

## **MERCY COLLEGE – PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF PERFORMANCE**

The intent of the Physical Therapy Program at Mercy College is to prepare graduates to practice in a variety of health care settings with entry-level proficiencies in the interaction, consultation, assessment, evaluation, and treatment of individuals who have experienced illness, disability, disease or impairment. Students are required to complete the academic and clinical requirements of the professional DPT program. The purpose of this document is to delineate the behavioral, communicative, psychomotor, cognitive, and self-care skills deemed essential for completion of the Program and performance as a competent and ethical physical therapist. These essential functions of physical therapy education identify the requirements for admissions, retention, and graduation of applicants and students respectively in the Physical Therapy Program.

If a student cannot demonstrate the following skills and abilities, it is the responsibility of the student to request an appropriate accommodation. The College will provide reasonable accommodation as long as it does not fundamentally alter the nature of the Program offered and does not impose an undue financial hardship or unduly disrupt the educational process.

A. Behavioral/Social Attributes:

The student must:

1. Be receptive to learning, have an ability to retain covered material, and appropriately utilize the information in clinical setting.
2. Demonstrate appropriate levels of compassion, respect, and dignity when observing or treating patients.
3. Recognize and be respectful of individuals of all ages, genders, races, socio-economic, religious, and cultural backgrounds.
4. Tolerate physically taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress.
5. Adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in various clinical settings and the treatment of many patients.
6. Possess sufficient emotional well-being to use their intellectual abilities, exercise sound judgment and develop mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with those encountered in educational and clinical settings.
7. Handle the stresses of an intensive training program by demonstrating effective and adequate coping skills.
8. Respond appropriately in emergency situations, to make quick decisions under stressful situations.
9. Demonstrate consistent timeliness in both educational and clinical environments, including but not limited to always showing up on time and achieving deadlines for assignments.

B. Communication Skills:

The student must demonstrate the ability to:

1. Communicate in English effectively with faculty, peers, patients, staff, physicians, health care team members, and community and professional groups. Such communication includes speaking, reading and writing in English.
2. Communicate with patients in order to elicit information, explain conditions and procedures, and teach home programs, in a timely manner and within the acceptable norms of academic and clinical settings.
3. Recognize changes in mood and perceive nonverbal communications to be able to effectively communicate with peers, faculty, patients, and the health care team.
4. Be assertive, delegate responsibilities appropriately, and function collaboratively as part of a health care team. Such abilities require organization skills necessary to meet deadlines and manage time.
5. Demonstrate interpersonal skills needed for productive classroom discussion, respectful interaction with peers, faculty and clinical supervisors, and development of appropriate therapeutic relationships within clinical settings.

C. Psychomotor Skills:

The student must:

1. Demonstrate the physical endurance to engage in active learning in a full weekend time block (Friday evenings for at least 3 hours., Saturdays and Sundays for at least 9 hours).
2. Provide appropriate strength, force, balance, and coordination to safely assess vital signs, wound status, endurance, segmental length, girth and volume, sensation, range of motion, strength, tone, reflexes, movement patterns, coordination, balance, developmental stage, soft tissue, joint motion/play, pain, cranial and peripheral nerve function, posture, gait, functional abilities, assistive device fit and use, and the pulmonary system, and any other appropriate assessment inherent in physical therapy practice.
3. Perform treatment procedures in a safe manner that is appropriate to the patient's status and desired goals, including but not limited to, exercise, developmental activities, balance training, gait training, coordination training, positioning techniques, self-care activities, joint mobilization techniques, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation.
4. Safely provide assistance required by patients to move in bed, transfer to all development positions on variable surfaces, and to ambulate.
5. Assess changes in muscle tone, skin quality, joint play, kinesthesia, and temperature to gather accurate objective information in a timely manner and monitor that individual's response to environmental changes and treatment and any other appropriate assessment inherent in physical therapy practice.
6. Manipulate common tools used for assessment of the cranial nerves, sensation, range of motion, and blood pressure as well as equipment with gait training, assistive devices, wheelchairs and modalities and any other appropriate tool inherent in physical therapy practice.
7. Travel to lecture, lab, clinical and research locations, and move within rooms as needed for changing groups, partners, and work stations and physically maneuver in required clinical settings to accomplish assigned tasks.

D. Cognitive Skills:

The student must:

1. Demonstrate the mental stamina to engage in active learning in a full weekend time block (Friday evenings for at least 3 hours., Saturdays and Sundays for at least 9 hours).

2. Receive, remember, interpret, and use information in the psychomotor, cognitive and behavioral domains of learning to integrate, analyze and synthesize data needed for the problem solving inherent in physical therapy practice.
3. Perform an evaluation of a patient including analysis of physiological, biomechanical, behavioral and environmental factors in a timely manner, consistent with the acceptable norms of clinical settings.
4. Evaluate results of tests and measures to formulate and execute a plan of physical therapy management in a timely manner, and to reassess and revise plans as needed, consistent with the acceptable norms of clinical settings.
5. Adhere consistently to safety regulations in both classroom and clinical settings; anticipate potentially hazardous situations and takes steps to prevent accidents.

E. Self Care

The student must:

1. Maintain general good health and self care in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals in the academic and clinical settings.
2. Arrange transportation and living accommodations for the academic and clinical aspects of the program that foster on time reporting to class and clinical centers.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am capable of performing the skills and abilities listed above.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not capable of performing all of the skills and abilities listed above and will need appropriate accommodation. (If this is checked you will need to contact the Office of Disability to create an accommodation plan. The College will provide reasonable accommodation as long as it does not fundamentally alter the nature of the Program offered and does not impose an undue financial hardship or unduly disrupt the educational process.)

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date