdrawal Policy	17
PTA Program Professional Phase Campus to Campus Transfer Policy	17
Remediation and Rounding	17
PTA Professional Conduct Code	18
Core Values for the Physical Therapist Assistant	20
South University Code of Conduct	20
Attendance	20
Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy	21
Examination Procedures- On Ground	21
Off-Campus Experiences	23
Program Guests/ Volunteers	23
Personal Presentation and Laboratory Attire	24
Open Lab Policy	24
PTA Laboratory Rules	25
Recorded Lecture Policy	26
Safety and Incident Reporting	26
Guidance	27
Student Affairs	27
Career Services	27
Library Services	27
University Email	
Electronic Communications Etiquette	
Section 2: Clinical Education Policies	
Clinical Education Overview	31
Required Contact Hours for Clinical Education Courses	31
Assignment of Clinical Education Sites	31
Clinical Attendance Policy	32
Hours	32
Transportation	32

Student Health Documentation	33
Background Check and Drug Screening	34
Drug/ Alcohol Testing Procedure	34
CPR	35
Clinical Attire and Personal Presentation	36
Technical Skills and Data Collection Form	36
Safe, Ethical, and Professional Practice	36
Confidentiality	36
Clinical Education Academic or Behavioral Adjustment	37
Grading of the Clinical Education Experience	37
Clinical Education Experiences Safety Guidelines	38
Clinical Externship: Summary of Student Skills	40
Responsibilities and Suggestions for The Student: Clinical Education	40
Appendices	
Appendix A – Essential Functions and Technical Standards	
Appendix B – Core Values for the Physical Therapist Assistant	
Appendix C – Program Curriculum Summary	
Appendix D – Recorded Lecture Policy Agreement	
Appendix E – Incident Report Form	
Appendix F – Clinical Education Experience File Checklist	
Appendix G – Affiliation Attendance Register	
Appendix H – Consent Form for Drug and Alcohol Screening	
Appendix I – CHP Records Release Form	
Appendix J – Technical Skills and Data Collection Form	
Appendix K – Clinical Site Orientation Checklist	
Appendix L - Student Counseling Report	
Appendix M - Student Learning Contract	
Appendix N –Clinical Externship: Summary of Student Skills	
Appendix O – Clinical Education: Responsibilities and Suggestions for the Student	



**SOUTH UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL THERAPIST
ASSISTANT
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**SECTION 1:
General Program
Policies and Procedures**



INTRODUCTION

This handbook has been prepared to orient you to current policies and procedures, guidelines, and resources relevant to your participation in the South University Physical Therapist Assistant program. Please read this handbook carefully as the contents will govern your enrollment in the South University Physical Therapist Assistant program. Additionally, this handbook contains information about the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) profession and its professional organizations. Periodically, additional policies and/or procedures may be established or changes made to the South University, Physical Therapist Assistant program's policies and procedures. All changes or additions will be shared with you via e-mail as they become effective. We hope this handbook will be useful to you. Please feel free to contact the Program Director or your faculty advisor if you have any questions.

Other policies and procedures regarding enrollment in South University can be found in the [South University Student Handbook](#) and the [South University Academic Catalog](#).

ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Austin, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 512-516-8744 or email abryson@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Columbia, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 803-935-4404 or email tswander@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Montgomery is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 334-395-8822 or email fberryman@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Richmond, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the

program/institution directly, please call 804-727-6881 or email mselden@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Savannah, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 912-201-8028 or email vnash@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Tampa, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 813-393-3793 or email dbawner@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, Virginia Beach, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 757-493-6979 or email lgarone@southuniversity.edu.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at South University, West Palm Beach, is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 561-273-6418 or email ljaffe@southuniversity.edu.

PROGRAM MISSION

In keeping with the stated purpose of South University, the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program strives to produce physical therapist assistants who, under the direction and supervision of physical therapists, reflect the highest standards of practice and conduct within the profession of physical therapy.

PROGRAM STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students of the South University Physical Therapist Assistant program will be expected to demonstrate competency essential to PTAs entering clinical practice. The South University Physical Therapist Assistant program expects achievement of the program learning outcomes (graduate competencies) by each student of the program. The program uses achievement of these learning outcomes as metrics for student competency and program effectiveness. Each course syllabi will guide the student through the assessment modalities utilized by the program to determine competency in the domains of clinical knowledge, interpersonal skills, clinical and technical skills, professional behaviors, and clinical reasoning and problem-solving abilities.

The following are the program learning outcomes (graduate competencies) for the South

University Physical Therapist Assistant program. Prior to graduation from the program, students will:

1. Provide safe, efficient, efficacious interventions within the plan of care established by the physical therapist.
2. Communicate using effective and culturally competent verbal, nonverbal, written, and digital communication.
3. Provide effective education to patients, caregivers, and members of the healthcare team.
4. Demonstrate the ability to appropriately and efficiently utilize resources to provide high-value physical therapy services.
5. Recognize the importance of maintaining competence in applicable areas of physical therapy practice.
6. Demonstrate the ability to work within the guidelines and standards established by the regulatory, professional, and organizational entities.
7. Demonstrate behaviors consistent with the Core Values of the profession of physical therapy.

PROGRAM LEARNING GOALS

The curriculum is designed to produce graduates who will meet the following programmatic outcomes:

1. The ultimate pass rate on the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) will meet or exceed programmatic accreditation standards.
2. The employment rate for licensed graduates will meet or exceed programmatic accreditation standards.
3. The results of graduate surveys will reveal overall graduate satisfaction with their preparation at South University.
4. The results of employer surveys will reveal overall satisfaction with the practice and employability of graduates.

PROGRAM CURRIUCLUM

The curriculum for the eight quarter and nine quarter programs can be found in Appendix C. Specific course descriptions can be found in the South University Academic Catalog.

Students must take courses in the professional phase of the Physical Therapist Assistant program in the order listed. As program coursework builds on prior courses, students must successfully complete each quarter prior to moving into the next quarter.

TECHNICAL STANDARDS FOR PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT STUDENTS

The essential functions and technical standards, detailed in Appendix A of this handbook, reflect expectations of a student in the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program for the performance of common physical therapy functions. In adopting these standards, the PTA program is mindful of the patient's right to safe function in a broad variety of clinical situations while administering physical therapy interventions. These standards do not encompass all that may be required for employment of the PTA program graduate. To verify the students' ability to perform these essential functions, students are required to demonstrate these technical standards throughout the curriculum. The faculty are the sole judge of a student's ability to meet these standards through

successful completion of the requirements of the program and individual courses.

The Physical Therapist Assistant program fully supports the provision of reasonable accommodations to students with special needs. Program requirements will not be altered. Instead, it is the policy of South University to provide reasonable accommodations to students with special needs who request them so that they can meet the program requirements. It is the student's responsibility to contact the Office of Disability Support Services with documentation to support their need for accommodations. Students are encouraged to contact the Office and/or Program Director as early as possible to discuss their situation.

Both Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, 29 U.S.C.A. Section 794, and the Americans with Disabilities Act prohibit discrimination against "otherwise qualified" persons with a disability. If an applicant can perform the Essential Functions and Technical Standards listed, he or she is "otherwise qualified" under the law and must be treated the same as a person without a disability. A person who cannot perform the Technical Standards is not "otherwise qualified" and may be denied access to the program without discrimination. These skills and behaviors include, but are not limited to:

Critical Thinking: A student must possess the intellectual, ethical, physical and emotional capabilities required to undertake the full curriculum and to achieve the levels of competence required by the faculty. Students must possess the ability to collect, interpret, and integrate information and use that information to make appropriate decisions.

Communication Skills: A student should be able to speak, to hear, and to observe patients to elicit information, and to perceive nonverbal communications. Students must be able to communicate effectively in English using verbal, nonverbal, and written formats with faculty, other students, patients, families, and healthcare workers.

Interpersonal Skills: A student must possess the emotional health required for full utilization of his or her intellectual abilities, the exercise of good judgment, and the ability to collaboratively work with all PTA students and with program faculty and patients in the classroom, lab, and clinical setting.

Coping Skills: A student must be able to respond appropriately to stressful environments or during impending deadlines.

Mobility/ Motor Skills: A student should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients and to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective physical therapy treatment in various clinical settings.

Sensory Abilities: A student should possess sufficient visual, auditory, and tactile abilities to effectively monitor and assess a patient's health needs.

Behavioral Skills: A student should possess the ability to demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic.

STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

South University is committed to the development of knowledge and ethics that are consistent with responsible professional and social behavior. During orientation to the program, each student receives a copy of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Student Handbook (this document), the [South University Student Handbook](#), and the [South University Academic Catalog](#). These documents govern student activity while enrolled in the South University Physical Therapist Assistant program. Students are expected to meet academic requirements and demonstrate a sense of responsibility with an understanding of and respect for the rights of others. The atmosphere of the University reflects these goals; and, in turn, each student must be aware of their individual responsibility to act accordingly. By enrolling as a student at South University, a student agrees to abide by the rules and regulations of South University. The rules concerning student behavior are outlined in the Code of Conduct section of the [South University Student Handbook](#). Specific conduct expectations of the South University Physical Therapist Assistant student can be found in the “[Standards of Conduct](#)” section of this handbook. Alleged violations of the program’s Standards of Professional Behavior will be referred to the program’s Progressions Committee. Alleged violations of the [University’s Code of Conduct](#) may be referred to the University’s Dean of Student Affairs.

DISABILITY SERVICES

Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: Disability Services](#) for more information.

ACADEMIC REGULATIONS AND POLICIES

Academic regulations, including grievance procedures, are further outlined in the [South University Academic Catalog](#) and the [South University Student Handbook](#). Students enrolled at South University are expected to uphold, at all times, standards of integrity and behavior that will reflect credit upon themselves and South University. Registration at South University implies the student’s acceptance of the published academic regulations, and all other rules found in any official publication or announcements. Conduct regulations are described in the [South University Academic Catalog](#) and the [South University Student Handbook](#).

NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: Non-Discrimination Policy](#) for the Non-Discrimination policy.

NO HARASSMENT POLICY

Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: No Harassment Policy](#) for the No Harassment policy.

STUDENT GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE

For concerns regarding mistreatment, discrimination, harassment (other than sexual harassment), unprofessional relationships, abuse of authority, and abusive and/or intimidating behavior, please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: Student Grievance Procedure for Internal Complaints of Discrimination and Harassment](#).

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT AND RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE POLICY AND PROCEDURES

For concerns regarding Sexual Misconduct & Relationship Violence, please refer to the [South University PTA Program Handbook](#)
Section 1: General Policies and Procedures

[University Academic Catalog: Procedures for Handling Sexual Misconduct and Relationship Violence Complaints.](#)

STUDENT GENERAL COMPLAINT PROCEDURE

For concerns regarding general complaints, please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: General Complaint Procedures.](#)

Students wishing to submit a grievance or concern to the University may do so through the [Student Portal.](#)

COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY

Due to the nature of the practice of health professions programs, the College of Health Professions maintains a zero-tolerance policy for any violation. Please refer to the [College of Health Professions Drug and Alcohol Policy](#) published in the [South University Academic Catalog.](#)

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

TUITION AND FEES

Tuition and fees are subject to change at the end of any term. The tuition cost for a full-time course load does not include expenses for such required items such as textbooks, medical equipment and supplies, laboratory fees, clinical tracking software fees, background check and drug screen fees, credentialing costs, clinical experience fee, and professional liability insurance. PTA students are not eligible for part-time enrollment. In-state and out-of- state tuition are the same. Upon graduation, students will no longer have access to digital and textbook resources. For more information on tuition and fees please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog.](#)

ADDITIONAL FEES

For all other estimated costs and associated fees which are subject to change for the PTA Degree, please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog](#) and/or each campus' website.

REFUND POLICY

Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: Institutional Refund Policy.](#)

FINANCIAL AID

Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog: Financial Aid.](#)

VETERANS BENEFITS

Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog.](#)

STUDENT RECORDS AND TRANSCRIPTS

Educational transcripts for each student enrolled in the South University Physical Therapist Assistant program will be maintained by the South University Registrar permanently following the student's graduation, withdrawal, or termination from the program. Official transcripts are available for order through a third-party vendor, [Parchment.](#) Please refer to the [South University Academic Catalog](#) for information on transcript fees.

The program maintains a file on each student which includes documents pertinent to students' admission and progression through the program. Student files are maintained in locked file cabinets in program office suite locked offices, storage vaults, and/or digitally on a secure drive. Graduate files are maintained in the program's secure file vault for three (3) years following graduation then are sent to a secure off- site storage facility. Students are granted access to their own personal academic file only as requested by the student in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please see the [South University Academic Catalog](#) for more information on FERPA.

Students do not have access to academic records or other confidential information of other students or faculty and are not permitted in areas that house this material without permission and the accompaniment and supervision of a faculty or staff member.

EVALUATION OF STUDENTS

SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS (SAP)

Refer to the [Academic Catalog](#) for details on making measurable progress toward completion of programs of study, policies regarding academic dismissal, and procedures for appeals.

ASSOCIATE OF SCIENCE AND ASSOCIATE OF APPLIED SCIENCE IN PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM PROGRESSION STANDARDS

Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) students are required to satisfactorily complete all professional phase course and clinical education requirements in order to remain in good standing and to be eligible for graduation. Students and program faculty must comply with published programmatic policies, syllabi, course goals and objectives, as well as published University requirements to ensure satisfactory student progress through the professional phase.

The PTA Progressions Committee (PC) is responsible for monitoring the professional phase progressions and reinstatement policies, which include academic, clinical, and conduct domains related to the PTA program. The PC reviews the progress of each student no less than once per quarter and more frequently as indicated. The PC will recommend an appropriate action for each student based on his/her academic, clinical, and professional performance. These actions may include progression to the next quarter, graduation, warning, continued warning, removal from warning, suspension, or dismissal. The PC may recommend other actions including, but not limited to, remediation or repetition of coursework and participation in academic tutoring.

The policies described below either clarify, operationalize, or augment the South University Satisfactory Academic Progress Policies.

Good Standing Status - Students must meet all of the following criteria while in the professional phase of the program:

1. Maintain the minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.50 for all professional PTA designated courses during each quarter of the professional phase. (Note: PTA1001 will be included in GPA calculations for the first quarter of the

professional phase even if the student takes the course prior to entry into the professional phase.)

