

MINIMUM TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS FOR ADMISSION AND CONTINUATION

Read this information sheet carefully and retain for your records

Introduction

Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act require that no qualified individual with a disability shall, by reason of such disability, be excluded from participation in or denied the benefits of SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University's services, programs or activities or be subjected to discrimination by SUNY Downstate. The term "qualified individual with a disability" means an individual with a disability who, with or without reasonable modifications to rules, policies, or practices, the removal of architectural, communication or transportation barriers, or the provision of auxiliary aids and services, meets the essential eligibility requirements for the receipt of services or for participation in programs or activities. The Committee on Admissions and Academic Standing will not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. Students must be able to perform the essential functions of the program in order to meet certain minimum academic and technical standards.

Technical Standards and Essential Functions

The goal of the Physical Therapy Program at SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University is to educate a competent entry-level physical therapist who can examine, evaluate, and provide a diagnosis, prognosis, plan of care and appropriate intervention for the general population of acute and rehabilitation patients/clients in current health care settings. Students will be guided to develop critical thinking and clinical decision-making skills based upon evidence-based practice and the ethical standards set for the American Physical Therapy Association. Students are required to successfully complete both the academic and clinical requirements of the program to receive the B.S./DPT degree in Health Sciences and Physical Therapy. In order to carry out the activities described below, candidates for the B.S./DPT degree in Health Sciences and Physical Therapy must be able to consistently, quickly, and accurately learn, integrate, analyze, and synthesize data.

The Physical Therapy Program requires that all candidates and any enrolled students possess the ability to acquire academic knowledge, perform essential functions, and demonstrate professional attitudes and behaviors involved in physical therapy practice.

All candidates for the Physical Therapy Program must meet health and technical standards to gain admission and participate in the Physical Therapy Program. Candidates for the Doctor of Physical Therapy degree must be able to meet these technical standards.

The following standards must be met by all students admitted to the DPT program and candidates for the Physical Therapy degree.

- Observation,
- Communication,
- Motor Coordination,
- Intellectual, including conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities, and • Behavioral and Social.

Performing in a reasonably independent manner is an essential function of the program and profession. The use of a trained intermediary means that the student's judgment must be mediated by someone else's power of selection and observation, and as such is unacceptable.

Observation

Candidates and students must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in basic and applied sciences and foundational courses, as well as in didactic courses in physical therapy theory and practice for normal and pathologic states. Candidates and students must have sufficient vision to be able to observe demonstrations, experiments, and laboratory exercises in the basic sciences.

The candidates and students must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation requires the use of common sense, as well as the functional use of the senses of vision, audition, olfaction, and palpation.

Communication

Candidates and students must be able to communicate, understand and observe patients in order to elicit information, examine patients, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive nonverbal communications. Candidates and students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients/clients and their families. Communication includes not only speech but also reading and writing. Candidates and students must also be able to communicate effectively and efficiently in oral and written form with all members of the health care team in both immediate and recorded modes to convey information for safe and effective care.

Sensorimotor

Candidates and students should have sufficient motor function to execute movements required to provide general care and emergency treatment to patients/clients. Candidates and students should have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients/clients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, manual positioning of body segments and other evaluative procedures. Candidates and students should be able to perform basic screening and examination (including physiological measures such as heart rate and respiration), diagnostic procedures (including palpation, manual muscle testing, goniometry, sensory evaluation, gait analysis, balance assessment), and evaluate EKGs and X-rays. They should be sufficiently mobile and possess the eye-hand coordination and motor strength, to execute movements required to provide general treatment of patients (including transfers) and provide general care and emergency treatment to patients. Examples of emergency treatment reasonably required of physical therapists are cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the application of pressure to stop bleeding. Additionally, students must be able to perform sharp debridement of wounds and other physical assessment maneuvers, where such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscle movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch and vision.

Intellectual, Conceptual, Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

Problem solving is a critical skill required by physical therapists, and requires conceptual, integrative, and quantitative thinking abilities. These abilities include measurement, calculation, memorization, reasoning, analysis, synthesis, and retention of complex information. Problem solving, the critical skill demanded of physical therapists, requires all of these intellectual abilities. In addition, candidates and students should be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

Behavioral and Social Attitude

Candidates and students must possess the emotional health required be able to fully utilize their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgment, promptly complete all responsibilities attendant to the evaluation, diagnosis and care of patients, and develop mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates and students must be able to adapt to changing environments, to display flexibility and to learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. Compassion, integrity, concern for others from all levels of society, respect for human diversity, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admissions and educational process. Candidates and students must demonstrate sufficient emotional health to be able to fully utilize their intellectual abilities and exercise appropriate judgment in a variety of settings with teachers, fellow students, clients, families and colleagues. Candidates and students must possess sufficient interpersonal skills to interact positively with people from all levels of society, ethnic backgrounds, and belief systems.

Candidates and students must demonstrate the ability to use professional touch in interactions with students, faculty, clinical

instructors and patients/clients and their families. This must be demonstrated in coursework and fieldwork. Several laboratory classes require that students practice examination, evaluation or intervention techniques with classmates. It is expected that students will wear specified clothing and/or manually interact with fellow students and teachers of all genders when participating in these practical learning experiences.

Candidates and students are required to demonstrate integrity and act in a manner that demonstrates consciousness of the profession's core values.

Conclusion

The SUNY Downstate Health Sciences University Physical Therapy Program and its sponsoring institution will attempt to develop creative ways of opening the Program to competitive, qualified individuals with disabilities. In doing so, however, the Program and sponsoring institution must maintain the integrity of the curriculum and preserve those elements deemed essential to the education of a Physical Therapist. The Program and sponsoring institution cannot compromise the health and safety of patients. An applicant or student who is unable to meet the minimum academic and technical standards is not qualified for the practice of the profession.

Signature

I have read, understand and agree to the technical standards as published above.

Signature

Date