

***Policy and Procedures***

***Physical Therapy Program  
Arnold School of Public Health  
University of South Carolina***

*Rev 8/1/2010*

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**Physical Therapy Program  
Department of Exercise Science,  
Arnold School of Public Health  
University of South Carolina**

**Policies and Procedures**

Faculty and students enrolled in the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree program are governed by the policies and procedures of the University of South Carolina as documented in the **Faculty Manual**, Arnold School of Public Health **Faculty Handbook** and the Graduate School **Graduate Bulletin**. This document is designed to set forth the policies and procedures of the Physical Therapy Program and is intended to supplement (not replace) those of the University, School and Graduate School of the University of South Carolina.

**1.0 Administration**

Administration of the Physical Therapy Program consists of the Program Director, the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education and their administrative assistants. The roles and responsibilities of these positions include;

**1.1 Program Director**

The Director of the Physical Therapy Program administers the daily operation of the Physical Therapy Program. As director of the program he/she coordinates the activities of faculty related to **accreditation, curriculum, budget, faculty recruitment/hiring and academic standards**. The program director also evaluates faculty and is the signature authority of the budget. The Director is responsible to the Chairperson of the Department of Exercise Science and the Dean of the Arnold School of Public Health.

Physical Therapy Programs are granted accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Accreditation is a core faculty responsibility and as such is coordinated by the Program Director.

It is the responsibility of the Program Director to insure

- timely submission of all required fees and documentation, including reports of graduation rates, performances on state licensing examinations and employment rates to the appropriate University and Accreditation authorities.
- timely notification of expected or unexpected substantive change(s) within the program, and of any change in institutional accreditation status or legal authority to postsecondary education to appropriate University and Accreditation authorities.
- maintenance of a mechanism for handling complaints about the program and maintaining records of complaints about the program.
- the program coming into compliance with accreditation criteria within two years of being determined to be out of compliance

## 1.2 Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education

The Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) is responsible for record keeping, grading, evaluating clinical experiences/clinical instructors and coordinating students in all aspects of the clinical education component of the program.

## 1.3 Administrative Assistants

The Administrative Assistants to the program is responsible for the maintenance of all student's communications and records. In addition, the administrative assistants work with the program director and ACCE to coordinate and implement the daily activities of the program.

## 2.0 Faculty

Faculty in the Physical Therapy Program have the same rights and privileges of faculty of similar academic rank at the University of South Carolina which are detailed in the University *Faculty Manual*.

### 2.1 Definitions

Faculty of the Physical Therapy Program are classified into subcategories including *core*, *adjunct*, *clinical education* and *support* faculty. These definitions clarify the role of each faculty member and assist in the accreditation process. For the purposes of the Physical Therapy Program and its accreditation these faculty are defined (*from CAPTE accreditation Handbook, Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education*) as;

#### *Core Faculty:*

those individuals appointed to and employed primarily in the Physical Therapy Program, Department of Exercise Science, including the program administrator and those who report to the program administrator. Members of the core faculty typically have full-time appointments. The core faculty include physical therapists and may include others with expertise to meet specific curricular needs. The core faculty have the qualifications and experience necessary to achieve the goals of the program through educational administration, curriculum development, instructional design and delivery, and evaluation of outcomes. The core faculty are the group with the responsibility and authority related to the curriculum. The core faculty may hold tenured, tenure track, or non-tenure track positions.

#### *Adjunct Faculty:*

those individuals who have classroom and/or laboratory teaching responsibilities in the program and who are not employed by the institution, though they may receive honoraria or other forms of compensation. The adjunct faculty may or may not be appointed to the faculty. The adjunct faculty may include, but are not limited to, guest lecturers, contract faculty, instructors of course modules, tutors, etc.

#### *Clinical Education Faculty:*

those individuals engaged in providing the clinical education components of the program, generally referred to as either Center Coordinators of Clinical Education (CCCEs) or Clinical Instructors (CIs). While these individuals are not usually employed by the educational institution, they do agree to certain standards of behavior through contractual arrangements for their services.

*Support Faculty:*

those individuals with faculty appointments in the Department of Exercise Science or other units within the institution who teach courses which are part of the professional program, e.g. faculty who teach physiology, or faculty from a School of Medicine who teach anatomy, etc.

## **2.2 Governance**

Rights and privileges of the core faculty are based upon academic rank and are set forth in the *Faculty Manual*. Faculty of the Columbia campus, subject to the review of the President and the Board of Trustees have legislative powers in all matters pertaining to the standards of admission, registration, requirements for and the granting of degrees earned in course, the curriculum, instruction, research extracurricular activities, discipline of students, the educational policies and standards of the program, and all other matters pertaining to the conduct of faculty affairs, including discipline of their own members.

Core faculty of the Physical Therapy Program regardless of rank and appointment, have direct governance over admissions, program policies and procedures, academic standards and curriculum. It is the responsibility of the core faculty to review these areas and propose revisions. Changes to these areas of responsibility must be brought to the core faculty for discussion and approval prior to submission to higher committees. Core faculty members are also participating faculty members in the Department of Exercise Science and the Arnold School of Public Health.

## **2.3 Evaluation of Faculty**

Faculty of the Physical Therapy Program are considered members of the Arnold School of Public Health. Faculties in the Arnold School of Public Health are appointed to either a tenure or non-tenure track position depending upon their role and responsibilities. Evaluation is conducted annually and is based on policies and procedures established by the School and the type of appointment. The following is a summary of the annual faculty evaluation procedures of the Arnold School of Public Health. Please refer to the specific documents for additional detail (*available the Office of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs, Arnold School of Public Health*).

All faculty members receive an annual administrative review conducted by their program director and/or department chairperson. The administrative review for members of the core faculty serves as the mechanism for the program director and the faculty member to review the past years accomplishments in the areas of teaching, scholarship and service and plan developmental activities for the coming year. The administrative review is also used for decisions regarding merit salary adjustments. The program director writes an evaluation of the faculty member and provides it to the chairperson of the Department of Exercise Science who performs his/her administrative review

### **2.3.1 Tenure Track Appointments**

Faculty in the School of Public Health are reviewed annually. Tenure track faculty, except tenured full professors, participate in the School's annual review process conducted by Tenure and Promotions Committee (*This review is under the supervision of the School's Tenure and Promotion Committee and managed by the Office of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs*). All faculty participate in an administrative review conducted by the Director of the Physical Therapy Program and the Chairperson of the Department of Exercise Science.

Faculty in tenure track positions are also reviewed on a regular basis for progress toward tenure and promotion. The primary responsibility for all tenure and promotion procedures rests with the tenured faculty of the Arnold School of Public Health. General University tenure and/or promotion procedures are outlined in the **Guide to USC-Columbia Tenure and Promotion Procedures** and the **School of Public Health's Criteria and Procedures for Tenure and Promotion**. Final authority for recommending tenure or promotion to the University Board of Trustees is the President. Final authority for approving recommendations of tenure or promotion rests with the Board of Trustees. The University Committee on Tenure and Promotion offers faculty an annual workshop on tenure and promotion matters where the criteria and procedures are discussed and faculty are provided an opportunity to ask questions.

### **2.3.2 Non-Tenure Track Appointments**

Clinical and Research faculty play an important role in the development and operation of the program and are critical to the successful pursuit of the clinical, teaching and research goals of the program. These faculty are annually evaluated for retention and promotion. Annual letters of appointment detail the specific distribution of effort of these faculty members (teaching, scholarship and service) which may change annually based on the needs of the program and faculty member. Specific guidelines for this review process and standards for promotion are set forth in the Clinical/Instructional Faculty Protocol of the Arnold School of Public Health.