2. Successfully complete academic coursework by achieving a minimum grade of “C” (70%) in all PTA designated courses. If a course has a lab element, the evaluation requirements are divided into lecture and laboratory components. In order for a final grade to be calculated, student must achieve a minimum average of 70% in EACH individual component. Averages below 70% in either the lecture or laboratory component will result in a “D” or “F” grade. If BOTH components meet the minimum 70%, they will be averaged together, and then professional behavior points will be added to assign the final course grade.
 - a. Students who do not achieve a minimum grade of “C” in any PTA course are unable to continue in the curriculum and will be immediately dismissed. Please refer to the PTA Dismissal and Withdrawal Process below.
 - b. Remediation While in Good Standing:
 - i. Remediation is mandatory if a student scores less than 75% on a written exam or if the student fails to demonstrate all designated critical safety elements in a practical examination. Failure to remediate via the format prescribed by the instructor (or PC) will result in an incomplete grade. Refer to the University catalog for the requirements for resolution of an incomplete grade.
 - ii. A written remediation plan (e.g., Student Counseling Report, Student Learning Contract, etc.) is initiated when a student’s average is nearing or below a failing grade for the course. Failure to comply with a remediation plan is likely to result in a failing grade.
3. Successfully complete clinical coursework with a grade of pass (P). To receive a passing grade (P), students must meet minimal competency standards and successfully complete all course requirements as published in clinical course syllabi.
 - a. If the student fails to receive a passing grade in any clinical course or if they are removed or withdraw from a clinical affiliation, they will proceed to Level Two: Suspension.
4. Student Code of Conduct/Professional Behavior
 - a. Students will abide by the [University Code of Conduct](#) (see South University Student Handbook), College of Health Profession policies, and PTA Professional Conduct Code below.

PTA Professional Conduct Code

The PTA faculty consider professional behavior as one of the most important components in the education of PTA students. Students enrolled in the PTA program are expected to abide by all of the following: 1.) the [South University Code of Conduct](#), 2.) the American Physical Therapy Association’s (APTA) [Guide for Conduct of the PTA](#), 3.) the APTA’s [Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA](#), and 4.) additional programmatic and instructor policies (e.g., attendance policies, lab rules, etc.) as published in the PTA Program Handbook and course syllabi.

Code of Conduct violations will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs and addressed according to the disciplinary procedures published in the South University Student Handbook. All other violations will be referred to the Program Director and may result in a written remediation plan, referral to the Progressions Committee (PC), and/or referral to the Campus Director.

PTA Dismissal and Withdrawal Process

1. Level One: “Warning”

Failure to maintain the minimum CGPA of 2.50 will result in the student being placed on programmatic warning. The student will be permitted to remain on warning for a maximum of one quarter (but no later than the first full-time externship). If this requirement is not met, the student will be dismissed from the program (see Level Three: Immediate Dismissal).

2. Level Two: “Suspension”

Withdrawal or removal from a clinical course or receipt of a failing grade in a clinical course will result in suspension while the PC investigates the situation. The PC will choose one of the following actions within 14 calendar days of the occurrence:

- a. If the committee determines that the student has a high probability of entering the profession as a safe, proficient practitioner, the student may be permitted to repeat the clinical course. The PC will outline requirements for completion of the course in conjunction with the PD and Academic Coordinator for Clinical Education (ACCE). The option to repeat a clinical course will be offered only once for any student while in the professional phase of the program.
- b. If the committee deems the withdrawal/removal or failing grade a substantial indicator that the student will not succeed in the profession, the student will proceed to Level Three: Immediate Dismissal.

3. Level Three: “Immediate Dismissal”

Students are immediately dismissed when any of the following occur:

- a. Failure to achieve a CGPA of 2.50 within one quarter of being placed on warning status.
- b. Failure to achieve a CGPA of 2.50 prior to the first full-time externship.
- c. Receipt of a "D" or "F" in one or more academic courses.
- d. The PC recommends dismissal in the case of an incomplete clinical course or failed clinical course.
- e. The PC recommends dismissal in the case of a significant policy, Code of Conduct, or PTA Professional Conduct Code violation.

The Program Director will notify students in writing if they are dismissed from the program. PTA students wishing to appeal their dismissal must do so in writing. Academic appeals will be handled in accordance with Grade Challenges as published in the [Academic Catalog](#). Student Code of Conduct and PTA Professional Conduct Code appeals must be received within 7 calendar days of receipt of the dismissal letter and will be handled in accordance with the University Code of Conduct policy published in the South University Student Handbook.

Students who have withdrawn from the program or who have been dismissed from the program may be eligible for reinstatement in the future. Please see the PTA Reinstatement Policy for more information. Note: If the student is dismissed a second time while in the professional phase, the student will be permanently dismissed from the program and will not be eligible for

readmission into any South University PTA program. Students should be aware that withdrawing from any course within the PTA curriculum schedule automatically withdraws the student from the PTA program.

PTA REINSTATEMENT POLICY

Students who wish to be considered for reinstatement should reapply using the following procedure. The reinstatement process will only be offered once. There is no guarantee of reinstatement for any student. Note that any appeals must be concluded prior to initiating the reinstatement process.

To begin the reinstatement process, the student must apply in writing to the Progressions Committee (via the Program Director) requesting reinstatement in the program. The letter must include the date the student wishes to return and a rationale describing how the student plans to complete the program successfully. The letter must be received by the Program Director no later than 60 calendar days prior to the first day of the academic quarter into which the student wishes to reenroll. The Progressions Committee (PC) will meet within 21 calendar days of receipt of the letter to consider the reinstatement request and complete a plan of action to address the reasons for withdraw/dismissal. The student may be required to attend this meeting.

The PC will formally notify the student of their decision and plan of action within 7 calendar days of the meeting. If remediation or other action is warranted, it must be successfully completed no less than 7 calendar days prior to the start of the quarter in which the student wishes to reenroll. If this does not occur, the student must reinitiate the reinstatement process. The final decision for acceptance into the next cohort will be based upon available slots in the cohort, successful completion of any actions required by the PC, and a reasonable expectation that the student in question has potential to succeed in the program.

Reinstatement Procedure

1. If the student withdrew or was dismissed during the first quarter of the professional phase, the PC may elect to have the student enter the ranking process to gain admission to the next cohort. The student will be required to follow the same application process as all other applicants. If the student gains admission to the professional phase, he/she will repeat all previously attempted PTA coursework.
2. If the student withdrew or was dismissed after completing one or more quarters of the professional phase, the PC will determine what coursework, if any, must be repeated upon reinstatement. The student must repeat any course in which he/she did not achieve a minimum grade of “C” (70%), however the PC may also require a student to repeat coursework that was completed successfully if it is deemed to be critical to the success of the student (see financial aid for costs associated with retaking coursework). The PC may also require actions including, but not limited to, remediation, competency checks, and/or written or didactic exams to determine if the student is suitable to return to the program and to help ensure student success.
 - a. When a student repeats a course, he/she must achieve a minimum grade of B (80%) to continue in the curriculum. If the course has a lab element, students must achieve a minimum average of 80% in EACH individual component (i.e., lecture and lab). If the student fails to achieve a minimum grade of B in repeated

coursework, he/she will be dismissed from the program and is not eligible for reinstatement.

3. Students who are eligible for reinstatement and who have been out of the program for longer than one year must reapply for admission to the university and meet the current admissions requirements of the professional phase of the PTA program.
4. The reinstated student will be required to comply with the curriculum and requirements in force at the time of reinstatement, including any changes made to the curriculum or prerequisites during his/her absence from the program.
5. If a student is dismissed a second time while in the professional phase, the dismissal is permanent, and the student is not eligible for reinstatement into any South University PTA program.

The decision for reinstatement of any student is made at the discretion of the PC. Students wishing to appeal this decision must do so in writing to the Campus Director within 7 calendar days of receipt of the decision letter. If the student is not satisfied with the results of the appeal, he/she may file a final appeal with the Dean of the College of Health Professions within 7 calendar days of receipt of the decision letter. The decision of the Dean of the College of Health Professions is final.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY

Please refer to the [Academic Catalog](#) for complete withdrawal procedures and policies. Students should be aware that withdrawing from a course within the PTA curriculum schedule automatically withdraws the student from the PTA program. Please refer to the PTA Program Progression Standards and Reinstatement Policy above.

PTA PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL PHASE CAMPUS TO CAMPUS TRANSFER POLICY

Students enrolled in the Professional Phase of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program who are in good standing according to the Physical Therapist Assistant Progression Standards may be eligible for transfer to a different South University PTA program. Students interested in transferring to a different campus should contact the Program Director of their current program to receive more information about the potential for transfer. There is no guarantee of transfer between programs. The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Progressions Committee at the receiving campus makes the final decision to accept or reject transfer students in the Professional Phase of the program.

REMEDICATION AND ROUNDING

Lecture Examinations

If a student scores less than a 75% on any written examination, the following remediation procedure will be adhered to:

1. The original test grade will remain as scored.
2. Remediation format will be determined by the course instructor and described/outlined with the first test which requires remediation.
3. All tests requiring remediation must be completed and submitted prior to receiving a final grade in the course.
4. Failure to comply with these procedures will result in an incomplete grade for the course.

Refer to the University catalog for requirements for resolution of an incomplete grade.

Laboratory Practical Examinations

1. All students will be made fully aware of the grading rubric and retake opportunities prior to each practical exam. The following remediation procedures will be adhered to:
 - a. A practical examination must be repeated if the student fails to correctly demonstrate all critical safety elements designated with an asterisk (*) and all critical competency elements marked with a caret (^). The student will have a maximum of two (2) retake opportunities per exam to properly demonstrate all critical elements with an asterisk or caret. If unsuccessful on both retake attempts, the student will receive an “F” in the course (refer to the PTA Progression Standards).
 - b. The original exam grade will remain as scored for all repeated exams except for summative practical examinations where a student scores less than 70% (see item #2 below).
2. If a student scores less than a 70% on a laboratory practical exam, he/she will be offered a single opportunity per quarter and per class to retake the practical examination in order to achieve a maximum grade of 70%. Note: this attempt is in conjunction with, NOT in addition to, the retake attempts noted in #1 above.
3. The student is responsible for coordinating adequate remediation with the instructor prior to any repeat practical exams. Repeated exams must be completed in a timely manner as determined by the course instructor.

If a student scores less than a 75% or fails any critical competency or safety element on any practical examination, the following remediation procedure must be completed after all testing is complete for the examination:

1. The original practical examination grade will remain as scored, except in the case of the final practical examination as described in #2 above. If the student repeats the final examination, the score on the repeated examination will stand.
2. Remediation format will be determined by the course instructor and described/outlined with the first test which requires remediation.
3. All tests requiring remediation must be completed and submitted prior to receiving a final grade in the course.
4. Failure to comply with these procedures will result in an incomplete grade for the course. Refer to the University catalog for requirements for resolution of an incomplete grade.

Individual examination, project, and assignment scores will not be rounded. Final grades will not be rounded.

PROGRAMMATIC POLICIES

PTA PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT CODE

The PTA faculty consider professional behavior as one of the most important components in the education of PTA students. Students enrolled in the PTA Program are expected to abide by all of the following:

1. The South University Code of Conduct (see [South University Student Handbook](#))
2. The American Physical Therapy Association’s (APTA) [Guide for Conduct of the PTA](#)

3. The APTA's [*Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA*](#)
4. Additional programmatic and instructor policies as published in this handbook and course syllabi.

Code of Conduct violations will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs and addressed according to the disciplinary procedures published in the South University Student Handbook. All other violations will be referred to the Program Director and may result in a written remediation plan, referral to the PC, and/or referral to the Dean of Student Affairs.

The Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant is the framework for the professional conduct code adopted by the PTA program. The programmatic policies that follow serve as a guideline to help develop the professional behaviors requisite for the profession as defined in the APTA documents cited above.

Professionalism includes the behaviors and attitudes expected of healthcare professionals, including physical therapist assistants (PTAs). Therefore, PTA students need to develop and display professional behaviors throughout their academic and clinical coursework in preparation for their future careers in health care. To assess the professionalism of students in the Professional Phase of the PTA program, the behaviors and attitudes of students will be monitored during the first three quarters of the program. At the beginning of each quarter, students will be awarded a set number of points. Throughout the quarter, professional behavior will be tracked in each class by the course instructor(s). Students will be evaluated on multiple aspects of professional responsibility, including punctual attendance, active classroom participation, positive attitude, timely completion of assigned tasks and assignments, and appropriate communication with faculty and peers. Students will lose points for unprofessional behavior including, but not limited to, unexcused absences or tardies, submission of late assignments, disruptive behavior in class, inappropriate communication, and disregarding the PTA lab rules. Frequent point deductions or loss of points as outlined in the course syllabi will result in disciplinary action, which may include a verbal warning, counseling report, student learning contract, or referral to the PTA program Progressions Committee.

The PTA Professional Conduct Code is outlined in the following sections. Note that these expectations are for illustrative purposes only and do not encompass all behaviors that may be in violation of the PTA Conduct Code or South University Code of Conduct.

- [Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant](#)
- [South University Code of Conduct](#)
- [Attendance](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Examination Procedures](#)
- [Program Guests and Off-Campus Experiences](#)
- [Personal Presentation and Laboratory Attire](#)
- [Open Lab](#)
- [PTA Laboratory Rules](#)

CORE VALUES FOR THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT

Entry-level therapists are expected to demonstrate mastery of academic information, technical skills, and a set of professional behaviors referred to as values-based behaviors. These behaviors are not explicitly part of the academic knowledge and technical skills but are, nevertheless, required for success in the profession.

In 2000, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) adopted Vision 2020. The strategic plan highlighted professionalism as one of its six key elements and set out to define and describe this concept by identifying behaviors graduates should demonstrate. In 2019, the APTA delineated 8 core values to guide PTAs and PTs to provide the highest quality of physical therapist services. The values described are: Accountability, Altruism, Collaboration, Caring and Compassion, Duty, Excellence, Integrity, and Social Responsibility (Core Values, September 2019).

These behaviors, their definitions, and sample indicators, detailed in Appendix B, are now considered part of the formal training of physical therapist assistants and will be assessed and developed formally in this program. The faculty will introduce the observation, assessment and development of these abilities early in the curriculum and integrate them into each course. The core values are presented to students as a guide to South University's efforts to objectify, assess, and alter behaviors displayed in the academic setting so that the student is able to seek entry-level positions upon graduation and is ready to display the more advanced behaviors expected of a clinician. Specifically, the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) addresses such behaviors.

SOUTH UNIVERSITY CODE OF CONDUCT

Each student who enters South University commits, by the act of enrolling, to full acceptance of the [University Code of Conduct](#). For ease of reference, the [South University Student Handbook](#) contains the Code of Conduct, disciplinary procedures, and the appeals process.

ATTENDANCE

Dependability and cooperation are character traits that are important to success in the healthcare field. Students are responsible for attendance requirements per the University's current policy ([see Academic Catalog](#)). Due to the quality and content of the Physical Therapist Assistant program curriculum, PTA students are held to higher attendance standards than the University attendance policy described in the Academic Catalog. Students are required to be present, punctual, and prepared for all lectures, laboratories, and clinical sessions unless illness or emergency makes it inadvisable or impossible to be present.

Students must notify the course instructor(s) directly prior to a tardy or absence if possible, including the reason for the tardy or absence. If the tardy or absence is planned (e.g., doctor's appointment, wedding), then students must provide advance notice. Approval of the planned tardy or absence is at the discretion of the instructor.

A student, whether present or absent from class, is responsible for knowing all that is announced, discussed, or lectured upon in class or lab as well as for mastering all assigned reading and skills. A student is also responsible for submitting, on time, all assignments and tests, recitations, and

unannounced quizzes. Make-up work may be permitted at the instructor's discretion, no later than the last day of finals week. Students who miss an exam for a valid reason will be allowed to take a make-up exam before the next class meeting. Only one test or quiz may be taken as a make-up test. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor to schedule a make-up test.

There are no guaranteed excused absences from lecture, laboratory, or clinical education experiences. Students should refer to the clinical education information for attendance policies specific to those courses. There is no leave of absence option available to on-campus students, including on-campus students taking online courses, at South University. Frequent absences, tardiness, and/or early departures will result in a Student Counseling Report and/or Student Learning Contract and may lead to referral to the Progressions Committee.

UNDERGRADUATE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

The University maintains that all members of the academic community are expected to employ the highest standards of academic integrity in their work. Any violation of such may be subject to a penalty based on the infraction, which may include a reprimand, reduction in grade, failing grade, suspension, or dismissal from the University. Please see the [Academic Catalog](#) and South University Student Handbook for the full [Academic Integrity Policy](#), including violations and due process.

EXAMINATION PROCEDURES – ON GROUND

The PTA Program firmly adheres to the Undergraduate Academic Integrity Policy and views any breach of academic integrity and all forms of academic dishonesty as a serious violation of the PTA Program Professional Conduct Code. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be fully investigated and reported according to University policy. Additional action may be taken by the PTA Progressions Committee.

To help ensure academic integrity, the following procedures will be followed for all examinations:

- No unauthorized materials are permitted to be on or near students or any classroom desks and tables during testing. Permitted materials most commonly include a pen/pencil for written or electronic examinations and a pen/pencil and student equipment (e.g., gait belt, goniometer) for practical examinations. If scrap paper is permitted it will be provided by the instructor. Bags, purses, textbooks, cell phones, electronic devices, and all other unauthorized items will be placed in an area designated by the instructor.
- No form of communication (e.g., written, verbal, gestures, electronic, etc.) will be tolerated amongst students during any examination. Silence is expected in the classroom during all written examinations.
- An examination will end for a student when he/she exits the room, regardless of the reason (e.g., use of restroom).
- Students who finish an examination early may leave the room as long as they do so quietly and without disturbing fellow students. Once a student leaves the room, he/she will not be permitted to reenter while the exam is in progress.
- When an instructor indicates the time to complete the exam has ended, all remaining students are required to stop immediately and give the exam to the instructor.

- Practical examinations may be videotaped for grading and review purposes at the discretion of the instructor.
- No materials, including all writing utensils and electronic devices, are permitted to be on or near students or any tables or desks during the review of written examinations.
- **The possession of a cell phone or any other electronic device during an examination or review of an examination is a serious infraction. The student will receive a zero for that exam and be immediately referred to the Dean of Student Affairs. Additional action may also be taken by the PTA Progressions Committee.**

OFF-CAMPUS EXPERIENCES

Approval must be received from the program director prior to any off-campus activity. The Program Director is responsible for ensuring a Memorandum of Understanding is in place with the facility (as needed). Faculty are responsible for completing: 1) the Trip Release Form, and 2) the *PTA Students Attending Off-Campus Experience Form*. The *PTA Students Attending Off-Campus Experience Form* includes objectives, facility-specific information, emergency contact information, and responsibilities of all parties. The program cannot require student participation. If the student voluntarily elects to participate, they must sign both forms prior to the activity. These forms will be placed in the students' files maintained in the PD's office.

Students will be accompanied by the course instructor or other faculty member, who provides onsite leadership for the class. Facility staff will provide direct instruction to students. If patients or clients are involved in the learning experience, the facility's physical therapist retains full responsibility for the care of the patient. In the event of an emergency, the facility's representative institutes/directs the facility's response protocol.

The PTA program requires that students follow HIPAA guidelines and keep confidential any information or materials shared during these educational experiences. This includes keeping confidential protected health information (PHI) that would identify a patient, clinic, hospital, or employee of the clinic. No oral or written presentations produced as part of the education process may contain or refer to specific information which would identify any of the above.

PROGRAM GUESTS/VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers, guest patients, and guest lecturers may be utilized to meet course and program objectives. Prior to participating in any educational activity, volunteer and unpaid guests must complete and sign a *Volunteer Release from Liability Form*.

Students are expected to demonstrate attentiveness, respect, and professional behavior at all times, especially when the program is hosting guests. The PTA program requires that students follow HIPAA guidelines and keep confidential any information or materials shared during these educational experiences (as described above).

PERSONAL PRESENTATION AND LABORATORY ATTIRE

Each student will be held accountable for the highest quality of personal hygiene, grooming, and dress in the classroom and during clinical externships. Lewd, indecent, or offensive clothing is

prohibited in the classroom and on campus.

Due to the hands-on nature of physical therapy, students are to dress for laboratory in a manner that allows free movement and exposure of areas of the body being studied while preserving modesty through appropriate draping. It is expected that all students will demonstrate decorum and respect for the privacy and personal space of their peers and patients. Violation of this policy will result in dismissal from the laboratory session and referral to the Program Director without relieving the student of the necessity to learn the material covered in that session. Failure to comply with this policy will be reflected in the course grade for participation and professional behavior.

Students will not be admitted to laboratories without clean and proper attire. Garments must be appropriately fitted to provide modesty and mobility. This consists of shorts, tank top and/or T- shirt, socks, and supportive shoes. For designated laboratory sessions (related to the trunk or upper quadrant anatomy) females may be required to wear a modest sports bra/halter top or similar garment, and males may be required to remove their shirt. Only those areas being addressed in the laboratory session will be expected to be exposed for laboratory activities. Any student who feels uncomfortable exposing certain areas of the body should notify the course instructor so that a solution or alternative can be developed prior to the learning experience. If a student has a medical condition that would preclude them from participation in program activities, it is the student's responsibility to inform the course instructor.

Hygiene and grooming are important components of safety and professional standards and are enforced throughout the technical preparation courses in the curriculum. Examples of this include hair (including facial hair) that is neat, secured, and of natural color; clean, short nails (no acrylics); no hats; simple jewelry in moderation that does not dangle or pose a hazard to others in the lab; and avoidance of strong perfume, cologne, and lotions. Please refer to Clinical Education Experience Safety Guidelines for further specific information on this policy.

OPEN LAB POLICY

The PTA program will provide open lab hours outside of scheduled class time to facilitate learning and development of psychomotor skills. Although attendance is not mandatory, the faculty *highly* recommend attendance of all offered hours, as significant practice is required for motor learning to occur. As such, students may be required to attend open lab hours to meet the provisions of student learning contracts and/or remediation. Open lab hours will be designated on the quarterly class schedule and may be subject to change. Additional hours may be offered on a case-by-case basis. Professional behavior is expected, and students must follow the expectations outlined in this handbook, the University Code of Conduct, and the posted PTA laboratory rules at all times.

The lab is available only for those students currently in the professional phase of the program unless written permission is provided by the Program Director. Students have access to the lab during business hours for didactic learning and do not need instructor supervision. Only skills that have previously been taught can be practiced in the lab without direct supervision;

students are not to engage in activities not yet covered in the curriculum or those that have been learned off-campus. Electrical modalities are stored in locked areas and able to be accessed and used only with direct supervision of a faculty member. Students are responsible for leaving the lab in a clean and orderly condition, ensuring all equipment is stored in its proper place and the main lab door is locked. Please reference the PTA laboratory rules at all times for specific details.

PTA LABORATORY RULES

1. Professional behavior is expected of students at all times.
2. The scope of work of a PTA involves hands-on skills (e.g., palpation, assessing body alignment, guiding motions, etc.). These skills require students to dress and drape appropriately to allow direct, skin-to-skin techniques. Therefore, all students are required to obtain informed consent from their partners prior to performing hands-on activities.
3. Students are permitted and encouraged to practice lab skills with fellow classmates and monitor peer performance to minimize accidents related to errors. Under no circumstances is treatment to be provided in the lab by a student for a pathological condition except with express permission and supervision of a faculty member licensed to practice physical therapy in this state.
4. Equipment will not be used by students for laboratory practice until its correct use, contraindications, and precautions have been reviewed by an instructor. No electrical equipment will be used without the supervision of an instructor.
5. Students must handle all equipment and supplies properly and with care. This includes abiding by all manufacturer's instructions, safety guidelines, and precautions such as rules for electrical safety. If equipment malfunction is suspected while using in the lab, students need to immediately stop using the equipment and notify the instructor of the situation. Students are NOT allowed to use any electrical equipment that lacks a current, valid safety inspection sticker or any equipment that has been tagged by faculty as unsafe for use.
6. No equipment or supplies may leave the lab without written consent from program faculty. Students are responsible for its safe return (in good working order) at the agreed upon return date and time.
7. Any accident or incident occurring in the lab must be reported immediately to the supervising instructor.
8. Please help keep the lab clean and orderly at all times. Follow faculty instructions for correct use of sanitizing sprays, handling of soiled linens, etc. to maintain adherence to OSHA regulations. Ensure equipment and supplies are stored in their proper place.

9. Know the location of the first aid kit, fire extinguisher, and AED.
10. Security of personal belongings is everyone's responsibility. Any theft of student, University, or faculty property will be dealt with by law enforcement authorities.
11. Food and beverages are not permitted during laboratory activities. Only plain water in clear plastic re-sealable bottles may be consumed during lab.
12. When in doubt, ask for assistance!

The South University PTA Program Laboratory Rules will remain posted in the PTA laboratory at all times for student reference. Failure to adhere to the laboratory conduct guidelines may result in a Student Counseling Report and/or referral to the PTA Progressions Committee.

Violations of the University Code of Conduct will be reported to the Dean of Student Affairs.

RECORDED LECTURE POLICY

Students must request and receive permission before recording any lectures by faculty members and guest lecturers. If approved, a *Recorded Lecture Policy Agreement* (Appendix D) will be reviewed and signed by the Program Director. The form will be placed in the student's files maintained in the PD's office. Program faculty have the right to terminate this agreement, either temporarily or permanently, at any time by notifying both the student and Program Director.

SAFETY AND INCIDENT REPORTING

Every faculty member is responsible for safety and must be safety conscious. Please report any unsafe or hazardous condition directly to your manager or to the security department.

Any accident or incident occurring in the classroom/lab must be reported immediately to the Program Director (PD) and followed through per University policy. This includes completing an *Incident Report Form* as soon as possible. Accidents and incidents can include, but are not limited to, any of the following: medical, theft, alcohol/substance, conduct, unauthorized access, weapons, fire, and safety.

- In case of an accident involving a personal injury of a student, regardless of how serious, please notify the PD and Dean of Student Affairs. If the accident involves faculty, please notify the PD and Campus Director.
- Should an exposure incident occur, follow the Blood Borne Pathogens Standard and Exposure Control Plan and contact the Corporate Risk Manager at (412) 995-7270. An SDS binder is located in the PTA laboratory.
- Students and employees should promptly report all criminal actions and emergencies occurring on or around campus facilities to the Campus Director, and/or Dean of Student Affairs; or the local Police Department by dialing 911.

Incident events and actions taken should be accurately documented by completing the *Incident Report Form* as soon as practical (Appendix E).

RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS

GUIDANCE

Each student is assigned a faculty advisor soon after matriculation. Students are required to meet with their faculty advisor for advisement each quarter. Specific academic problems should first be discussed with the individual instructor who is directly involved in the concern. Career and job concerns can be addressed to the Director of Career Services. Additional counseling for personal issues is available through the office of the Dean of Student Affairs and through South University's Student Assistance Program. Students who are experiencing academic, personal, or career problems are encouraged to schedule an appointment with the Dean of Student Affairs.

Students are strongly encouraged to seek help early when experiencing difficulties because academic deficiencies, personal problems, or other issues can be detrimental to a student's successful completion of the program. Faculty are encouraged to urge students to seek help for personal issues early through the Dean of Student Affairs and to provide information on the Student Assistance Program to students.

Students at South University have access to our student assistance program, Be Well at South University, for counseling needs 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. You can access the service by calling 833-434-1217 or via application, telehealth, or in-person counseling sessions with a local provider. These are available to you regardless of location, and no insurance is necessary.

The Wellness Programs include articles and videos on mental health and wellness topics, including self-esteem, nutrition, academic thriving, stress and anxiety, relationships, and more. Students may access the Wellness Programs by going to <https://app.uwill.com/collaborate>. The program is easy and confidential. Be Well at South University Program licensed counselors are available to assist you with balancing school with work and other responsibilities, short-term counseling services, life, and career coaching, medical advocacy, and personal concierge services. Please contact the Dean of Student Affairs with any questions about this service.

STUDENT AFFAIRS

The Dean of Student Affairs is responsible for all aspects of student life outside of the classroom. This includes but is not limited to campus security, career services, counseling, disability services, graduation, financial aid information, fire evacuation, medical procedures, orientation, tutoring, parking, student activities and clubs, student lounge and other common areas, veterans' affairs, weather announcements, approval for advertisement and on-site fundraising activities, alcohol and drug information, and student discipline. Please see the [South University Academic Catalog: Student Affairs](#) for detailed information on each of the above topics.