### **2.3.3 Associate Faculty**

Adjunct and support faculty make a significant contribution to the foundational and clinical core of the curriculum. Adjunct faculty contribute clinical expertise that enhances the clinical component of the program while support faculty provide content and research experience contributing to the foundational core. Adjunct and support faculty are evaluated on a number of factors that contribute to their effectiveness in delivering relevant instructional content. Evaluation components used as part of evaluative process include; academic credentials, quality of the learning experiences provided to students, instructional effectiveness, student/instructor interaction and quality of the materials used in instruction. Adjunct and support faculty represent two groups, each with differing needs regarding instructional supervision and support. The evaluation methods used are selected to address the specific needs of each group.

**Adjunct Faculty:** Adjunct faculty possess clinical expertise but often have limited academic and instructional experience. For this reason, the instruction of adjunct faculty is supervised and mentored by a member of the core faculty. Adjunct faculty are primarily used to support instruction (i.e. laboratory instructors) in courses taught by a member of the core faculty. It is the responsibility of the mentoring faculty to review and approve all instructional materials prior to presentation. This is accomplished during meetings held prior to the course offering and throughout the semester. It is further expected that the supervising faculty member will observe the adjunct faculty's instruction on a regular basis and mentor appropriate and effective instructional strategies/ evaluation techniques.

The core faculty reviews and approves the professional credentials of all adjunct faculty prior to appointment. Instructional competence is evaluated using both student assessments of instruction and the mentors assessment of teaching. Faculty with concerns regarding the instructional content and/or effectiveness of an adjunct faculty is expected to bring these concerns to the attention of the program director and core faculty. Upon notification of a concern, the program director meets with the adjunct faculty and designs and implements a developmental plan to remediate the problem. If the problem cannot be corrected the services

of the adjunct faculty member will be discontinued. If instructional support of an adjunct faculty member is necessary/desired the program is willing to financially support activities designed to increase clinical expertise and/or instructor effectiveness. Associated faculty are encouraged to attend program faculty meetings but to not have voting privileges.

If an adjunct faculty member is the instructor of record of a course, the adjunct faculty member's instructional effectiveness is evaluated by the Program Director using a review of instructional materials, student comments during annual program assessment meeting, informal discussions with students and the results of student evaluations of instruction. Feedback is provided to adjunct faculty, with full instructional responsibilities of a course, at the conclusion of the course.

Specific rights and privileges of adjunct faculty include but not limited to:

- The right to be identified as an adjunct of the Physical Therapy Program in the Arnold School of Public Health of the University of South Carolina.
- The right to a University identification card with the privileges of such as outlined in the Faculty Manual.
- Invitation to all professional seminars sponsored by the Arnold School of Public Health, Department of Exercise Science and/or the Physical Therapy Program.
- Instructional materials and supplies to facilitate instruction.
- Use of a laptop computer to use for instructional purposes.
- A negotiated salary for services rendered.
- The right to seek instructional assistance using university resources.
- The right to apply for financial support to seek their clinical instructor credential.

**Support Faculty:** Support faculty have considerable academic experience and the program relies upon this instructional and research expertise to design and implement appropriate instructional experiences. Core faculty members acting as content liaisons (as previously discussed in Section 3.1) provide suggestions and guidance to support faculty insuring that the content they deliver is relevant for the students enrolled in the physical therapy program. Core faculty have taken the opportunity to meet individually with each support faculty to review the content of their course and offer suggestions. This process of core faculty review has proven to be valuable in assisting the core faculty to better understand the content of the classes taught by support faculty and providing support faculty with insight into the relevance of their content to physical therapy.

Support faculty have academic appointments in a related department or school. Although the core faculty depends upon the support faculty members home department to insure content and instructional expertise, the core faculty reviews the academic credentials of its support faculty. The home department of the support faculty is responsible for their annual evaluation. The program director reviews their instructional performance, as evaluated by students, at the conclusion of each course. Additional informal student's assessments of support faculty's provide valuable insight into the quality of instruction provided by support faculty. If problems are identified, the program director meets with the support faculty in an attempt to correct the problem. If the problem persists, the chair of the support faculty's department is consulted to assist in correcting the instructional deficiency. To date, this review process has been used successfully to improve the instruction delivered to our students

## **2.4 Faculty Mentoring**

The University of South Carolina has no formal policies and procedures for mentoring of new

faculty. For this reason, the DPT program has established the following policies and procedures to assist new faculty to make an appropriate adjustment to the university setting. These policies and procedures are not intended to diminish the program directors role in faculty development and evaluation but are designed to supplement these efforts.

1. Upon hiring the program director will assign to the new faculty member a mentor who has advanced faculty rank (Associate or Full) and tenure. It will be the mentors responsibility to review the policies and procedures of the mentoring program with the new faculty member within the initial semester of employment.
2. It is the role of the mentor to introduce the new faculty member at all faculty functions and facilitate introductions to faculty that may result in collaborative relationships.
3. Mentoring of faculty may take place in two settings: formal and informal. Formal mentoring sessions are designed to provide the new faculty member with information and insight regarding the role of faculty and administration in the physical therapy program. Informal interactions are those in which the mentor and faculty member exchange information of interest to the new faculty member. Information exchanged during informal mentoring sessions is confidential.
4. Mentors formally meet with their assigned faculty member a minimum of one time per semester to review relevant information, examine the faculty members tenure and promotion records and to address specific questions of the faculty member. A record of the topics covered in these formal mentoring sessions will be kept in each faculty members personnel file and must be kept current by the mentor. Although there is no limit on the type of information that may be shared with the faculty member the following information must be reviewed by the mentor:

Material Contained in the Faculty Manual  
Procedures for Annual Review/Preparation of File  
Tenure and Promotion Criteria (tenure-track)  
Assessment of Teaching  
Accurate Record Keeping  
Preparing and Review of the 3 year Review and  
Tenure/Promotion File (tenure-track)

5. The mentor is encouraged to actively facilitate activities required for tenure/promotion and annual review (e.g. peer review of teaching, assignments to School and University level committees, submission of grant proposals).
6. A mentor will continue to be assigned to a faulty member until that faculty member has submitted their tenure and/or promotion file or a non-tenured faulty member has been on staff for at least five years. At that time it is up to the faculty to maintain or discontinue the mentoring relationship.
7. If for any reason the mentor or faculty member desires a change of assignment, a request must be submitted to the program director with the reasons for this request clearly delineated. Upon receiving such a request the program director will individually meet with both parties and make a ruling. In all instances it will be the program directors role to facilitate a positive mentoring experience.

## 2.5 Faculty Development

Faculty development activities are designed to (1) fulfill specific program needs identified by the core faculty and /or (2) enhance individual faculty instructional/research expertise. Program needs are identified by the core faculty and provided to the program director for consideration. The program director at his/her discretion will request specific faculty to participate in developmental activities to address these program needs.

Annually, individual core faculty establish developmental plans that are reviewed by the program director. Faculty development plans are designed to identify activities intended to maintain and/or enhance instructional/research expertise. The program provides financial support for faculty development activities.