CAREER SERVICES

Students should seek the assistance of the Director of Career Services during or prior to their last quarter of enrollment. Information is available regarding resume/CV writing and job search strategies and techniques. The Director of Career Services provides individualized job search assistance. Career workshops as well as theme weeks based on academic majors are held

throughout the school year to aid students in their professional development. All programs are open to any student at no charge. Please see the [South University Student Handbook: Career Services](#).

LIBRARY SERVICES

The Library/Learning Resource Center (LRC) encompasses a spacious open area dedicated to individual and communal study tables with ample seating and collection areas. The Library/Learning Resource Center (LRC) circulation desk is staffed and stocked with a comprehensive selection of office supplies for student use. Serials, publications, print volumes, and reference books are housed within the main room.

The Library/Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides seating, study tables, carrels, computer workstations with abundant electrical outlets, and a small lounge area. There is a supplemental private study room with a large table, chairs, and whiteboard to offer a quiet environment for students needing a separate space to focus. The adjoining computer lab furnished with ten computer workstations gives students access to campus computers and printing at no additional cost. There are several other computer labs with printers on campus as well. The South University Digital Library houses over 300,000 electronic books and 98 other databases, consisting of medical, business, and IT journals, 3 million full-text dissertations and specialized medical resources. All online resources are available to students, faculty, and clinical preceptors on campus and via remote internet access. Personal laptops can be used anywhere on the premises, since the campus is wireless-capable. All campus computers provide access to the Internet and Microsoft Office Suite which is also available through all student and faculty school accounts.

To assist students in retrieving the latest information, the library subscribes to over sixty periodicals in print format and several thousand full-text sources on-line. Duplicating services, interlibrary loan and tutorial services are also available in the library. The library provides access to the Internet, Microsoft Office Suite, and both general and subject-specific on-line databases.

Please see the [South University Student Handbook: Library Services](#) for more information.

UNIVERSITY EMAIL

Students receive all course communication and important announcements via email. Course communication and important announcements will be done via email and through the Bright Space course page. It is the student's responsibility to frequently check their South University email account and the course page on Bright Space. It is strongly recommended that you also forward your South University e-mail to your personal email account in order to ensure you do not miss course communication. All emails should originate from your @southuniversity.edu account.

ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATIONS ETIQUETTE

Text-based communications like email, text messages, and even discussion boards, can be tricky. It is easy to read into something that someone says without all of the other in-person clues, like the tone of voice, hand gestures, etc. However, there are a few tips that will help to keep written

communication appropriate and genial.

- **Avoid using caps lock** - For better or for worse, using all caps when typing SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE YELLING! --The same can be true when over-using exclamation marks!!!
- **Read first, then think, then write** - While another student may have posted something in a discussion board with which you disagree, take a minute to re-read and make sure it says what you first thought. Then, take another moment to think through your response. Taking a minute to think about what you want to say, and how you want to say it, can ensure that your response is thoughtful and well-received.
- **Be your own proofreader** - Review your text before replying. Make sure your grammar and punctuation are correct. Typos and incorrect words can change the meaning of what you are trying to say.
- **Be forgiving** - If you notice a minor grammatical mistake or error in another student's post, do not pounce. Instead, respond the way you would want someone to respond if you had made that error.
- **Embrace diversity** - We all have different backgrounds and experiences that have made us who we are. It is always OK to ask for more information about something you may not be familiar with; just do it in a respectful and supportive way.
- **Cite your sources** - When appropriate, always cite your source of information using APA formatting. It strengthens your contribution. If you are unsure, always err on the side of citing and ask for clarification!



**SOUTH UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL THERAPIST
ASSISTANT
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**SECTION 2:
Clinical Education Policies**

CLINICAL EDUCATION OVERVIEW

Specific course objectives, requirements and policies for clinical education are listed in the clinical course syllabi. The *Clinical Education Experience File Checklist* (Appendix F) must be completed prior to the student being permitted to attend each clinical education experience. Students must make documentation associated with this checklist available to clinical sites upon request.

All students are required to adhere to the clinical education policies located in this handbook. Students are also expected to comply with the policies and procedures of the clinical site to which they are assigned. Clinical externship sites may deny participation for any reason including, but not limited to, criminal history, a positive drug test, or the inability to produce a complete health screening. Successful completion of clinical externships is required for continuation in the program and graduation. Denial of participation in a clinical externship may delay or prevent graduation.

REQUIRED CONTACT HOURS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION COURSES

Eight Quarter Programs (Austin, Columbia, Richmond, Tampa, Virginia Beach)

PTA2047 Essentials of Clinical Care: Varied hours for 2 weeks =	Up to 60 hours
PTA2048 Clinical Externship I: 40 hours/week for 6 weeks =	240 hours
PTA2099 Clinical Externship II: 40 hours/week for 9 weeks =	360 hours
TOTAL CLINICAL HOURS	Up to 660 hours

Nine Quarter Programs (Montgomery, Savannah, West Palm Beach)

PTA2058 Clinical Externship I: 40 hours/week for 7 weeks =	280 hours
PTA2099 Clinical Externship II: 40 hours/week for 9 weeks =	360 hours
TOTAL CLINICAL HOURS	Up to 640 hours

Students in each cohort will be notified of exact dates of all clinical education coursework no later than the quarter prior to the clinical experience.

ASSIGNMENT OF CLINICAL EDUCATION SITES

Clinical education centers affiliating with South University are located throughout the local area and state. Students may have to drive up to two hours (each direction) to an affiliated clinical site. Student affiliations will be assigned based on the availability of clinical slots, geographic location, diversity of clinical setting or patient population, and the needs of the individual student. Each student will be required to complete one inpatient and one outpatient clinical experience to ensure exposure to a variety of settings.

Students may request specific locations or clinics, but this does not guarantee placement. Due to variations in availability and the number of schools requesting clinical education experiences with a finite number of clinical centers, it may not be possible to provide students with affiliations which are close to home. In cases where the student is placed outside the local area, the student will be responsible for transportation and living arrangements during the clinical experience. The judgment of the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) in this

regard will be final.

Students are not permitted to negotiate with clinical sites for externship placement. To avoid any conflict of interest, no student will be placed at a clinic in which they were previously or are currently employed. Students will not be paid for clinical education experiences.

CLINICAL ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are required to meet the minimum clinical contact hours designated in each course syllabus. Successful demonstration of professional behaviors, including punctuality, reliability, and ability to adhere to clinic policy, is required to complete many of the clinical course objectives.

Tardiness or absence must be reported immediately and directly to the clinical instructor (CI) and ACCE by the student. Medical documentation is required for any missed time longer than two (2) days. The student must make arrangement with the CI to make up any missed hours prior to the end of the term. A student may be removed from the externship for excessive absenteeism. Vacations and educational trips may not be scheduled during externships. Alterations of the clinical attendance policy are at the discretion of the CI at the facility with the approval of the ACCE at South University.

Contact hours are formally recorded on the Affiliation Attendance Register (Appendix G). If a student does not meet the minimum clinical contact hours due to extenuating circumstances during a clinical externship, the ACCE and CI must be notified immediately. A special circumstances agreement will be completed.

HOURS

Each full-time clinical education experience is scheduled to be a five day/week, eight hours/day assignment. This is generally 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., however hours vary from facility to facility. Many of our clinical education sites have extended hours or weekend hours. Students are required to check with their assigned facilities to ascertain the exact hours of departmental operations, including hours of operation during holidays. Students are required to adhere to the schedule set by the CI. The clinical instructor has the final authority when determining the schedule for clinical education experiences.

TRANSPORTATION

Each student is responsible for providing personal transportation to and from clinical education experience facilities and, in instances of a clinical education experience with remote healthcare facilities, providing for necessary personal living expenses during the period of affiliation. Students are also responsible for personal transportation to and from all off-campus experiences, such as field trips.

STUDENT HEALTH DOCUMENTATION

Each student will be required to complete the Clinical Education Experience File Checklist (Appendix F) prior to placement in all clinical education experiences. The ACCE is responsible for verification of this list; however, it is the **student's responsibility to maintain all health documentation through the tracker portal** and provide it to clinical sites as required. Forms containing protected health information (PHI) are not maintained by the ACCE. Documentation includes:

1. A health examination and certification from a licensed practitioner attesting that the student is in good health, free from communicable disease, and with no apparent health problems that would hinder the performance of duties required for PTA program clinical education experiences.
2. Current TDaP (tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis), varicella, and MMR (measles, mumps, and rubella) vaccinations or evidence of immunity (i.e., titer).
3. A negative tuberculosis screening test (must be provided annually). This may include a tuberculin skin test, a two-step skin test, the T-SPOT test, the QuantiFERON-TB Gold-in-Tube test, a chest x-ray, and/or a questionnaire.
4. Additional immunizations (Influenza, or COVID-19) or waivers may be required seasonally or prior to the start of a clinical rotation. The ACCE will notify students of site requirements prior to clinical rotations.
5. Hepatitis B vaccine or waiver.
 - The program strongly encourages all PTA students to receive immunization against the hepatitis B virus (HBV). HBV is transmitted through exposure to blood and body fluids and presents a health risk to all healthcare providers. Students may be exposed to blood and body fluids during the educational process while attending the South University PTA program.
6. Proof of health insurance or waiver.
 - Physical therapy has been defined as having certain occupational risks. The cost of health care is extremely expensive even for a short period of hospitalization. Neither the University nor the clinical education facilities assume financial responsibility for ill or injured students. All medical bills are the student's responsibility. South University advises and encourage the student to carry health insurance or comparable coverage for emergency medical care.

It is the responsibility of the student to stay current with immunizations and update the tracker portal where indicated. Additional testing, immunizations, or other student health documentation may be required by individual clinical sites. The ACCE will inform the student of additional requirements that the student will be required to complete and provide to the site prior to the start of the clinical rotation. Completion of the Clinical Education FERPA Release may be required to verify that clinical requirements are met, and release requested student information to the clinical site prior to placement. Failure to follow all guidelines for student health documentation could delay clinical externships. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the PD and/or ACCE if there are any changes in a student's health status that may impact their ability to safely and effectively demonstrate interventions or techniques in the classroom or clinical setting.

BACKGROUND CHECK AND DRUG SCREENING

The PTA program follows the College of Health Professions Background Check Policy and the College of Health Professions Substance Abuse and Screening Policy located in the South University Catalog (www.southuniversity.edu/admissions/academic-catalog). All students must sign the *Consent Form for Drug and Alcohol Screening* (Appendix H) and *Records Release Form* (Appendix I) upon admission to the program. A background check and drug screening are required prior to admission into the professional phase of the program at the student's expense. If a clinical site requires one or both of these measures prior to accepting a student for a clinical education experience, or if repeat testing is required, the student will be advised and must provide his/her results to the affiliating site prior to clinical placement. The university will not maintain records of background checks or drug screenings.

The student is responsible for notifying the PTA Program Director if he/she is charged or convicted of any misdemeanor or felony while enrolled in any portion of the program. Criminal activity that occurs while a student attends the University may result in disciplinary action, including dismissal, and will be addressed through the university's academic or disciplinary policies.

- Being convicted of a felony while enrolled in the PTA program will result in a referral to the PTA Progressions Committee and/or Dean of Student Affairs and be grounds for immediate dismissal from the program.
- If a student is charged or convicted of any misdemeanor, the PTA Program Director will provide counseling, applicable portions of the state practice act, and instructions for contacting the state licensing agency. Any misdemeanor conviction while enrolled in the PTA program will result in referral to the PTA Progressions Committee and/or Dean of Student Affairs and *may* be grounds for dismissal from the program.
- Any type of misdemeanor conviction may impair the student's ability to be placed in clinical externship, which may delay or prohibit graduation from the program. Furthermore, a misdemeanor conviction may prevent the student from taking the PTA licensure exam.

Students may be asked to submit to a drug screen at any time during enrollment in the program. Clinical sites may also require additional drug screening for reasonable cause or at random, and any associated fees will be the student's responsibility (see Drug/Alcohol Clinical Testing Procedure below). Attendance at clinical sites will be denied to students who refuse or fail to provide a sample for a drug test or who have an unsatisfactory test result and will immediately result in referral to the PTA Progressions Committee and Dean of Student Affairs to determine the appropriate course of action, which may include dismissal from the program and/or university. Due to the nature of the practice of health professions programs, the College of Health Professions maintains a zero-tolerance policy for any violation outlined in the Substance Abuse and Screening Policy.

DRUG/ALCOHOL CLINICAL TESTING PROCEDURE

Students may be required to submit to additional drug screening as directed by the ACCE to comply with affiliated health care facility requirements. Prior to clinical placement, all students must comply with drug screening policies and procedures of South University. Please refer to the [College of Health Professions Substance Abuse and Screening Policy](#) located in the [South](#)

[University Catalog.](#)

CPR

A two-year Basic Life Support (BLS) CPR certification endorsed by the American Heart Association (or equivalent as deemed by the program) is required by the start of professional phase coursework and must remain valid throughout all clinical rotations. The student is responsible for obtaining this certification at his/her own expense and on his/her own time.

CLINICAL ATTIRE AND PERSONAL PRESENTATION

Each student is expected to purchase appropriate clinical attire to be worn during clinical education experiences as required by the program and/or specified by the affiliated institution. Each student will be held accountable for the highest quality of personal hygiene, grooming, and dress, including appropriate uniforms.

All students are expected to wear clothing that is sufficiently “roomy” to allow stooping, bending, stretching, reaching, and working on exercise mats without interference with patient care and to preserve the modesty of the student and patient. Appropriate undergarments are to be worn at all times and must not be visible outside of the uniform. Students will be expected to wear only those uniform styles permitted by the facility where they are affiliating; facility policy may supersede that of the University and should be discussed with the CI and ACCE as needed for clarification.

The program’s uniform guidelines are as follows:

- The student must wear a name badge which identifies the student at all times in the clinical setting.
- Official South University PTA program polo shirt. Solid long-sleeve shirts are permitted to be worn underneath.
- Slacks must be a solid neutral color (e.g., khaki, navy, gray, black). Jeans and low-riding slacks are not permitted.
- Shoes must be closed-toe, non-skid, and solid in color. Sandals and heels are not permitted. Socks must be solid and match the shoes.
- Jewelry should be modest with no rough, raised edges that may injure patients. Students are not to wear chains, necklaces, or dangling earrings that patients would be able to grasp, thereby harming the student or interfering with patient care. No visible piercings are permitted with the exception of modest ear piercings.
- Tattoos should be covered at all times.
- Hair should be a naturally occurring color.
- Hygiene and grooming will be followed in accordance with guidelines as described in the Clinical Education Safety Guidelines of this handbook.
- Professional dress is incorporated when assigning the final grade for clinical education experiences. The final decision for uniform guidelines rests with the ACCE.
- *Note:* The guidelines detailed in this handbook are the minimum standards required. A clinical site’s requirements for clinical and personal presentation supersede those of the program and may be more stringent than those stated here.

TECHNICAL SKILLS AND DATA COLLECTION FORM

Students should keep and use this form (Appendix J) throughout their clinical externships as a guide for the performance of technical skills and data collection in a clinical setting. Students should review this form with their clinical instructors at the beginning of the externship to identify skills that can be performed at the clinical site. Students should mark completed items as they are performed. This will allow students, the ACCE, and their clinical instructors to identify areas in which students have gained exposure and experience, as well as recognize areas for growth and development.

SAFE, ETHICAL, AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

Throughout the clinical education experience, the student will be held accountable for his/her own actions or lack of actions. All student physical therapist assistants are to function in the clinical setting within the ethical and professional standards established by the specific state's practice act, APTA guidelines, clinical facility's policy and procedures, and South University's established policies. During clinical education experiences, students are considered a part of that clinical site and are responsible for abiding by that institution's policies and procedures. Departmental procedures are reviewed as a part of the Clinical Site Orientation Checklist (Appendix K) completed during the first week of each externship.

Students are expected to obtain verbal consent from the patient before initiating any treatment or procedures, however the clinical instructor (CI) remains ultimately responsible for the delivery of all patient care. Students, as members of the healthcare delivery system and members of the physical therapy community, will be expected to demonstrate those attitudes and behaviors appropriate to persons responsible for delivery of health care and to abide by the APTA's *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant* (www.apta.org).

Any student found to be in violation of the aforementioned laws, standards, policies, procedures, or codes will be referred to the PRA Progressions Committee and may be dismissed from the university and the PTA program.

CONFIDENTIALITY

The PTA program requires that students follow Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) rules and keep confidential protected health information (PHI) obtained at the affiliating clinical facilities. The affiliating student is also responsible under applicable federal and state law, clinical policies, and the South University Affiliation Agreement to keep confidential any information that could identify a patient/client. Course assignments, class discussions, and required course submissions may not contain or refer to specific information which could identify a patient/client. All such identifying information must remain in the records of the affiliating clinical facility and is not to be copied, reproduced, photographed, or in any other way removed from the affiliating clinical facility. Violation of HIPAA rules, federal or state law, clinical policies and procedures, or program policies or procedures may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

CLINICAL EDUCATION ACADEMIC OR BEHAVIORAL ADVISEMENT

During full-time externships, the ACCE will make a midterm visit to all students affiliating at clinical sites that are within a reasonable driving distance of the campus. For those students whose clinical affiliations are not within a reasonable driving distance, a phone call to the clinical

instructor (CI) and student will be made by the ACCE. The CI is to notify the ACCE of any academic or behavioral student problems that arise. These problems should be identified as early as possible and brought to the immediate attention of the ACCE, so corrective actions can be taken. For minor problems (e.g., tardiness, non-adherence to dress code), the student will be given a written warning via a Counseling Report (Appendix L) and the occurrence will be documented. If the problem involves safety or ethical concerns, this will be addressed more aggressively (i.e., meeting between the student, CI, and the ACCE; appropriate documentation; and learning contract).

If a written clinical education Student Learning Contract (Appendix M) is required, it will be created by the ACCE in consultation with the CI. The CI, student, and ACCE will discuss the situation and action plan to be implemented by the student and the CI in order to correct the identified deficiency. The student will sign the document to demonstrate: 1) awareness of the deficiency, 2) acceptance of responsibility, and 3) the need for remediation of the issues cited. The CI and the ACCE also sign the learning contract to indicate participation in ensuring the student's successful completion of the clinical rotation.

Chronic academic or behavioral problems or the lack of adherence to the terms of the clinical education Student Learning Contract may result in referral to the PTA Progressions Committee and/or the Dean of Academic Affairs and Retention, which could lead to further disciplinary action or dismissal from the program.

GRADING OF THE CLINICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCE

The South University PTA program has adopted the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) PTA Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) to assess students during their full-time clinical education components. The CPI is a competency-based evaluation tool used to assess the student's ability to complete the performance objectives outlined in the syllabi of the clinical education courses. The PTA CPI: 3.0 highlights eleven performance-based criteria that are addressed at midterm and final to assess the progression of student performance and clinical skills. Refer to clinical course syllabi for specific skills/criterion from the CPI that will be required for successful completion of each clinical education experience.

Grading for all clinical education courses will be on a pass/fail basis, with the final grade determined by the ACCE. "Pass" will be assigned to those students that successfully complete all course requirements as per each course syllabus. This includes performance on CPI criteria, a grade of at least 80% on all written assignments, and the completion of all clinical rotation hours.

Assignment of a failing grade by the ACCE is based on the grading criteria stated above and in course syllabi. Additional criteria resulting in a grade of "Fail" includes any of the following:

- The student is removed from the clinical site for non-compliance with the facility's policy and procedures manual.
- The student inappropriately accesses and/or discloses confidential information, engages in disruptive behavior, or threatens the safety of patients, staff, the facility, and/or his/herself.
- The student fails to meet corrective measures as outlined in a clinical education Student Learning Contract.

- The student does not sign a justifiable clinical education Student Learning Contract.
- The student does not meet the requirements to transform an “Incomplete” grade to a passing grade. As outlined in the Academic Catalog, an “Incomplete” will be changed to a “Fail” grade if criteria for “Pass” grade have not been met in the allotted time.
- The student does not make up days missed during the course of the affiliation, which resulted in an “Incomplete” grade.

CLINICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCE SAFETY GUIDELINES

Safety guidelines are designed to allow you to deliver patient care safely, thereby minimizing the risks to the patient, yourself, colleagues, visitors, the clinic, and the environment. With close attention to basic safety guidelines, you should be able to have a long, safe, and rewarding career. Students should:

- 1. Students should familiarize themselves with the South University risk management policies outlined in the South University Student Handbook and the policies of the affiliating clinical site regarding risks, emergency plans, and reporting procedures.**
- 2. Recognize and remedy safety concerns without delay during patient care.**
 - a. Report any faulty equipment to the clinical instructor (CI) and/or center coordinator of clinical education (CCCE) (e.g., loose brakes on wheelchair, walker missing rubber tip on one leg).
 - b. Remove faulty equipment from circulation immediately and tag it for repair per facility protocol.
- 3. Request and use assistance and appropriate patient handling techniques as needed during patient handling and care.**
 - a. Use safe body mechanics and appropriate guarding techniques at all times.
 - b. Do not treat patients alone in isolated areas, such as stairwells, without back-up in case of emergency.
 - c. Use gait belts at all times unless specifically contraindicated.
 - d. Practice OSHA standard precautions for infection control at all times, particularly when working with blood or other potentially infectious materials. Wash hands frequently, both before AND after patient contact, equipment use, and the application and removal of gloves.
 - e. Disinfect treatment and assessment tools between patients (e.g., stethoscope, gait belt, goniometers, etc.) using facility-approved disinfectants.
 - f. Always cover any breaks in the skin, such as a cut or scratch, with an appropriate bandage or glove.
 - g. If coughing, wear an approved mask.
- 4. Understand that good grooming and hygiene are essentials of good clinical care and safety.**
 - a. Follow the dress code of the facility. It is for the student’s safety and the comfort of patients.
 - b. Fingernails should be cut short to avoid patient injury. Fingernail polish and acrylic nails are prohibited.

- c. Hair should be neatly groomed and secured so as not to obscure vision or touch the patient or any surfaces. Hair should not be an unnatural color (e.g., pink, green, blue, etc.) to avoid distractions.
 - d. Tattoos should be covered at all times.
 - e. Piercings, besides small ear piercings, should be removed or covered to avoid distractions.
 - f. The body should be “unscented”. Maintain good hygiene but avoid use of scented products as many patients (and staff) may be sensitive to these substances.
- 5. Use care and appropriate protective equipment when using potentially hazardous materials such as solvents and whirlpool additives.**
- a. Report spills and skin exposure immediately.
 - b. Know where to locate the facility’s Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) manual detailing containment and first aid for chemical exposure.
- 6. Patient care requires proper attire.**
- a. Close-toed, supportive shoes with non-skid soles are required at all times. Heels and sandals are not permitted.
 - b. Jewelry should be modest and have no rough, raised edges to injure patients.
 - c. Students are not to wear chains, necklaces, or dangling earrings that patients would be able to grasp, thereby harming the student.
- 7. Handle all equipment and supplies properly and with care according to the manufacturer’s instructions. When in doubt, ask.**
- a. Do not touch electrical equipment, including patient beds, with wet hands.
 - b. Do not use unfamiliar electrical, electromagnetic, or mechanical modalities until you have observed its correct use by an instructor, reviewed contraindications and precautions specific to the equipment, and been given clearance to use the equipment.
- 8. Familiarize themselves with and follow all restraint guidelines at your affiliation site.**
- 9. Know the location of the nearest first aid kit, fire extinguisher, emergency exit, and AED.**
- 10. Understand that security is everyone’s responsibility.**
- a. Most facilities have security guards. If at any time a student feels unsafe or needs accompaniment to his/her vehicle, he/she should ask for assistance.
 - b. Do not tempt theft by leaving purses, phones, or personal effects unattended. Any theft of student, facility, University, or faculty property should be reported at once and will be dealt with by law enforcement authorities.

Any accident or incident occurring on affiliations must be reported immediately to the PTA Program Director, the ACCE, your CI, and the CCCE and followed through as outlined in the South University Student Handbook. The CI remains ultimately responsible for the delivery of

all patient care.

CLINICAL EXTERNSHIP: SUMMARY OF STUDENT SKILLS

Refer to Appendix N for a summary of student skills and when they should be expected to be competent per clinical rotation.

RESPONSIBILITIES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR THE STUDENT: CLINICAL EDUCATION

Refer to Appendix O for a detailed list of responsibilities and suggestions for students prior to an affiliation and during an affiliation.



**SOUTH UNIVERSITY PHYSICAL THERAPIST
ASSISTANT
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

Appendices

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND TECHNICAL STANDARDS

The following standards reflect expectations of a student in the PTA program for the performance of common physical therapy functions. In adopting these standards, the PTA program is mindful of the patient's right to safe function in a broad variety of clinical situations while receiving physical therapy interventions. The PTA student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a broad variety of clinical situations while administering physical therapy interventions. These standards do not encompass all that may be required for employment of the PTA program graduate. In order to verify the students' ability to perform these essential functions, students are required to demonstrate the following technical standards throughout the curriculum.

The faculty is the sole judge of a student's ability to meet these standards through successful completion of the requirements of the program and individual courses.

Categories of Essential Functions	Definition	Example of Technical Standard
Critical Thinking/Problem Solving Skills	Ability to collect, interpret, and integrate information and use that information to make appropriate decisions.	Read and comprehend relevant information in textbooks, medical records and professional literature; identify cause/effect relationships; identify patient problems and develop interventions appropriate to patient goals; respond to emergencies; know when to apply universal precautions; use effective teaching, learning and test taking strategies; maintain minimum CGPA of 2.50 in all PTA core courses.
Interpersonal Skills	Ability to collaboratively work with all PTA students and with program faculty and patients in the classroom, lab, and clinical setting.	Establish rapport with patients/clients and colleagues; demonstrate respect for authority; participate in lab situations to role play both clinician and patient role; interact appropriately with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, economic, cultural and intellectual backgrounds; employ basic conflict management skills.
Coping Skills	Ability to respond appropriately to stressful environments or during impending deadlines.	Manage heavy academic schedules and deadlines; perform in fast-paced clinical situations; cope with psychosocial issues involving catastrophic illness, disability, and death; manage the demands of personal life with minimal disruption of the educational process.
Communication Skills	Ability to communicate effectively in English using verbal, nonverbal, and written formats with faculty, other students, patients, families, and healthcare workers.	In both oral and written formats, explain physical therapy procedures, give patient instructions clearly, answer questions posed by patients, co-workers, physicians and other healthcare providers; keep accurate logs and records of treatment procedures and charges using appropriate medical terminology and correct spelling and grammar; demonstrate active listening skills; recognize, interpret, and respond to non-verbal behavior of self and others.
Mobility/Motor Skills	Sufficient motor ability to execute the movement and skills required for safe and effective physical therapy treatment in various clinical settings.	Demonstrate the coordination, speed, and agility necessary to assist and safely guard a patient who is walking, exercising, or performing other rehabilitation exercises. Perform physical activities such as standing, walking, sitting, bending, squatting, kneeling, crawling, reaching, pushing and pulling Safely lift, transfer, move, adjust and position patients or equipment using correct body mechanics. Exert 20 to 50 pounds of force occasionally, and/or 10 to 25 pounds of force frequently, and/or greater than negligible up to 10 pounds of force constantly to move objects. (medium category of Department of Occupational Titles (https://occupationalinfo.org/07/076224010.html)). Able to provide emergency treatment to patients. Stand or sit for a prolonged period. Possess fine and gross motor coordination manipulate/operate equipment controls and to perform manual treatment/ assessment techniques.

Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Core Values Self-Assessment

Notice: This resource was created in 2013 and is inconsistent with APTA's Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant, updated in 2019, which can be found at the link below. APTA is providing this resource until a new assessment can be developed.

<https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/leadership-and-governance/policies/core-values-for-the-physical-therapist-and-physical-therapist-assistant>

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PROFESSIONALISM IN PHYSICAL THERAPY: CORE VALUES

Introduction

In 2000, the House of Delegates adopted Vision 2020 and the Strategic Plan for Transitioning to A Doctoring Profession (RC 37-01). The Plan includes six elements: Doctor of Physical Therapy, Evidenced-based Practice, Autonomous Practice, Direct Access, Practitioner of Choice, and Professionalism, and describes how these elements relate to and interface with the vision of a doctoring profession. In assisting the profession in its transition to a doctoring profession, it seemed that one of the initiatives that would be beneficial was to define and describe the concept of professionalism by explicitly articulating what the graduate of a physical therapist program ought to demonstrate with respect to professionalism. In addition, as a byproduct of this work, it was believed that practitioner behaviors could be articulated that would describe what the individual practitioner would be doing in their daily practice that would reflect professionalism.