## 2.6 Content Liaisons

The Physical Therapy curriculum contains selected courses taught by non-physical therapy faculty in a interdisciplinary classroom setting. The faculty of the Physical Therapy Program has the responsibility to insure that material presented in these classes meets the needs of the physical therapy students enrolled in the course. Interdisciplinary courses will have a content liaison assigned whose responsibility is to insure that the needs of the curriculum and students are met. The following guidelines have been established for the faculty of interdisciplinary courses and the content liaison.

1. The semester proceeding the offering of a course taught in the Physical Therapy curriculum by a non-physical therapist faculty member, the program director will assign a licensed core faculty member to act as a content liaison to that course.
2. The content liaison is to act as a **resource** to the faculty of the interdisciplinary course. The role of this position is to insure that content relevant to the physical therapy students enrolled in that course is presented in a manner to meet the professional needs of these students.
3. As a resource, the content liaison is to review the outline of each course and provide input regarding material specific to the field of physical therapy. It is the responsibility of this individual to make available to the faculty of the course those materials that facilitates the delivery of this professionally related content.
4. The content liaison will provide to the faculty relevant examples to be used in the course (e.g. in anatomy the case studies presented to the physical therapy students will relate to clinically relevant issues).
5. It is role of the content liaison to facilitate the delivery of instructional materials that is relevant to needs of the physical therapy students enrolled in the course. If an issue arises that cannot be resolved, the content liaison is to bring this matter to the attention of the program director who will meet with the course faculty in an attempt to resolve the issue. In instances where the issue can not be resolved the program director will develop an alternative methods of the delivery.
6. The content liaison will report his/her efforts to the faculty at the conclusion of the semester in which the course was taught.

7. Students will be informed of the content liaison assigned to each interdisciplinary course. Students will be encouraged to communicate their reactions of the course to the content liaison.

### **3.0 Students**

Enrollment in the DPT program is limited to approximately 18 students per year. Recruitment, admission and retention of students is the primary responsibility of the core faculty departmental guided by the following policies and procedures

#### **3.1 Recruitment**

Students are recruited to the DPT program using a variety of techniques that provide information related to the program. The quality of the academic program and the combination of clinical and research experiences offered, are the two most important factors to recruiting the type of student desired for this program. Additional techniques to recruit students include;

Contact with undergraduate and graduate institutions preparing students in related disciplines (e.g. exercise science, biology) through written and bulletin board material.

Direct contact with faculty in related departments at selected institutions.

A web page containing information related to all aspects of the program and allows students to directly request additional information and/or e-mail program faculty.

Presentations at local, national and international meetings.

Publication of faculty and student generated research in professional journals. Preparation of an informational brochure for individuals requesting additional information on the program.

Cooperating with the University admissions office in preparing materials for distribution.

#### **3.2 Admissions**

Admission to the DPT program at the University of South Carolina involves meeting the admission requirements of the Arnold School of Public Health and the Physical Therapy Program of the Department of Exercise Science. All applications to the Physical Therapy program are taken electronically and are received by the program once the student has paid the application fee. Core faculty of the Physical Therapy program make all admissions decisions and forward these to the Graduate School for action.

##### **3.2.1 Arnold School of Public Health Requirements**

The Arnold School of Public Health Admission Requirements are described in detail in the publication entitled *Graduate Studies, Arnold School of Public Health, The University of South Carolina*. The admission process is a joint, cooperative effort of the Graduate School, Arnold School of Public Health and the Physical Therapy Program.

Following is a summary of The School of Public Health Admission Requirements. *No application will be given final consideration until all credentials, fees, etc. have been received.*

- Non-refundable application fee;
  - For *foreign students*, an additional non-refundable \$325.00 to the Office of International Programs for Students;
  - South Carolina residents are required to complete a residency questionnaire;
  - Official transcripts from each institution attended showing all previous course work;
  - Three (3) letters of recommendation;
  - Completed Supplementary Application Form;
  - Official GRE and TOEFL Examination Scores;
  - Immunization requirements for students born after December 31, 1956.
- An application file is valid for one (1) year.

### 3.2.2 Physical Therapy Program Requirements

The following requirements have been established for the Physical Therapy program and are in addition to those of the Arnold School of Public Health. Applicants for the DPT degree in the Department of Exercise Science must have an earned baccalaureate degree in a science-related discipline from an accredited institution and will reviewed for admission by the core faculty. The following items must be submitted prior to an application being considered for admission.

- A completed Graduate School application and supplemental application for the Physical Therapy Program and the required, non-refundable application fee.
- Three letters of recommendation. These letters should be from one individual familiar with the applicant's academic abilities, one from an individual familiar with the applicants clinical skills and one individual that can comment on the applicants graduate/research or interpersonal skills.
- A formal writing sample completed on a topic and form provided by the Physical Therapy Program.

The applicant's transcripts, regardless of major, must demonstrate successful completion of the following prerequisites;

	Credit hours
General Physics.....	8*
Elementary Statistics.....	3
Chemistry.....	8*
Anatomy and Physiology.....	8*
Biology.....	8*

\* Course must include a laboratory

In rare instances core faculty can waive a prerequisite if the applicant demonstrates proficiencies in a specific content area. Applicants interested in obtaining such a waiver should contact the program director for the appropriate procedures for submitting such a request.

In addition to meeting the academic requirements for admission into the DPT degree, students enrolled in the program must provide evidence of an annual tuberculosis screening, vaccination

against diphtheria and tetanus within the last 10 years and Hepatitis B virus immunization. Student's must complete and maintain CPR certification by either the American Red Cross or American Heart Association.

### **3.2.3 Admission Criteria to the Physical Therapy Program**

The Admission Committee of the core faculty makes admission decisions. Admission decisions are made after reviewing a completed admission file and are based on the applicants academic credentials and personal work experiences.

#### **3.2.3.1 Academic Credentials**

The initial phase of the admission process is designed to insure that students enrolled in the DPT program possess the academic credentials to successfully complete the program of study. A number of criteria are used during this phase of the admission process each with a weight assigned by the core faculty prior to the admissions process. Criteria used during the initial phase of the admission process (weighting is determined by the core faculty each admission cycle) includes:

***Undergraduate Grade Point Average (GPA)*** Applicants total GPA for credit hours taken at the undergraduate level. Students that have taken graduate work will have that work considered.

***GPA of Prerequisite Course Work*** The applicant's GPA calculated on the prerequisite courses required for admission into the DPT program.

***Graduate Record Examination Scores*** Combined quantitative, verbal scores and the writing score on the applicant's graduate record examination.

Values for each of the criteria are entered into a formula to produce an admission score that is used for evaluating applicants.

#### **3.2.3.2 Professional Experiences**

The second phase of the admission process is designed to evaluate the applicant's personal characteristics and previous professional and work experiences. This phase of the admission process is designed to identify applicant's that possess the characteristics to make successful professionals.

During the admissions process core faculty may subjectively evaluate a number of factors that may be considered for admission. Student's previous graduate study/graduate degree, research experience and/or relevant work/life experiences may be given priority in the admissions process. The core faculty on an individual basis will evaluate applicants possessing such experiences and consider this information in its deliberations. It is the intent of this subjective process to consider an applicants demonstrated desire and efforts to seek admission to the program and not to "substantially change" the academic standards of the program.

Criteria to be used during the second phase of the admission process are more subjective and include;

***Graduate Study / Graduate Degree*** Applicant's with previous graduate study or a graduate degree will be given credit for their experience based on the extent and quality of their course

work and/or degree attained.