As a part of the preparation for this consensus conference, relevant literature was reviewed to facilitate the development of the conference structure and consensus decision-making process. Literature in medicine^{3, 18, 19, 25, 27} reveals that this profession continues to be challenged to define professionalism, describe how it is taught, and determine how it can be measured in medical education. The groundwork and advances that medicine laid was most informative to the process and product from this conference. Physical therapy acknowledges and is thankful for medicine's research efforts in professionalism and for their work that guided this conference's structure and process.

Eighteen physical therapists, based on their expertise in physical therapist practice, education, and research, were invited to participate in a consensus-based conference convened by APTA's Education Division on July 19-21, 2002. The conference was convened for the purpose of:

- 1) Developing a comprehensive consensus-based document on Professionalism that would be integrated into *A Normative Model of Physical Therapist Professional Education, Version 2004* to include a) core values of the profession, b) indicators (judgments, decisions, attitudes, and behaviors) that are fully consistent with the core values, and c) a professional education matrix that includes educational outcomes, examples of Terminal Behavioral Objectives, and examples of Instructional Objectives for the classroom and for clinical practice.
- 2) Developing outcome strategies for the promotion and implementation of the supplement content in education and, where feasible, with practice in ways that are consistent with physical therapy as a doctoring profession.

The documentation developed as a result of this conference is currently being integrated into the next version of *A Normative Model of Physical Therapist Professional Education: Version 2004*. The table that follows is a synopsis of a portion of the conference documentation that describes what the physical therapist would be doing in his or her practice that would give evidence of professionalism.

In August 2003, **Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Core Values** was reviewed by the APTA Board of Directors and adopted as a core document on professionalism in physical therapy practice, education, and research. (V-10; 8/03)

We wish to gratefully acknowledge the efforts of those participants who gave their time and energies to this challenging initiative; a first step in clearly articulating for the physical therapist what are the core values that define professionalism and how that concept would translate into professional education.

USING THE SELF-ASSESSMENT

The Self-Assessment that follows is intended for the user to develop an *awareness* about the core values and to *self-assess* the frequency with which he or she demonstrates the seven core values based on sample indicators (behaviors not intended to be an exhaustive list) that describe what the practitioner would be doing in daily practice. These seven core values were identified during the consensus-based conference that further defined the critical elements that comprise professionalism. Core values are listed in alphabetical order with no preference or ranking given to these values. During the conference many important values were identified as part of professionalism in physical therapy, however not all were determined to be core (at the very essence; essential) of professionalism and unique to physical therapy. The seven values identified were of sufficient breadth and depth to incorporate the many values and attributes that are part of professionalism.

For each identified core value, (ie, accountability, altruism, compassion/caring, excellence, integrity, professional duty, and social responsibility) a definition and sample indicators (not intended to be exhaustive) are provided that describe what the physical therapist would be doing in practice, education, and/or research if these core values were present.

Complete the Self-Assessment

Review each core value indicator and check the frequency with which you display that sample indicator in your daily practice based on the rating scale provided (1-5). It is not expected that one will rate himself or herself as 5 (always) or 1 (never) on every item. Be candid in your response as this is a self-assessment process with an opportunity for personal learning and insight, identification of areas of strength and growth, and assessment of your development in the professionalism maturation process.

Analyze the Completed Self-Assessment

Once you have completed the Self-Assessment, you may want to reflect as an individual or group on the following questions:

- On what sample indicators did you or the group consistently score yourself/themselves on the scale at the 4 or 5 levels?
- Why did you or the group rate yourself/themselves higher in frequency for demonstrating these sample behaviors?
- On what sample indicators did you or the group score yourself/themselves on the scale at level 3 or below?
- Why did you or the group rate yourself/themselves lower in frequency for demonstrating these sample behaviors?
- Identify, develop, and implement approaches to strengthening the integration of the core values within your practice environment.
- Establish personal goals for increasing the frequency with which you demonstrate specific sample behaviors with specific core value(s)
- Conduct periodic re-assessment of your core value behaviors to determine the degree to which your performance has changed in your professionalism maturation.

PROFESSIONALISM IN PHYSICAL THERAPY: CORE VALUES

For each core value listed, a definition is provided and a set of sample indicators that describe what one would see if the physical therapist were demonstrating that core value in his/her daily practice. For each of the sample indicators listed, check only one item that best represents the frequency with which you demonstrate the behavior where 1= Never, 2= Rarely, 3= Occasionally, 4= Frequently, 5= Always.

Core Values	Definition	Sample Indicators	Self-Assessment				
			1 (N)	2 (R)	3 (O)	4 (F)	5 (A)
Accountability	Accountability is active acceptance of the responsibility for the diverse roles, obligations, and actions of the physical therapist including self-regulation and other behaviors that positively influence patient/client outcomes, the profession and the health needs of society.	1. Responding to patient's/client's goals and needs.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Seeking and responding to feedback from multiple sources.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Acknowledging and accepting consequences of his/her actions.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Assuming responsibility for learning and change.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Adhering to code of ethics, standards of practice, and policies/procedures that govern the conduct of professional activities.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		6. Communicating accurately to others (payers, patients/clients, other health care providers) about professional actions.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		7. Participating in the achievement of health goals of patients/clients and society.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		8. Seeking continuous improvement in quality of care.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		9. Maintaining membership in APTA and other organizations.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		10. Educating students in a manner that facilitates the pursuit of learning.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Core Values	Definition	Sample Indicators	Self-Assessment				
			1 (N)	2 (R)	3 (O)	4 (F)	5 (A)
Altruism	Altruism is the primary regard for or devotion to the interest of patients/clients, thus assuming the fiduciary responsibility of placing the needs of the patient/client ahead of the physical therapist's self interest.	1. Placing patient's/client's needs above the physical therapists.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Providing pro-bono services.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Providing physical therapy services to underserved and underrepresented populations.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Providing patient/client services that go beyond expected standards of practice.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Completing patient/client care and professional responsibility prior to personal needs.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Compassion/ 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.	1. Understanding the socio-cultural, economic, and psychological influences on the individual's life in their environment.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Understanding an individual's perspective.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Being an advocate for patient's/client's needs.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Communicating effectively, both verbally and non-verbally, with others taking into consideration individual differences in learning styles, language, and cognitive abilities, etc.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Designing patient/client programs/interventions that are congruent with patient/client needs.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		6. Empowering patients/clients to achieve the highest level of function possible and to exercise self-determination in their care.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		7. Focusing on achieving the greatest well-being and the highest potential for a patient/client.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		8. Recognizing and refraining from acting on one's social, cultural, gender, and sexual biases.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Core Values	Definition	Sample Indicators	Self-Assessment				
			1 (N)	2 (R)	3 (O)	4 (F)	5 (A)
Compassion/ Caring (continued)		9. Embracing the patient's/client's emotional and psychological aspects of care.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		10. Attending to the patient's/client's personal needs and comforts.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		11. Demonstrating respect for others and considers others as unique and of value.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Excellence	Excellence is physical therapy practice that consistently uses current knowledge and theory while understanding personal limits, integrates judgment and the patient/client perspective, challenges mediocrity, and works toward development of new knowledge.	1. Demonstrating investment in the profession of physical therapy.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Internalizing the importance of using multiple sources of evidence to support professional practice and decisions.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Participating in integrative and collaborative practice to promote high quality health and educational outcomes.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Conveying intellectual humility in professional and personal situations.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Demonstrating high levels of knowledge and skill in all aspects of the profession.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		6. Using evidence consistently to support professional decisions.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		7. Demonstrating a tolerance for ambiguity.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		8. Pursuing new evidence to expand knowledge.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		9. Engaging in acquisition of new knowledge throughout one's professional career.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		10. Sharing one's knowledge with others.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		11. Contributing to the development and shaping of excellence in all professional roles.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Core Values	Definition	Sample Indicators	Self-Assessment				
			1 (N)	2 (R)	3 (O)	4 (F)	5 (A)
Integrity	Integrity is steadfast adherence to high ethical principles or professional standards; truthfulness, fairness, doing what you say you will do, and “speaking forth” about why you do what you do.	1. Abiding by the rules, regulations, and laws applicable to the profession.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Adhering to the highest standards of the profession (practice, ethics, reimbursement, Institutional Review Board [IRB], honor code, etc).	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Articulating and internalizing stated ideals and professional values.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Using power (including avoidance of use of unearned privilege) judiciously.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Resolving dilemmas with respect to a consistent set of core values.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		6. Being trustworthy.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		7. Taking responsibility to be an integral part in the continuing management of patients/clients.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		8. Knowing one’s limitations and acting accordingly.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		9. Confronting harassment and bias among ourselves and others.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		10. Recognizing the limits of one’s expertise and making referrals appropriately.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		11. Choosing employment situations that are congruent with practice values and professional ethical standards.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		12. Acting on the basis of professional values even when the results of the behavior may place oneself at risk.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Core Values	Definition	Sample Indicators	Self-Assessment				
			1 (N)	2 (R)	3 (O)	4 (F)	5 (A)
Professional Duty	Professional duty is the commitment to meeting one's obligations to provide effective physical therapy services to individual patients/clients, to serve the profession, and to positively influence the health of society.	1. Demonstrating beneficence by providing "optimal care".	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Facilitating each individual's achievement of goals for function, health, and wellness.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Preserving the safety, security and confidentiality of individuals in all professional contexts.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Involved in professional activities beyond the practice setting.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Promoting the profession of physical therapy.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		6. Mentoring others to realize their potential.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		7. Taking pride in one's profession.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
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.	1. Advocating for the health and wellness needs of society including access to health care and physical therapy services.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		2. Promoting cultural competence within the profession and the larger public.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		3. Promoting social policy that effect function, health, and wellness needs of patients/clients.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		4. Ensuring that existing social policy is in the best interest of the patient/client.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		5. Advocating for changes in laws, regulations, standards, and guidelines that affect physical therapist service provision.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		6. Promoting community volunteerism.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		7. Participating in political activism.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Core Values	Definition	Sample Indicators	Self-Assessment				
			1 (N)	2 (R)	3 (O)	4 (F)	5 (A)
Social Responsibility (continued)		8. Participating in achievement of societal health goals.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		9. Understanding of current community wide, nationwide and worldwide issues and how they impact society's health and well-being and the delivery of physical therapy.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		10. Providing leadership in the community.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		11. Participating in collaborative relationships with other health practitioners and the public at large.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
		12. Ensuring the blending of social justice and economic efficiency of services.	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

Comments:

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PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM: EIGHT-QUARTER CURRICULUM

The following campuses follow the eight-quarter curriculum for the Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant: South University, Austin; South University, Columbia; and South University, Tampa.
The following campuses follow the eight-quarter curriculum for the Associate of Applied Science in Physical Therapist Assistant: South University, Richmond and South University, Virginia Beach.

QUARTER	COURSE #	COURSE NAME	CREDITS	QTR TOTALS
GENERAL EDUCATION PHASE (<i>sample</i>)				
Quarter 1				12 Credits
	AHS1001	Medical Terminology	4	
	ENG1100	Composition I	4	
	MAT1001 or MAT1500	Approved Math Elective	4	
Quarter 2				14 Credits
	BIO1011	Anatomy and Physiology I	4	
	BIO1012	Anatomy and Physiology I Lab	2	
	ENG1200, COM2006 or SPC1026	Basic Communications Elective	4	
	PSY1001	Approved Psychology Elective	4	
Quarter 3				14 Credits
	BIO1013	Anatomy and Physiology II	4	
	BIO1014	Anatomy and Physiology II Lab	2	
	HUM EL	Approved Humanities Elective	4	
	PTA1001*	Introduction to Physical Therapist Assistant	4	
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PHASE				
Quarter 4				16 Credits
	PTA1003	Pathophysiology	4	
	PTA1005	Kinesiology	6	
	PTA1006	Testing and Measurement for the Physical Therapist Assistant	6	
Quarter 5				14 Credits
	PTA2000	Habilitation/Rehabilitation	6	
	PTA2024	Therapeutic Interventions I	6	
	PTA2047	Essentials of Clinical Care	2	
Quarter 6				16 Credits
	PTA2025	Therapeutic Interventions II	6	
	PTA2046	Advanced Habilitation/Rehabilitation	6	
	PTA2050	Professional Seminar	4	
Quarter 7				12 Credits
	PTA2048	Clinical Externship I	8	
	PTA2049	Current Rehabilitation Issues	4	
Quarter 8				12 Credits
	PTA2099	Clinical Externship II	12	
Total				110 Credits

*This course can also be taken in the first quarter of the professional phase.

Note: UVC1000 Strategies for Success is required if the student is also required to take ENG0099 or MAT0099.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM: NINE-QUARTER CURRICULUM

The following campuses follow the nine-quarter curriculum for the Associate of Science in Physical Therapist Assistant: South University, Montgomery; South University, Savannah; and South University, West Palm Beach.

QUARTER	COURSE #	COURSE NAME	CREDITS	QTR TOTALS
GENERAL EDUCATION PHASE <i>(sample)</i>				
Quarter 1				12 Credits
	AHS1001	Medical Terminology	4	
	ENG1100	Composition I	4	
	MAT1001 or MAT1500	Math Elective	4	
Quarter 2				14 Credits
	BIO1011	Anatomy and Physiology I	4	
	BIO1012	Anatomy and Physiology I Lab	2	
	ENG1200, COM2006 or SPC1026	Basic Communications Elective	4	
	PSY1001	Approved Psychology Elective	4	
Quarter 3				14 Credits
	BIO1013	Anatomy and Physiology II	4	
	BIO1014	Anatomy and Physiology II Lab	2	
	HUM EL	Approved Humanities Elective	4	
PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION PHASE				
Quarter 4				14 Credits
	PTA1001	Introduction to Physical Therapist Assistant	4	
	PTA1003	Pathophysiology	4	
	PTA1005	Kinesiology	6	
Quarter 5				12 Credits
	PTA1006	Testing and Measurement for the Physical Therapist Assistant	6	
	PTA2000	Habilitation/Rehabilitation	6	
Quarter 6				12 Credits
	PTA1008	Modalities	6	
	PTA2021	Therapeutic Exercise and Orthopedic Applications	6	
Quarter 7				12 Credits
	PTA2046	Advanced Habilitation/Rehabilitation	6	
	PTA2050	Professional Seminar	4	
	PTA2057	Physical Therapy Through the Lifespan	2	
Quarter 8				12 Credits
	PTA2058	Clinical Externship I	9	
	PTA2059	Current Rehabilitation Issues	3	
Quarter 9				12 Credits
	PTA2099	Clinical Externship II	12	
Total				110 Credits

Note: Students who do not place out of MAT0099 must complete both MAT0099 and UVC1000 during the general education phase of the program.