**Research Experience** Applicant's with previous experience (graduate and undergraduate) collecting, analyzing and preparing written reports of research will be given credit for the quality of their experience(s).

**Previous Work Experience** Applicant's with post graduate work will be given credit for this experience. Work in a rehabilitation field will be weighted greater than non-related work experience.

**Letters of Recommendation** The information provided in the recommendations will be evaluated and used in the selection process. This may include follow up contact with an applicant=s recommendations.

**Interview Results** Interviews are only used when the core faculty requests an interview with the applicant. Interviews are informal and allow faculty and applicant to gain greater insight their potential role as a student in the physical therapy program.

### 3.2.4 Transfers

The DPT Program does not accept transfer students from other programs. All students must complete the program of study as defined.

### 3.3 Criminal Background Checks

Prior to admission to the physical therapy program and/or starting a clinical internship with a contracted/affiliated hospital or healthcare facility, students are required to undergo a background check\_ to enhance patient safety and protection. In compliance with this requirement, the USC DPT program has established the following policy.

1. USC DPT program requires that admitted students undergo a background check prior to matriculation.
2. A private company approved by the University of South Carolina to perform background checks will conduct these checks.
3. The student has the responsibility to initiate the procedures to obtain the background check.
4. The background check may include, but not be limited to, one or more of the following checks:
  - a) Criminal Record Check for all locations of residence for previous seven years from addresses disclosed as part of the application process;
  - b) Statewide Sexual Offender and/or Sexual Predator Registry – A database search for individuals registered as sex offenders and/or sexual predators in the selected state or jurisdiction for all locations of residence for the previous seven years;
  - c) Health and Human Services (HHS), Office of the Inspector General (OIG), General Services Administration (GSA) List, Persons or entities listed as excluded from

- participation in Medicaid, Medicare and Federal Health Care Programs. Debarment actions on the HHS/OIG/GSA lists ;
- d) Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) Terrorist Search, Specially designated nationals and blocked persons as determined by OFAC;
  - e) Social Security Report, Names, addresses, and employment associated with a social security number. ;
5. The background check vendor will provide a report to USC Human Resources who will forward results to the DPT Clinical Director (ACCE).
  6. Information from the background check may be used to advise the student regarding their admission or continuance status in the USC DPT program, but only after consultation with the student and University officials.

### **PROCESS**

1. USC DPT program will notify all newly admitted students of the new requirement that they must have an approved background check prior to matriculation.
2. USC DPT program will notify all enrolled students of the new requirement that they must complete a background check prior to being placed (as part of their training) in an affiliated healthcare facility.
3. Students must complete an authorization and release to initiate the background check. This document is available on the University's Human Resources website at: <http://hr.sc.edu/forms/bkgrndAuthStu.pdf>
4. Upon completion of the authorization and release the student must submit the form to the DPT Clinical Director.
5. The report will be delivered to the DPT Clinical Director, and will be available for review by the student upon request.
6. Any finding from a student background check will be discussed with the student to allow the student to explain the results. The authorized individual representing the DPT program, either the DPT Program Director or DPT Program Clinical Director (ACCE) will consult legal counsel to discuss the findings of the background check. Certain findings in a background check could preclude participation in clinical education at certain training facilities and may also preclude licensure as a physical therapist in the state of South Carolina. If it is likely that a student may pose a threat to the welfare of patients or that a student will be unable to complete the clinical education portion of the curriculum, the student may be denied admission or continuance in the USC DPT Program.
7. Once the background check is done, additional background checks will only be performed when the student self reports a violation or when the clinical facility requires a more recent or more extensive background check. In the event that a facility requires more extensive background checks, the student must follow the facility procedure if the student wishes to do an internship in that facility. Prior to any individual clinical internship, each student will complete a form affirming the absence or presence of any criminal convictions since the last background check.

8. Background check reports will be stored in a locked file in the DPT Clinical Director's (ACCE's) office

### **3.4 Drug Screening**

Drug Screening is performed only at the request of institutions that clinically educate our students. Results are forwarded to the institution.

In the event that a clinical education site requests a drug screen, the USC DPT Program will follow this procedure.

1. A private company approved by the University of South Carolina to perform drug screens will perform these screens.
2. The student has the responsibility to initiate the procedures to obtain the drug screen.
3. The type of drug screen will be individualized to the clinical site's request.
4. The drug screen vendor will provide a report to USC Human Resources who will forward results to the DPT Clinical Director (ACCE).
5. Information from the drug screen may be used to advise the student regarding their continuance status in the USC DPT program, but only after consultation with the student and University officials.

### **PROCESS**

- USC DPT program will notify a student of drug screens that are required by their clinical site prior to the clinical internship in the affiliated health care facility.
- Students must complete a Chain of Custody Form that authorizes collections of specimens and release of test results to the University of South Carolina. This document is available from the University's Human Resources department located in the Osborne Building, Suite 207.
- The student completes the drug screen at an approved site.
- The results will be delivered to the DPT Clinical Director, and will be available for review by the student upon request.
- Any finding from a student drug screen will be discussed with the student to allow the student to explain the results. The authorized individual representing the DPT program, either the DPT Program Director or DPT Program Clinical Director (ACCE) will consult legal counsel to discuss the findings of the drug screen. Certain findings in a drug screen could preclude participation in clinical education at certain training facilities and may also preclude licensure as a physical therapist in the state of South Carolina. If it is likely that a student may pose a threat to the welfare of patients or that a student will be unable to complete the clinical education portion of the curriculum, the student may be denied admission or continuance in the USC DPT Program.

## 3.5 Student Responsibilities

### 3.5.1 Professional Organizations

Students enrolled in the DPT program are encouraged to be student members of the national and state chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). Participation in national and state meeting is strongly encouraged. Students attending professional meetings will be excused from class and are required to contact the instructor to make up content. Students presenting at professional meeting will often be provided with financial support to partially cover their expenses. The amount awarded will be individually determined by the core faculty. For additional information or to request funding contact the office of the program director.

### 3.5.2 Academic Responsibility

Students enrolled in the DPT program are governed by the University of South Carolina Code of Academic Responsibility which states; It is the responsibility of every student at the University of South Carolina at Columbia to adhere steadfastly to truthfulness and to avoid dishonesty, fraud, or deceit of any type in connection with any academic program. Any student who violates this rule or who knowingly assists another to violate this rule shall be subject to discipline. <http://www.sc.edu/policies/staf/staf625.html>

### 3.5.3 Attendance

Students enrolled in the DPT program are expected to attend, and be on time, to all classes unless otherwise excused. To be excused you are to notify the instructor of the course (preferably prior to the absence) to document the reason for the absence. Student absent from a class are expected to obtain the content of the class missed. Students exhibiting a pattern of unexcused absences shall be subject to discipline by the DPT faculty.

### 3.5.4 Remediation

Students receiving less than a passing grade (80%) on any major evaluation (written or practical) in a PHYT course will be required to remediate that content. While the content and structure of the remediation sessions are course dependent (determined by the instructor), the remediation grading scale is consistent across all PHYT courses. Course Instructors will have specific remediation policies and procedures that outline the content and structure of remediation for their course. Remediation is considered a second attempt to secure knowledge or clinical skills to insure that you are a safe and competent practitioner. Remediation is not used to replace a poor grade in a class. **Remediation of an evaluation will not change your original score which will be used to calculate your final class average.**

Students are provided only **one attempt** at remediation per exam and if that remediation is not successfully passed, the student may be dropped from the class. **Any subsequent remediations are at the discretion of the core Faculty.** If successful in the remediation, the student will be allowed to continue in the class. If at the conclusion of the semester, your final class average is below 80% **due solely** to remediation in the class, you will receive an average of 80% for the course. A faculty member can use a number of factors to determine your final grade. If other factors (other than those you have remediated) contribute to your final average

falling below the minimum passing grade (80%), the grade for the course will be determined by the instructor using the criteria established for the class.

Students are expected not to exhibit a **pattern** of needing remediation. This might (at the discretion of the core faculty) result in dismissal from the program. All remediations are reported via a centralized reporting system. If a student develops a “pattern” of remediation, defined as greater than three remediations across courses or within a course, he/she is placed on “probation” for the remainder of that semester and the next full semester. If the student needs to remediate another examination during the semester probation period, the student may be dismissed from the Program. The Program Director and the Core Faculty will evaluate each instance independently and determine if dismissal or another action is warranted (ie. failure of the class, establishment of remedial plan).

Remediation is a privilege provided by the faculty and is granted to students enrolled in the DPT program. Core Faculty have the right to withdraw the opportunity for remediation from individual students abusing this privilege. Students having their remediation privilege revoked and not passing an evaluation (written or practical) will fail the class and may be dismissed from the program.

### **3.5.5 Ethical Behavior**

Students enrolled in the DPT program are expected to adhere to the ethical standards of the Physical Therapy Profession. This Code of Ethics, adopted by the American Physical Therapy Association, shall be binding on all students enrolled in the DPT Program.

[http://www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Policies\\_and\\_Bylaws1&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=730120](http://www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Policies_and_Bylaws1&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=730120)

#### **PRINCIPLE 1**

Physical therapists shall respect the inherent dignity and rights of all individuals

#### **PRINCIPLE 2**

Physical therapists shall be trustworthy and compassionate in addressing the rights and needs of patients/clients.

#### **PRINCIPLE 3**

Physical therapists shall be accountable for making sound professional judgments.

#### **PRINCIPLE 4**

Physical therapists shall demonstrate integrity in their relationships with patients, clients, families, colleagues, students, research participants, other health care providers, employers, payers and the public.

#### **PRINCIPLE 5**

Physical therapists shall fulfill their legal and professional obligations.

#### **PRINCIPLE 6**

Physical therapists shall enhance their expertise through the lifelong acquisition and refinement of knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional behaviors.

### **PRINCIPLE 7**

Physical therapists shall promote organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients/clients and society.

### **PRINCIPLE 8**

Physical therapists shall participate in efforts to meet the health needs of people locally, nationally, or globally.

#### **3.5.6 Dress Code**

Physical therapy is a professional degree and as such, student enrolled in the program are expected to dress appropriately.

##### **Classroom - Lecture**

Students may dress for lectures in casual clothing. Student should refrain from wearing clothes that are excessively worn or tattered. Good judgment should guide the selection of proper dress.

##### **Classroom - Clinical**

Dress is to be appropriate for the class activities. Students should be prepared to uncover the body part to be studied. Lockers are available in the PHRC building.

##### **Clinical Setting**

Students are to follow the dress policy of the clinical site that you have been assigned. Cl's should provide this information to student. On The initial day of your clinical affiliation, students are to dress in a manner that reflects your professional status.

#### **3.5.7 Transmitted Diseases**

Students enrolled in the Physical Therapy program and faculty should be particularly aware of the potential contamination from infectious agents in the health care environment. Students enrolled in the DPT program must comply with the requirements of level 3 risk category of the *Department of Exercise Science Health and Safety Handbook*.

#### **3.5.8 Use of Clinical Classroom**

Students have access to the clinical classroom to practice clinical skills and complete assignments when classes are not scheduled. The following rules govern the use of the clinical classroom.

1. Classroom is to be left neat and clean after use. Wipe down the table and stool when you are finished. Then place the stool upside down on the table and raise the table to its highest position.
2. No food or drink in the classroom.
3. Please remove your shoes and any other items that could puncture the leather prior to using the tables.

4. Do not use any equipment that you have not been instructed on. Do not treat individuals other than those enrolled in the program. Do not use modalities on yourself. If you are not sure, don't do it. Be safe!
5. You should only use the clinical classroom with a partner. Do not use alone unless you are just studying or using models.
6. At night please ensure that each partner gets to their car safely.
7. When using the clinical classroom please keep the door closed and locked. Insure that the door is locked when you leave.
8. Do not allow unauthorized individuals into the clinical classroom.
9. Make sure that all equipment is clean, put away and is turned off when you are completed.
10. Do not share the combination to the room with anyone other than those enrolled in the program.
11. When using the classroom always have a cell phone to use in case of an emergency.
12. **IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY CALL UNIVERSITY POLICE AT 803-777-9111.** (you are in room 309 of the Arnold School of Public Health Research building)

### **3.5.9 Computer Use**

Computers and a printer are available for student use in the Public Health Research Center. The following rules govern the use of program computers.

- Room is to be left neat and clean after use.
- No food or drink in the room.
- When using the computer room please keep the door closed and locked. Insure that the door is locked when you leave.
- Do not allow unauthorized individuals to use the computers.
- Do not share the combination to the room with anyone other than those enrolled in the program.
- Do not place any software or personal files on the computer.
- When done leave the computers on but log out.

### **3.5.10 Use of Electronic Equipment in Classroom**

Computers are allowed in the classroom for the purposes of reviewing power point presentations and taking notes. All other use during class time is prohibited and considered disrespectful to the instructor and the class. A student violating this privilege will be asked to leave class and not be allowed further use of the computer in this class. Repeat violations

across multiple classes will result in the loss of the use of computers in the remainder of the program of study.

All cell phones should be muted prior to each class and texting and the reading of text messages in class is not allowed. Repeat violation in a particular class may result in the student being withdrawn from class.

### **3.6 Academic Responsibilities and Retention**

Students enrolled in the DPT program are required to meet the academic standards of the Graduate School as detailed in the University Graduate Studies Bulletin and those established by the core faculty of the Physical Therapy Program.

#### **3.6.1 Graduate School Requirements**

It is the right and responsibility of every graduate student at USC to own a current copy of the *Graduate Studies Bulletin*. The first part of this document contains general information concerning The University of South Carolina and The Graduate School. The *Graduate Studies Bulletin* also includes a complete section of specific information on the School of Public Health; graduate degrees offered by the Department of Exercise Science; and a description of graduate courses.

A one-page handout entitled *Excerpt of Graduate School Regulations* is also available from The Graduate School. This document includes general information as well as information on grading, residency, advisement, registration, programs of study, theses/dissertations and graduation.

#### ***The student should read and be familiar with these documents!***

##### Grade Point Average

The student must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on all courses attempted for graduate credit. The student must also maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a 4.0 scale on all courses numbered 700 or above.