Recorded Lecture Policy Agreement

You have been permitted to tape or digitally record class lectures for your personal study only. Lectures taped for this purpose may not be shared with other people without the consent of the lecturer. Information contained in the recorded lecture is protected under federal copyright laws and may not be published or quoted without the express consent of the lecturer and without giving proper identity and credit to that person.

In order to maintain the integrity of the services offered and to honor copyright law, I certify and agree as follows:

I agree to abide by the following rules for obtaining and using recorded course materials:

- I will not copy or reproduce the educational material (recordings) being provided nor allow anyone else to do so.
- I will not allow anyone else to use the educational material (recordings).
- Violation of this Agreement may be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in penalties including suspension and expulsion. Violations may also constitute a violation of federal and/or state laws and may result in civil or criminal prosecution, payment of fines or other moneys to the copyright holder, and/or incarceration.

I, the undersigned student, understand the rules listed above and will comply.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Faculty Signature: _____

Program Director Signature: _____

Incident Report Form

Name of Person Completing Report: _____

Title: _____ Signature: _____

Date of Incident: _____ Time of Incident: _____

Nature of Incident: Medical Theft Alcohol/Substance Conduct
 Unauthorized Access Weapons Fire & Safety

Place of Incident: Campus (describe where on campus) _____
 Parking Lot Off Campus

Person(s) Involved (faculty, staff, student or other):

Name: _____ Student ID or Title: _____

Witnesses (faculty, staff, student or other):

Name: _____ Student ID or Title: _____

Describe in detail the incident that occurred. Use only factual information. Include resolution/action taken.



PTA PROGRAM CLINICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCE FILE CHECKLIST

Student's Name: _____

The following items have been reviewed by the ACCE. **All documents will be maintained by the PTA student and made available upon request.** A "check" will indicate that each document has been verified and approved by the ACCE. A copy of this checklist will be provided to the student and the hard copy will be filed in the office of the ACCE. The University and PTA program do not maintain any health or insurance-related information, drug test results, or background check records.

Non-HIPAA-Protected Information: Copies maintained in ACCE's office; originals returned to student.

<input type="checkbox"/> CPR Certification - Expiration Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Student Information Form Completed
---	---

HIPAA-Protected Information: Original documents maintained in documentation management system and viewed online. No copies maintained by ACCE.

<input type="checkbox"/> Completed Health Insurance Statement	<input type="checkbox"/> Satisfactory Physical Exam Date: _____
<i>TB Screening</i> Date of Negative Test Results: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> PPD <input type="checkbox"/> 2-Step <input type="checkbox"/> Chest X-ray <input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaire <input type="checkbox"/> T-SPOT <input type="checkbox"/> QuantiFERON-TB Gold	
<i>Hepatitis B</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Vaccination or <input type="checkbox"/> Waiver	<i>Varicella</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Vaccination or <input type="checkbox"/> Titer
<i>MMR</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Vaccination or <input type="checkbox"/> Titer	<i>T-DAP</i> <input type="checkbox"/> Vaccination or <input type="checkbox"/> Titer
<i>COVID-19</i> Date: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> One Series <input type="checkbox"/> Two Series <input type="checkbox"/> Booster Date: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> No Vaccine	
<i>Influenza</i> Date: _____ (Seasonal)	

Confidential information: Results maintained in documentation management system and viewed online. No copies maintained by ACCE.

<input type="checkbox"/> Background Check - Date: _____	<input type="checkbox"/> Drug Screen - Date: _____
---	--

By signing this document, the student confirms that there have been no changes in their medical history or background check since applying to the program.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

ACCE Signature: _____ Date: _____



Weekly Attendance Log

Student Name:	
Clinical Site:	
Week Number:	
Hours worked through last week:	

Day	Date	Time In	Time Out	Time In	Time Out	Daily Total
This Week's Total Hours:						
Total Hours Overall:						

Please mark this box if student was tardy this week.

Specify date/s:

By signing this attendance log, I verify that the student has completed the above clinical hours.

Clinical Instructor Signature: _____

CONSENT FORM FOR DRUG AND ALCOHOL SCREENING

College of Health Professions
South University
[Campus]

Consent for Release and Exchange of Student Records

Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

I, _____, hereby voluntarily agree to provide urine, blood, or hair as required for testing for the presence of drugs and/or alcohol. I authorize that the results of my drug screen be released to South University and the _____ [Program]. I understand that the results of the drug screen will be used to determine: 1) eligibility for clinical placement, 2) fitness for duty, 3) violation of substance abuse policy, or 4) disciplinary action against me, up to and including dismissal from programs within the College of Health Professions. I understand that the results of the drug and alcohol test will be shared with clinical placement sites as required. I understand that my willingness to submit to the requested screening is completely voluntary and that I have the right to refuse. I am aware that my refusal to submit to the drug and alcohol screening is grounds for disciplinary action and further actions as outlined in the Substance Abuse Policies of the College of Health Professions and South University. I have read and agreed to the terms of the Substance Abuse Policy for the South University College of Health Professions.

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this signed form.

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name

RECORDS RELEASE FORM

College of Health Professions
South University
[Campus]

Consent for Release and Exchange of Student Records

Name: _____ Student ID#: _____

Students in the College of Health Professions participate in clinical rotations which are part of the requisite course work for the _____ degree offered by South University.

To enable South University and the clinical rotation sites to evaluate a student's eligibility to participate in clinical rotations and to evaluate a student's performance on clinical rotations, it is necessary for South University and the clinical rotation sites to exchange educational records and information about that student. The educational records and information subject to release and exchange include grade reports, transcripts, evaluations, attendance records, examination results, background check results, and records of conduct and disciplinary investigations and proceedings. Release and exchange of educational records and information is between and among faculty members, administrators, and other designees of South University and the facilities which have an agreement with South University to provide clinical rotations.

I hereby consent to the release and exchange of my educational records and information as described above.

I acknowledge receipt of a copy of this signed form.

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name

SOUTH UNIVERSITY
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM
TECHNICAL SKILLS AND DATA COLLECTION FORM

Instructions: Students should keep and use this form throughout their clinical externships as a guide for the performance of technical skills and data collection in a clinical setting. Students should review this form with their clinical instructors at the beginning of the externship to identify skills that can be performed at the clinical site. Students should mark completed items as they are performed. This will allow students and their clinical instructors to identify areas in which students have gained exposure and experience, as well as recognize areas for growth and development.

DATA COLLECTION AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

General

- Review of reports provided by patient, family, caregivers, etc.
- Conduction of interviews with patient, family, caregivers, etc.
- Administration of questionnaires, scales and indices as provided and/or requested by PT
- Recognition of safety factors Review of daily activities logs

Range of Motion (including muscle length):

- Observation of muscle, joint, soft tissue characteristics (crepitus, tightness, laxity, end feel, etc.)
- Measurement of ROM (with goniometer, tape measure, flexible ruler, inclinometer):
 - Cervical Thoracic Lumbar TMJ
 - Shoulder Elbow Wrist Hand
 - Hip Knee Ankle Foot

Muscle Performance:

- Muscle Tone & Mass Grip or pinch strength testing via hand-held dynamometer
- Manual Muscle Testing:
 - Neck Back Abdominals Shoulder Girdle
 - Shoulder Elbow Wrist Hand
 - Hip Knee Ankle Foot

Aerobic Capacity, Endurance, Ventilation, & Circulation (measures, observes, recognizes)

- Vital Signs (circle all that apply): BP HR RR Pulse Oximetry Temperature
- Exercise Test Protocols (treadmill, ergometer, etc.)
- Scales (perceived exertion, dyspnea, angina, METS, etc.)
- Breathing Patterns (chest wall mobility, expansion, excursion) and lung sounds
- Signs/Symptoms (i.e. cyanosis, dyspnea, cough, edema, etc.)

Anthropometric Characteristics (measures, observes, recognizes)

- Measurements (circle all that apply): Height Weight Length Girth Leg Length
- Changes in Edema Normal/Abnormal Alignment

Arousal, Mentation, and Cognition (observes, recognizes, identifies)

- Orientation to time, person, place, and situation
- Changes in state of arousal, attention, mentation, and cognition
- Factors influencing motivation, learning, and processing commands
- Gross expressive and receptive deficits

Assistive and Adaptive Devices (measures, observes, recognizes)

___ Ability to care for the device ___ Components, alignment, and fit of the device

Community & Work Integration/Reintegration (IADLs) (measures, observes, recognizes)

___ Adaptive skills in all settings ___ Environment and work tasks

Environmental, Home, and Work Barriers (measures, observes, inspects, recognizes)

___ Environmental Barriers ___ Possible Modifications

Gait, Locomotion and Balance (administers, measures, observes, analyzes, recognizes)

___ Tests of Balance: observation, instruments ___ Effects of terrain/environment

___ Normal & abnormal characteristics of static/dynamic balance

___ Gait: observation, instruments ___ Normal and abnormal gait characteristics

Integumentary Integrity – Skin (measures, observes, recognizes)

___ Hair and Nail Growth ___ Tissue Mobility, Turgor, and Texture

___ Continuity of Skin Color ___ Pigment Changes

___ Activities, positions, postures, and devices that can produce skin trauma

Integumentary Integrity – Wounds (measures, observes, recognizes)

___ Blistering ___ Burns ___ Dermatitis ___ Ecchymosis ___ Bleeding

___ Signs of Infection ___ Exposed Anatomical Structures ___ Scar Tissue

___ Activities, positioning, and postures that can aggravate the wound or produce trauma

___ Wound Characteristics (circle all that apply):

___ Contraction	___ Drainage	___ Location	___ Granulation	___ Odor
___ Shape	___ Size	___ Depth	___ Tunneling	___ Undermining

Motor Function (measures, observes, recognizes, describes)

___ Head, Trunk, and Limb Movement

___ Stereotypic Movements (synergies, associated movements, etc.)

___ Postural, Equilibrium, and Righting Reactions (adults)

Neuromotor Development and Sensory Integration (observes, recognizes)

___ Postural, Equilibrium and Righting Reactions (children)

___ Gross and Fine Motor Skills (milestones, developmental sequence)

Orthotic, Prosthetic, Protective, Supportive Devices (measures, observes, recognizes, describes)

___ Use-Related Skin Changes ___ Components, Alignment, Fit ___ Safety

___ Patient's ability to apply, remove, and care for device

___ Residual limb and/or adjacent segment for ROM and strength

Pain (measures, observes, recognizes, describes)

___ Pain-Related Behaviors/Reactions ___ Pain Questionnaires, Scales, Graphs

___ Muscle Soreness ___ Pain with Joint Movement ___ Pain Perception (e.g. phantom pain)

Peripheral Joint Integrity and Mobility (observes, recognizes, describes)

___ Normal and abnormal movement of peripheral joint/extremity during specific tasks

___ Peripheral joint hypomobility and hypermobility ___ Soft tissue restrictions

Posture (measures, observes, recognizes)

Normal and Abnormal Postures Reasons for Abnormal Postures

Self-Care and Home Management - ADLs, IADLs, Training (measures, observes, recognizes)

Adaptive Skills Transfers Environment and Work Tasks
 Self-care and home-management activities Self-care in unfamiliar environments

Sensory Integrity (measures, observes, recognizes)

Auditory Stimuli Visual Stimuli
 Superficial Sensations (circle all that apply):
Sharp/Dull Temperature Light Touch Pressure Stereognosis Other: _____

TECHNICAL SKILLS

Therapeutic Exercise – Balance, Coordination, Developmental Sequence

Balance Training Coordination Training
 Manual Dexterity Training Mobility Training (non-gait)
 Developmental Activities Training Gait Training
 Motor Training/Retraining (fine and gross skills) Body Mechanics

Therapeutic Exercise – Neuromuscular

Neuromuscular Re-Ed (PNF, Swiss ball, NDT, etc.) Sensory Training/Retraining
 Neuromuscular Relaxation, Inhibition, Facilitation (PNF, cold, vibration, taping, tapping, etc.)

Therapeutic Exercise – Musculoskeletal

Strengthening: Resistive (free weights, pulleys, elastic bands, mechanical equipment, etc.)
 PROM AAROM AROM Stretching Postural Training

Therapeutic Exercise – Other

Aquatic Exercises Structured Play or Leisure Activity

Therapeutic Exercise – Cardiopulmonary

Aerobic Endurance Activities Conditioning and Reconditioning
 Breathing Strategies Breathing Exercises

Airway Clearance Techniques

Assistive Cough Techniques Chest Percussion, Vibration, Shaking
 Postural Drainage and Positioning

Manual Therapy Techniques

Connective/Soft Tissue Mobilization Manual Traction Other: _____
 Therapeutic Massage (effleurage, petrissage, friction, tapotement, etc.)

Functional Training / Retraining

ADL Training
 IADL Training (home chores, structured play, community travel, etc.)
 Organized Functional Training Programs (back school, simulated environments, etc.)
 Injury Prevention or Reduction Training
 Assistive/Adaptive Devices Training
 Orthotic, Protective, Supportive Devices Training (including application of device)
 Prosthetic Training (including donning and doffing)

Recommendation, Training, Application, Use of Devices and Equipment

- Adaptive Devices (raised toilet, seating systems, grab bars, shower chairs, w/c cushions, etc.)
- Assistive Devices (crutches, canes, walkers, wheelchairs, reachers, power devices, etc.)
- Orthotic Devices (splints, braces, shoe inserts, casts, etc.)
- Prosthetic Devices for Lower Extremities
- Protective Devices (braces, taping, cushions, helmets, etc.)
- Supportive Devices (taping, compression garments, slings, elastic wraps, oxygen, etc.)

Wound Management

- Debridement - Nonselective: wet-to-dry dressing/wet-to-moist dressing/iodine, H₂O₂, Dakins, etc.
- Debridement - Selective: mechanical/enzymes/other agents (autolysis)
- Dressings (wound coverings, hydrogels, etc.) Bandages (gauze, elastic, non-elastic)
- Topical Agents (ointments, moisturizers, creams, cleansers, sealants, etc.)