##### I (Incomplete) to F

An "I" is a temporary mark that may be assigned at a professor's discretion to allow a specified additional time to finish course requirements following illness, accident or unusual hardship. **A grade of "I" is converted to a grade of "F" after one (1) year.**

##### Program of Study Form

The program of study lists all courses that a given student must complete as a part of the degree to which he or she has been admitted. The student, the student's liaison and the graduate director in accordance with the graduate curriculum must endorse the program of study for the Department of Exercise Science. **The approved program of study should be submitted not later than the student's second semester of study to the Graduate School for review and approval by the Graduate Dean.**

#### **3.6.2 Physical Therapy Retention Criteria**

Physical Therapy is a clinical profession and therefore it is vital to public safety that program faculty are assured that students progressing to their clinical experiences and those entering the profession have the skills necessary to practice in a safe and ethical manner consistent with contemporary practice. For this reason, core faculty of the DPT program have established formal academic standards of performance beyond those of the Graduate School and a method by which a faculty members concerns regarding a student's professional behavior and/or academic performance may be reviewed. Students not meeting these standards of performance will not be retained in the program of study. The core faculty makes all retention decisions. Dismissal from the program is a major decision and will usually only be made when other attempts at resolving the problem have failed.

### 3.6.2.1 Academic Standards

- Successful completion of the program of study requires that students must receive minimum grade of >B= or 'Pass' on all courses identified with a PHYT delimiter. All other courses in the program of study must be passed with minimum grade of 'C' or 'Pass' (within the rules of the graduate school). **All other grades (incomplete or withdraw) will be considered as not successfully completed.**
- Progress through the DPT program is dependent upon successful completion of each course at the time that it is offered in the program of study. Courses are sequenced in the curriculum to build upon the knowledge gained in previous courses. For this reason, students **not successful in completing a course** may be restricted from taking additional courses until that coursework is re-mediated. This may result in the student's graduation being delayed. Faculty will review each case individually and notify the student of his/her right to enroll in additional coursework prior to the semester following the deficient course work. Possible decisions that may be made by the faculty include, but are not limited to the following:
  - Continue in the program and re-mediate the deficient course while remaining on track in the program of study.
  - Continue in the program but only be allowed to enroll in classes identified by the core faculty.
  - Suspension from the program with return to the program the next time the deficient course is offered.
  - Dismissal from the program
- Faculty members establish the grading policies and procedures for individual courses. In establishing these grading policies, faculty members must insure student mastery of all course work. Students not demonstrating mastery in specific aspects of the course may, at the decision of the faculty member be provided remedial work. The opportunities for remedial work may be limited and if available will be delineated in the grading section of the course syllabus. Remedial work may or may not be considered in assigning a final grade by the course instructor.
- Students are not expected to **exhibit a pattern** (as determined by the core faculty) of needing remedial work within a course and/or across courses in the program of study. Students needing remedial work on a regular basis should be referred by the student's liaison to the core faculty for consideration. Faculty will review the student's academic performance (usually across two or more

semesters) and meet with the student to discuss their progress in the program of study. Faculty may take action to insure a student's clinical competence that may include, but not limited to the following.

- Re-taking of selected segments of courses or complete courses within the program of study.
  - Completing additional assignments selected to demonstrate clinical competence
  - Development of a plan for a student's continued progress in the program of study.
- Unsuccessful completion of any PHYT course retaken for re-mediation will automatically result in dismissal of the student from the program
  - Students at the conclusion of the summer semester of Year 03 will be required to pass a comprehensive examination. The comprehensive examination for the DPT program will consist of multiple-choice questions. The exam focuses upon the student's master of clinical knowledge and practice. The passing grade for the exam will be established each year by taking the mean class grade + 2SD. Students not passing the comprehensive examination will be required to retake it. Students are allowed to take the comprehensive examination a maximum of three times. A second failure will require the student to take an oral exam prepared and graded by the core faculty. Pass or failure of the oral examination will be determined by the subjective assessment of the core faculty. Failure to pass the oral examination will result in the student not being retained by the program.
  - Students must meet the deadlines established for the research component of the program of study. Those students not meeting these deadlines must be reported by the faculty member responsible for their research to the core faculty for action. As a general rule students are not allowed to fall one semester behind the specified deadlines. Actions taken by the core faculty may include, but are not limited to the following:
    - Suspension from the program including all course work and clinical experiences until the research deadlines are met.
    - Dismissal from the program of a student not progressing in a timely manner.
  - Students receive midterm and final evaluations of clinical performance in all clinical courses. In the PHYT 850 course, the CI rates the student using the *PHYT 850 Part-time Clinical Evaluation Checklist* (pp 75-80 of 93 of *Clinical Education Guide* <http://www.sph.sc.edu/dpt/pdf/Manual1%20chng%20839%20PM%20Feb%204%202007.pdf>). In all other clinical courses the CI rates the student using the *CPI*. Both students and CIs are provided with the *Expected Level of Performance on Each CPI Criterion at End of Clinical Experience* (p 82 of 93 of *Clinical Education Guide*). This provides information regarding the expected final level of performance during the PHYT 851, 852, and 853 internships. The Clinical Grading Policy is outlined in page 83 of *Clinical Education Guide*.

In the Clinical Education Policies and Procedures section of the *Clinical Education Guide* (pp13-16), policies and procedures are detailed for 1) Clinical Problems and 2) Repeat or Extension of a Clinical Course. Clinical problems should ideally be resolved by the student and clinical instructor, but the CCCE and ACCE may also become involved in the attempted resolution of clinical problems not handled successfully at the student/CI level or in specific cases where this is not the appropriate level for resolution of the problem. Actions taken by the ACCE with the support of the core faculty include but are not limited to:

- A clinical course may be extended by the ACCE to allow extra time to gain cognitive, psychomotor, and affective mastery of clinical skills.
- A clinical course may also be repeated but a student may only repeat one clinical course.
- Dismissal from the program

### 3.6.2.2 Professional Standards

Faculty, staff and other students may notice the action of a student enrolled in the program of physical therapy that may result in behavior that may be considered unethical or professional. In addition, a student may experience academic problems with selected course content. Independent observations of isolated events may not be sufficient to draw attention to a larger potential problem. For this reason, collective observations may assist in the identification of a significant problem and indicate a need for external assistance.

Faculty and staff of the program of physical therapy program have established a policy and procedure for assisting students exhibiting behavioral or academic problems. The objectives of this program are:

- The early identification of students exhibiting behavioral and/or academic problems that will be detrimental to their progression in the academic program or practice as a physical therapist.
- The development of a remedial plan of action designed to assist a student in managing and addressing behavioral or academic problems.
- Although one isolated incident may not rise to the level of dismissal from the program, a **pattern** of unprofessional behavior may result in sufficient cause for dismissal

The following procedures should be followed by faculty, staff or students who observe unprofessional behavior or academic problem on the part of a student enrolled in the physical therapy program.

1. An individual who observes a unusual behavior or poor academic performance, physical signs, emotional signs, or inappropriate social interactions should complete the Report Behavioral or Academic Problems Form. This form can be obtained from the office of the Director of the Physical Therapy.
2. The completed form should be returned to the office of the Director of Physical Therapy. The confidentiality of the respondent will be assured.

3. Upon receipt of a completed form the Director of the Physical Therapy Program will schedule an interview with each respondent
4. The Director of the Physical Therapy Program will maintain a confidential file of all submitted forms. In evaluating the nature of an individual students problem, the Director will evaluate the number of forms submitted on a student, the nature of the submitted reports and any additional information obtained from the respondent interview.
5. The Director of the Physical Therapy Program will inform the student of the reported problem and meet with the student and the student will have the right to rebut the observations/assertions.
6. The Director of the Physical Therapy Program will synthesize all relevant information and submit a report to the core faculty and solicit input regarding the appropriate steps for providing assistance to the involved student.
7. The Director of the Physical Therapy program will prepare a final report and define the steps to be taken to resolve the problem. A meeting will be held with the involved student to summarize the report and provide an opportunity for assistance. Both the student and Director will sign the report. The report will be placed in the student file and destroyed upon completion of the remedial steps. If the student does not agree with the report or the remedial step he/she may request a hearing with the School of Public Health Grievance Committee.
8. Students may also be referred to additional support agencies on campus including the Counseling and Human Development Center (Student Health Services) for professional and personal problems and Educational Support Services (Office of Student Development) for problems related to academic skills.
9. The Director of the Physical Therapy Program will establish a regularly scheduled meeting with the student to monitor progress and provide the faculty with relevant information regarding the students progress.

### **3.6.2.3 Appeal Policy**

Students who for reasons above are suspended or dismissed from the program of study have a right of appeal. **Appeals of suspensions or dismissals from the program are conducted by the Arnold School of Public Health Grievance Committee.** Grievance procedures are initiated following the procedures outlines in the Policies and Procedures of the Arnold School of Public Health Grievance Committee (available in the Office of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs of the Arnold School of Public Health). It is important to note that a formal grievance must be submitted to the Arnold School of Public Health Grievance Committee within five (5) working days of the conclusion of any program's procedures.

Students not in compliance with the requirements of the Graduate School should follow the appeal procedures outlined by the Graduate School. Graduate School appeals will be reviewed by the core faculty and a recommendation of the core faculty for action will be forwarded to the Graduate School.

Students not in compliance with the requirements of the Physical Therapy Program must appeal in writing (within two weeks of notification) to the Program Director who will bring the matter to

the Core faculty for complete review. In response to an appeal faculty may take no action and leave the current ruling in place or change or modify the current ruling. For reinstatement dismissal a student must demonstrate extenuating circumstances that **significantly contributed** to their performance.

### **3.7 Assistance**

#### **3.7.1 Insurance**

##### **MALPRACTICE INSURANCE**

Malpractice insurance in the amount of One Million/Three Million dollars of coverage per incidence/occurrence is required for the duration of each clinical experience and is provided by the University of South Carolina doctoral physical therapy program. Additional personal student professional liability coverage can be obtained through Healthcare Providers Service Organization (HPSO). Information regarding this coverage may be found at the website <http://www.hpso.com/students/stucovm3.php3>.

##### **HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE**

Many clinical facilities require a statement of health insurance coverage. Students are responsible for this coverage and will be required to provide the statement if assigned to facilities with this requirement. Failure to provide the required statement of health insurance coverage will prevent the student from attending the required clinical education experience and will likely result in delayed graduation. Students may obtain personal health insurance from a variety of sources. Two such sources are <http://www.stuent-resources.net/top.htm> and <http://www.studentinsurance.com>.

#### **3.7.2 Counseling**

The Counseling and Human Development Center (CHDC) provides: brief out-patient psychiatric intervention; psychological services; including individual and group counseling and biofeedback and psychological testing services; and limited social work support for Columbia campus students. Part of Student Health Services, in the Department of Student Development, the CHDC is committed to the educational, personal, social, and emotional development of every student. Hours are provided between 8:30am until 5:00 pm M-F. The Counseling and Human Development Center is located in the Byrnes Bldg (on Sumter Street across from The Horseshoe) on the 7th floor. Appointments can be made by calling 777-5223.

#### **3.7.3 Financial Aid**

Information regarding financial aid may be obtained from the Office of Student Financial Aid and Scholarships at 803-777-8134 or at their web site <http://www.sc.edu/financialaid/> or by e-mail USCFAID @sc.edu. The contact person for the physical therapy program is Mr Jerel Arceneaux.

#### **3.7.4 Academic Assistance**

The Academic Skills Program offers a wide variety of services designed to help students improve their reading and study skills. Students who are having difficulty with classes as well as students who are more successful may benefit from consultation with or participation in the Academic Skills Program.

Services include: individual skills counseling; study skills presentations; computer-assisted instruction; programs focusing on time management, speed reading and comprehension, test-taking skills and test anxiety reduction, note-taking and listening, vocabulary development, memory improvement, and textbook mastery. Academic assessment, learning-style assessment, and preparation for standardized admissions tests for graduate and professional schools are also available. For more information or to make an appointment call 803-777-6573.

**Additional listing student assistance programs can be obtained at the University web address <http://www.sc.edu/use/current.html>.**

## **4.0 Academic Program**

### **4.1 Program of Study**

Students are required to complete the program of study (i.e. sequence of coursework, clinical experiences and research) documented in the program of study in effect at the time of their enrollment. The program of study of each class is available at the program web site under the year of expected graduation. **It is the responsibility of each student to keep track of their progression and insure they are fulfilling the requirements for graduation.** Prior to graduation the office of the Program Director will check to insure that each student approved for graduation has met the program's requirements.

### **4.2 Clinical Education Requirements**

Students must successfully complete all clinical experiences in sequence. Failure to complete a clinical experience may result in delayed graduation and restrictions placed on academic progression. All clinical experiences must be completed and are regulated by the policies and procedures outlined in the Clinical Education Guide.

### **4.3 Research Project**

Students enrolled in a Doctor of Physical Therapy Program in the Department of Exercise Science of the Arnold School of Public Health must submit an approved research project to the office of the Program Director to satisfy part of the requirements for the DPT degree. This document is the ultimate requirement of the academic program because it remains as a permanent record of the independent research and creative effort that led to your being awarded your DPT degree. Guidelines for conducting and preparing this research project can be obtained from the program web site under the link for current students.

Authorship on any professional dissemination of a research project completed to fulfill the requirements of the program of study should include the committee members directing the project.

## **5.0 Essential Functions**

It is the policy of the Physical Therapy Program at the University of South Carolina to provide **reasonable accommodations** for qualified students with disabilities so they can perform the essential functions required for graduation and the practice of physical therapy. The University of South Carolina Office of Student Disability Services and the Physical Therapy Program make the determination of **reasonable accommodation** jointly. If you need accommodations due to a disability please contact the Office of Student Disability Services at 803-777-6142.

The practice of physical therapy includes the examination, diagnosis, and treatment of people with physical disabilities, movement dysfunction, and pain. Physical therapists must be prepared to conduct in a timely manner a relevant patient examination, evaluate the results of this examination and synthesize these data to establish an accurate diagnosis, prognosis and plan of care, implement an intervention and use the process of re-examination to assess patient outcomes. Physical therapists must also possess the skills necessary to determine when referral of the patient/client to another health care professional is appropriate. Physical therapists must provide evidence that the care that they provide is effective, often through the conduct of clinically-based research.

The Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) accredits professional physical therapy programs and requires that graduates of these programs be able to deliver entry-level clinical services. Graduates of entry-level programs are required to possess a broad base of knowledge and skills requisite for the practice of physical therapy. Physical therapists require the *intellectual - communication, behavioral – social, observational, and motor* abilities to meet the standard of practice.

Certain disabilities can interfere with a student's ability to complete the program of study and acquire the essential functions necessary for the practice physical therapy. **Reasonable accommodation** can be made to compensate for some limitations. However, those that interfere with patient care, safety or require the use of an intermediary may be incompatible with independent professional practice.

The Physical Therapy Program at the University of South Carolina has defined the essential functions of physical therapy as follows.