Physical Agents – Electrotherapeutic Modalities

- Biofeedback Iontophoresis TENS IFC HVPC
- Electrical Muscle Stimulation Functional Electrical Stim. Other: _____

Physical Agents – Athermal Modalities

- Pulsed US Pulsed Diathermy Ultraviolet Phonophoresis Anodyne

Physical Agents – Thermal Modalities

- Ultrasound Diathermy Hot Packs Paraffin Fluidotherapy

Physical Agents – Cryotherapy

- Cold Packs Ice Massage Vapocoolant Spray Cryocuff

Physical Agents – Hydrotherapy

- Therapeutic Pool/Aquacizer Whirlpool Contrast Bath Pulsed Lavage

Physical Agents – Compression

- Vasopneumatic Compression Pumps Taping
- Compression Bandaging Compression Garments

Physical Agents – Traction

- Mechanical (sustained cervical) Mechanical (sustained lumbar)
- Mechanical (intermittent cervical) Mechanical (intermittent lumbar)

Physical Agents – Other

- Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) Tilt Table Standing Table/Frame

Miscellaneous

- Other: _____



CLINICAL SITE ORIENTATION CHECKLIST

Student Name: _____ Clinic Name: _____

Dates of Clinical Rotation: _____

- CI and CCCE Phone #, Fax # and E-mail**
- General tour of facility/parking/break room
- Tour of Rehab Department: Copier Fax VHI/ Exercise Kits
- Manuals
 - Student Manual (as applicable)
 - Policy & Procedure Manuals as needed & Organizational Chart
 - Safety Manual, Infection Control Manual, and MSDS
- Departmental Procedures
 - Responsibilities & performance expectations
 - Role in contributing to company's mission & goals
 - Safety procedures, code status, and emergency procedures
 - Fall prevention, restraints, lifting guidelines
 - Computer access and request for passwords
- Customer service and role of student as appropriate
- Department hours & general information
- Schedule list and phone numbers for other therapists as needed
- Attendance/Tardiness/Lunch/Breaks/Staff meetings/In-service schedule
- In-service/ Presentation requirements and other expectations for student
- Competencies that clinic may require students to complete such as:
 - Orthopedic Stroke Other (Please specify): _____
- Documentation requirements
- Billing
- Scheduling patients

I have read the applicable manuals, completed orientation and understand departmental operations. I understand that I can address any concerns with the CI, CCCE, and ACCE as needed.

Signatures:

Student: _____ CI: _____



STUDENT COUNSELING REPORT

STUDENT NAME: _____

DATE: _____

REASON FOR COUNSELING:

- Conduct / Attendance
- Student / Instructor Interaction
- Academic Performance
- Clinical Performance
- Other: _____

SITUATION/ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN:

ACTION IF IMPROVEMENT IS NOT MADE:

STUDENT COMMENTS:

STUDENT SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

FACULTY SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____



STUDENT LEARNING CONTRACT

PURPOSE:

To address, in writing, the existence of performance problems, their specific potential impact on successful completion of the clinical experience, and agreed-upon methods for correction of the problems.

EXPECTED BENEFITS:

The identification of problems and their description in behavioral terms allows the student to understand the perception of difficulty and to take an active part in describing behaviors which will indicate correction of the problems.

COMPONENTS OF THE CONTRACT:

1. **GOALS:** Goals are statements of the identified problems as behaviors to be demonstrated as indication of successful correction of the problems.
2. **OBJECTIVES:** Objectives are subsets of the previously stated goals, presented as expected behaviors.
3. **ACTIVITIES OF THE STUDENT:** This section outlines the specific activities the student will be expected to be involved in to allow them to demonstrate the desired behaviors.
4. **ACTIVITIES OF THE CLINICAL/ACADEMIC FACULTY MEMBER(S):** The clinical/academic faculty member is an active participant in the contract process. His/her specific responsibilities regarding supervision, instruction, modeling behaviors, oversight, correction, and other activities will be detailed in this section.
5. **EVALUATION:** The student, clinical/academic faculty member(s), and/or Program Director agree to the time frame and how the student will be evaluated, and on what criteria the evaluation will be based.
6. **LIMITATIONS:** *All coursework:* Failure to comply with this learning contract is likely to result in a failing grade. *Clinical coursework:* There is a limit of one learning contract available in each clinical education course. If the terms of the contract are not met, a second remediation will not be attempted and the student will receive a failing grade for the course.
7. **SIGNATURES:** The student, clinical/academic faculty member(s), and/or Program Director involved in developing the contract will sign to indicate consultation on, and agreement with, the terms of the learning contract.

Clinical Externship: Summary of Student Skills

Students are accountable for:

Skill/Procedure	PTA2047	PTA2048/2058	PTA2099
Basic Skills			
Standard Precautions^/Isolation Procedures	X	X	X
Informed Consent^ (including ID of patient, precautions, contraindications)	X	X	X
Lifting Skills/Body Mechanics^	X	X	X
Patient Safety^ (e.g. positioning, guarding, gait belt)	X	X	X
Documentation (SOAP format, paper and web-based)	X	X	X
HEP Development	*	X	X
Functional Mobility			
Activities of Daily Living (ADLs) (instruction, equipment use)	X	X	X
Bed Mobility, Transfers	X	X	X
Gait Training (all assistive devices, weight-bearing)	X	X	X
Patient Positioning, Draping	X	X	X
Step/Curb Training	X	X	X
Wheelchair Adjustment & Instruction	X	X	X
Tests & Measures			
Anthropometric, Volumetric Measures	X	X	X
Coordination Testing (Rhombberg, equilibrium, etc.)		X	X
Cranial Nerve Screening		X	X
Functional Balance Grading (poor-normal)	*	X	X
Goniometry (AROM/PROM)	X	X	X
Integumentary Integrity	X	X	X
Manual Muscle Testing (0-5 grading)	X	X	X
Mental Functions (cognition, orientation, arousal)	*	X	X
Musculoskeletal-Basic Special Testing (misc.)	X	X	X
Pain (VAS, standardized scales)	X	X	X
Reflex Testing (DTRs, tonic, primitive, etc.)	*	X	X
Sensation (2-point, dermatomes, etc.)	*	X	X
Standardized Balance Testing (TUG, Tinetti, Berg, etc.)	*	X	X
Tone (Modified Ashworth scale, flexor/extensor patterns)		X	X
Vital Signs	X	X	X
Therapeutic Exercise - Musculoskeletal			
AROM, AAROM, PROM, Stretching	*	X	X
Postural Training	*	X	X
Spinal Stabilization		X	X
Strength (manually & mechanically resisted, elastic bands, free weights)		X	X
Therapeutic Exercise - Neuromuscular			
Balance/Coordination Training (various positions, equipment)		X	X

Developmental Milestones		X	X
Developmental Positioning & Handling Techniques		X	X
Neuro Re-ed (PNF, Swiss ball, NDT, etc.)		X	X
Neuro Relaxation, Inhibition, Facilitation		X	X
Sensory Training/Retraining		X	X
Modalities^^			
Biofeedback	X	X	X
Continuous Passive Motion (CPM) Machine	*	*	*
E-Stim (IFC, NMES, TENS, HVG, FES)	X	X	X
Hydrotherapy (whirlpool, contrast bath)	*	*	*
Iontophoresis	X	X	X
Light (UV, Low Level LASER, infrared)	X	X	X
Massage (Swedish, cross-friction, soft tissue mobilization)	X	X	X
Pneumatic Compression	*	*	*
Thermal (hot/cold packs, ice massage, paraffin)	X	X	X
Thermal (diathermy, fluidotherapy)	*	*	*
Traction (manual, mechanical)	X	X	X
Ultrasound (continuous, pulsed, combo)	X	X	X
Special Populations/Topics			
Aerobic Conditioning (monitoring, equipment)	*	X	X
Amputations/Prosthetics (wrapping, positioning, mobility, donning/doffing)	X	X	X
Aquatics		*	*
Cardiovascular Rehab (monitoring, conditioning, sternal precautions)	*	X	X
Cerebrovascular Accident (CVA) (specific mobility training, balance)		X	X
Home/Community/Work Safety and Reintegration, Ergonomics	X	X	X
Joint Arthroplasties (precautions, interventions)	*	X	X
Lymphedema (basic principles only)		*	*
Orthoses/Braces (application and instruction)	X	X	X
Pregnancy/Post-Partum (pelvic floor strength, diastasis recti, precautions)		*	*
Relaxation Training		X	X
Respiratory (auscultation, pursed-lip, huffing-coughing, postural drainage)	X	X	X
Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) (special handling, pressure relief, resp. mgmt., etc.)		X	X
Scoliosis (measurement and tx.)	*	X	X
Taping (corrective, kinesio tape basics)		*	*
Vestibular Dysfunction (basic ID and intervention)			*
Wound Care (sterile/clean technique, measurement)	X	X	X

* Indicates skills where student has had exposure, but has not been judged as competent with the skill.

^ Indicates critical safety elements that students are required to demonstrate for successful completion of ALL skills in the curriculum.

^^ In addition to the critical safety elements indicated with a "^", students are required to demonstrate the following critical elements for competency in modality skills: 1. Recognize when it is inappropriate to administer the physical agent. 2. Proper positioning for patient safety and comfort. 3. Examination of skin integrity before and after application.

Responsibilities and Suggestions for the Student: Clinical Education



Prior to the Affiliation:

1. Become familiar with the CPI rating scale, skills, and performance dimensions. If you have previously completed an affiliation, be aware of and attentive toward areas that have been identified as needing improvement.
2. Approximately one month in advance, send a letter of introduction and the Student Information Form (Appendix E) to your clinical instructor (CI). Check with the ACCE to ensure you have the correct contact information.
3. Call your CI one week prior to the affiliation. Your goals are to introduce yourself and to confirm details (e.g., time and place to meet on the first day, parking, etc.).
4. Take a test drive during rush hour to your clinical site. This will allow you to best plan your commute and ensure you have no issues locating the site your first day.
5. Review your PTA Student Handbook (Clinical Education Policies), practice acts, and course syllabus to confirm all requirements and objectives will be met.

During the Affiliation:

1. Come prepared the first day with your file of required documents, a smile, and a list of the clinical skills and objectives you would like to work on during the affiliation. These will be discussed with your CI and broken down into weekly objectives.
2. Do not be afraid to ask questions, especially when a lack of information may compromise the safety or effectiveness of your treatment(s). However, do not burden your CI with unnecessary questions, particularly if you can look up the answer yourself.
3. Gather background information on your patients **prior** to rendering treatment. Remember, you are not just an aide following instructions. You need to understand the rationale and goals for the treatments, patient background, and any other information needed to provide optimal patient care.
4. **YOU** take the initiative to ensure adequate skills and interventions from the CPI are completed to meet course objectives. When appropriate:
 - Ask for particular patients or to work with specific equipment.
 - Ask the clinical instructor to observe while you perform skills.
 - Ask for feedback (e.g., “How am I doing?”).
5. Take initiative around the clinic and with your patients. If something needs to be done (within your realm of responsibility and capability), do it. In regard to your patients, take the initiative to advance them within the treatment guidelines and plan of care provided to you by the PT.
6. Keep the PT informed on how your patients are doing. Be especially diligent in reporting any problems relating to patients, including a lack of progress.
7. Use your time in the clinic constructively: read charts, ask to observe or help others, write notes, review the CPI, tidy the area, discuss your patients with the CI or other PT personnel, or request reference materials to review appropriate to your caseload.

8. Do not be defensive toward constructive criticism. Be thankful that the CI is willing to give you honest feedback and help in identifying your deficiencies. Constructive criticism is **NOT** a personal attack on you; it is designed to help you become an excellent clinician!

Clinical Education Documentation:

1. Clinical Site Orientation Checklist
 - To be completed by the end of the first week and returned to the ACCE.
2. Progress Report
 - Make it a point to regularly meet with your CI to set and review your objectives and discuss your progress.
 - Identify deficiencies early to allot sufficient time to address them before the end of the affiliation. Communication with your CI is key! Try to get a *precise* idea of what the deficiency is and how the CI would prefer you to handle the task.
3. Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI)
 - Completed at midterm and final (final only for the part-time rotation [PTA2047]).
 - Your self-assessment should be completed *before* you meet with your CI.
 - After a problem area is identified, you and your CI should develop a plan together to remedy the deficiency. Put forth a good effort in implementing the plan.
4. Clinical Site Information Form (CSIF)
 - As discussed in class, the APTA is encouraging all sites to input their data into CSIF Web. Please assist them in this process as needed.
5. Affiliation Attendance Roster
 - Completed throughout the experience, signed by your CI, and returned to ACCE upon completion of the affiliation.
6. Student Evaluation of Clinical Experience and Instruction (SECEI)
 - Section 1 (assessment of the clinical experience) will be completed at the conclusion of each affiliation. Please remember this form will become a very useful tool for future PTA students (all student/CI identifying information will be removed).
 - Section 2 (assessment of clinical instruction) is shared with your CI. Remember that you are expected to provide a constructive, honest critique of your experience, just as you would expect your CI to provide to you.
7. Student Assessment of ACCE/DCE Performance
 - This form is completed at the end of your final affiliation only and allows you to assess both the ACCE and South University's clinical education program. Your feedback is invaluable in further developing and improving this component of the curriculum. Again, please be honest and constructive in your comments.

MOST IMPORTANTLY:

1. **Contact the ACCE if any issues arise that causes you concern and may not be able to be resolved in the clinic through discussion with your CI or the CCCE. *Early* intervention may solve the problem and prevent deterioration of your affiliation.**
2. **Have fun and make the most of your experience!**



PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND UNDERSTANDING: STUDENT HANDBOOK

I have read and understand the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Student Handbook. I fully understand this information and hereby agree to abide by the Physical Therapist Assistant Program policies and procedures contained within the South University Physical Therapist Assistant Program Student Handbook. Additionally, I agree to abide by all rules and regulations as set forth in the South University Academic Catalog, and in South University Student Handbook.

The South University Physical Therapist Assistant Program reserves the right to modify curriculum requirements as necessary to ensure the academic integrity of its program. Students will be notified of any changes in curriculum or program requirements prior to implementation in accordance with CAPTE standards.

Student Name (Print Name)

Student Signature

Date