### ***Intellectual – Communication Abilities***

Intellectual skills include the abilities to recall and comprehend large amounts of didactic information and to apply this information to the examination, evaluation and management of routine and complex physical therapy problems. Effective communication skills enable the physical therapist to elicit appropriate information from patients and to effectively explain examination and treatment procedures.

Some of the skills an individual must be able to demonstrate include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Communicate clearly and in a timely manner with patients, physicians, other health professionals, community or professional groups, and colleagues.
- Report clearly, legibly, and in a timely manner through progress notes in patient charts, reports to physicians, insurance forms, and order forms.
- Respond to such things as a patient calling from behind a curtain, warning calls from anyone, and machine alarms.
- Participate in group meetings to deliver and receive information and to respond to questions from a variety of sources.

### ***Behavioral and Social Attributes***

Students must demonstrate the ability to practice in a professional and ethical manner and possess the emotional stability to practice in a stressful work environment. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, cultural competence and motivation are all personal attributes associated with the practice of physical therapy.

Some of the skills an individual must be able to demonstrate include but are not limited to the

ability to:

- Recognize and respond appropriately to individuals of all ages, genders, races, socio-economic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.
- Cope with the stress of heavy work loads, demanding patients, and life threatening clinical situations.
- Recognize and respond appropriately to potentially hazardous situations.

### **Observational Skills**

Observation is one of the key tools that a physical therapist possesses. To gather data on patient/client condition and to appropriately manipulate machinery are critical to being an effective physical therapist. Some of the skills an individual must be able to demonstrate include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Observe and interpret patient movement, skin condition, safety hazards, and changes in appearance.
- Read and interpret equipment dials, assessment graphs, patient charts, professional literature, and notes from patients, physicians, and other health professionals.

### **Motor Skills**

The practice of physical therapy requires that the practitioner possess the ability to perform basic evaluative and therapeutic procedures that require specific physical skills and stamina (e.g. palpation, transfers, gait training). A therapist must be able to use vision and somatic sensation in the evaluation and treatment of patients. Some of the skills an individual must be able to demonstrate include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Lift, carry, and push patients (150 lbs.) in bed or wheelchairs, heavy equipment, body parts, and patients transferring from bed to chair or mat or be able to instruct others in the activity including proper body mechanics.
- Walk and balance well enough to help patients walk and transfer with or without equipment, and prevent injury to patient and self.
- Palpate anatomical structures and handle injured body parts without causing injury to the subject.
- Exhibit sufficient manual dexterity to manipulate very small equipment, provide support and resistance as needed through complex exercise movements, perform CPR, manipulate dials, and treat acutely ill patients without disturbing sensitive monitoring instruments and lines.
- Provide for the patient's safety and well being in all therapeutic or transporting activities.

## **6.0 Informed Consent**

Physical therapy students are required to sign an "Informed Consent" document detailing the activities they will experience during laboratory courses throughout the program of study and clinical experiences.

The rights and safety of research participants are protected by the policies and procedures set forth by the [Office of Sponsored Programs and Research](#) in [Section SPAR 1.03](#) of the [University of South Carolina Policies and Procedures Manual](#). All research conducted by students enrolled in the Physical Therapy Program involving human and/or animal subjects is conducted under the guidelines and review of the [Institutional Review Board](#). (IRB Assurance Number FWA 00000404 and Animal Welfare Assurance Number A3049-01).

All researchers (faculty and students) must successfully complete an online [tutorial](#) regarding

conducting human research prior to submitting an [\*Institutional Review Board Application\*](#) for approval. If research is conducted in a clinical facility not affiliated with the University of South Carolina, students must obtain IRB approval from both the University and that facility prior to data collection.

The University recognizes that laboratory animals are sentient creatures. Their use is a privilege accompanied by an ethical and legal obligation for their humane care and handling. Individuals whose work requires them to use animals in research or instruction must understand and be committed to fulfilling the legal and moral responsibilities of such use. The University of South Carolina endorses the *Principles for the Care and Use of Laboratory Animals of the National Institutes of Health*; has implemented the recommendations of this document, and is complying, and will continue to comply, with the *Animal Welfare Act* and other applicable statutes and regulations concerning the care and use of laboratory animals. Students using laboratory animals for research must complete [\*in-service training\*](#) on the care and handling of animals and be granted approval.

## **7.0 Program Complaints**

There are several methods by which individuals can submit a complaint or comment regarding the Physical Therapy Program at the University of South Carolina its faculty, staff or student

### **7.1 Making a Complaint or Comment**

#### **For Complaints or Comments Regarding the Program's Accreditation.**

The Physical Therapy Program at the University of South Carolina is an accredited program by Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) a nationally recognized accrediting agency. As part of the accreditation process, the Physical Therapy Program is encouraged to provide a method by which the general public and academic community can file a formal written complaint regarding any aspect of the program or the conduct of one of its faculty/students.

You can provide the accrediting agency with written testimony regarding the program or file a formal complaint following the procedures detailed at the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education's web site or by directly contacting: American Physical Therapy Association, Attention: Accreditation Department, 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-1488; Fax: 703/706-3387; or e-mailed to [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org).

CAPTE Web Site:

[http://www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=General\\_Information&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=32324](http://www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=General_Information&TEMPLATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&CONTENTID=32324)

#### **For Informal Complaints of Comments That You Wish to Bring to our Attention.**

Informal comments or complaints regarding the program can be made through the office of the Chairman of the Department of Exercise Science. Individuals wishing to make a complaint or comment about the program, its faculty or students may do so following these procedures:

- Detail your complaint in a brief narrative. Identify all the important details and identify those individuals involved.

- Provide dates when applicable.
- Provide details regarding your role in the complaint/comment.
- Give suggestions as to how you believe the complaint/comment should be resolved.
- Provide steps that you have taken to resolve the issue.
- Give contact information so that we may get back to you. When possible your identity will be kept confidential

Complaints and Comments can be mailed to the Chairman, Department of Exercise Science, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina, Columbia, SC 29208. Fax: 803/777-8422; or e-mailed to [ldurstine@gwm.sc.edu](mailto:ldurstine@gwm.sc.edu). Once you have submitted your complaint or comment you can expect to be contacted to obtain additional information. You will be notified regarding the action taken in response to your concern.

### **For Formal Complaints Regarding the Physical Therapy Program.**

There are established procedures for filing formal complaints about the program, its faculty and students. If the nature of a concern is major and you desire to file a formal complaint with the University, you are urged to contact the Office of the Dean, Arnold School of Public Health, University of South Carolina 29208 to discuss the nature of your complaint and to determine what procedures should be taken to initiate the formal complaint process.

### **For Complaints that Fall Outside the Normal Mechanisms Listed Above.**

The Program also has a mechanism for individuals to submit complaints about the program outside the normal mechanisms of due process. Informal complaints regarding the program may be submitted at any administrative level; they are documented on a **Documentation of Complaint Form** and submitted to the desired administrative level (i.e. program director, chairman of the Department of Exercise Science, dean of the Arnold School of Public Health)

#### **7.2 Resolution of the Complaint**

Formal complaints or comments forwarded to CAPTE or through the Universities due process procedures will be resolved following the policies and procedures of the agency to which the complaint or comment was submitted.

Informal complaints of comments will be investigated by the Office of the Chairperson of the Department of Exercise Science who will make recommendations to the Core Faculty and Program Director. Individuals submitting a complaint or comment will expect receive a written explanation of the action taken resulting from the submission within thirty (30) days.