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**Essential Functions and Requirements of Physical Therapist Education at CSU**  
*Department of Physical Therapy: Technical Standards for Admission, Retention, and Graduation of Candidates*

**Policy**

The Doctor of Physical Therapy Program at CSU (Program) endeavors to select applicants for admission who have the ability to be successful in the curriculum, and to ultimately become entry-level physical therapists. Admission, retention, and progression decisions are based on prior satisfactory academic achievement and non-academic factors, which serve to ensure that the candidate can complete the essential functions of the academic program, required for graduation. The Program has responsibility to the public to assure that graduates can become fully competent and caring professionals, capable of doing benefit and not harm. Therefore, it is critical that persons admitted possess compassion, integrity, intelligence, humanitarian concern, and physical and emotional capacity necessary to practice physical therapy.

The Department of Physical Therapy is committed to the principle of equitable opportunity and does not illegally discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, sex, religion, genetic information, veteran or military status, or any other basis on which the University is prohibited from discrimination under local, state, or federal law, in its employment or in the provision of its services, including but not limited to its program and activities, admissions, educational policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and University-administered programs. Charleston Southern University will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified students. It is the responsibility of the student with a disability(ies) to request reasonable accommodations needed to execute and maintain these essential requirements for the duration of the physical therapy program.

**Program**

The Program adheres to the standards and guidelines set forth by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) to produce qualified graduates. Within these guidelines, the Program has the authority to select and evaluate students, design, implement, and evaluate the curriculum, and award a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) degree. The curriculum requires that students participate in diverse and specific experiences ranging in complexities to acquire entry-level knowledge and skills to function as a safe essential healthcare practitioner. Upon matriculation into this program, the student must have certain qualities and abilities which are necessary to successfully complete the program and ensure the safety of patients, fellow students, faculty, and other healthcare practitioners. These qualities and abilities are referred to as technical standards and are described as the Essential Functions and Requirements of Physical Therapist Education at Charleston Southern University.

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### **Technical Standards**

Technical standards, as distinguished from academic standards, refer to physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and the development of professional attributes required by the faculty of all students at graduation. The essential functions required throughout the curriculum include intellectual/cognitive, behavioral, and social, psychomotor, communication, sensory, and a service-centered acumen.

#### Intellectual & Cognitive

Students must be able to:

- Be purveyors of knowledge by acquiring information.
- Demonstrate the ability to problem solve, think critically, and apply clinical reasoning to actual and simulated patient/client scenarios.
- Comprehend and discern dimensional and spatial relationships of persons and structures.
- Develop and display reasoning and decision-making skills appropriate for safe physical therapy practice.
- Self-evaluate, identify, and communicate limits of one's own knowledge and skills to the appropriate person.
- Identify and use resources to improve knowledge and skills.

#### Behavioral & Social

Students must be able to:

- Display emotional control and poise during times of stress including but not limited to classroom and laboratory activities, written examinations, clinical practical examinations, professional meetings, and formal and informal clinical experiences.
- Demonstrate emotional stability to function effectively under stress and adapt to an environment or situation which may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways.
- Reflects on one's learning and identifies areas of growth.
- Responds appropriately to criticism/feedback and use it to improve knowledge, skills, and behavior.
- Display mature, empathetic, and effective professional relationships by exhibiting compassion, integrity, and concern for others in diverse academic and clinical environments.
- Regularly attend classes, clinical experiences, meetings, arriving on time and prepared.

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### Psychomotor

Students must be able to:

- Demonstrate sufficient motor function to safely execute movements, within reasonable limits, required to guard, resist, move, lift, or transport persons or equipment required in the practice of physical therapy in the classroom and healthcare setting.
- Move her/himself, fellow students, and or patient/client in a three-dimensional space in order to perform motor function tests and therapeutic interventions.
- Perform basic life support including CPR and function in an emergency situation.
- Document in medical records.
- Perform a physical examination using tests and measures common in physical therapy practice.
- Obtain visual, auditory, and tactile information from the patient/client and other sources.
- Manage movement disorders by designing, implementing, and modifying therapeutic interventions.

### Communication

Students must be able to:

- Communicate effectively and sensitively with students, faculty, staff, patient/client, family/caregivers, physician, and other members of the healthcare team using language appropriate terms in English.
- Process and communicate verbal and written information on the patient/client's status with accuracy in a timely manner to physical therapy colleagues, other members of the healthcare team, and family/caregivers considering the needs and cultural values of the listener/reader.
- Recognize distress from others through verbal and non-verbal means and provide timely alert in the event of an emergency.
- Demonstrate a willingness and ability to give and receive feedback.
- Recognize the significance of non-verbal communication from a person with whom an interaction is occurring and possess openness, concern, and sensitivity to cultural differences.

### Sensory

Students must be able to:

- Use visual and auditory senses to sufficiently monitor patient/client responses.
- Demonstrate that speech, language, voice, and resonance are within functional limits to accomplish the tenets of patient/client care.
- Recognize and adjust when a person does not understand the student's written or verbal communication.
- Observe a patient/client accurately from a distance and close to appreciate verbal and non-verbal forms of communication indicating comfort or distress from examination or treatment intervention.
- Perceive signs of disease and infection as manifested from a screen or examination as derived from visual, touch and or auditory information.

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Service-Centered Acumen

Students must be able to:

- Apply the concepts and skills associated with service-learning to challenge them cognitively and developmentally.
- Express strengths and weakness to strategically plan in an organized manner so that she/he functions effectively and efficiently in a group.
- Demonstrate behaviors of collaboration that respects and considers the needs of others as opposed exerting intentions.
- Utilize self-reflection before, during and after service engagement to improve delivery of service.
- Participate in service activities related to personal and professional development.

**Reasonable Accommodation for Disabilities**

Students with disabilities are expected to perform all the essential functions of the program with or without reasonable accommodation. While Charleston Southern University will make every effort to accommodate all students with their disability-related needs, it must be noted that the Program nor the University is required to provide requested accommodations that would fundamentally alter the essential qualifications, functions, technical standards or other academic requirements of the Program, or result in an undue financial or administrative burden.

**Implementation for Admission, Retention, & Graduation**

Faculty will use this document to regularly discuss student performance and abilities to meet essential functions. Faculty advisors, in conjunction with course instructors and the Program Director, will be responsible for monitoring whether the student is meeting the essential functions for the program.

By my signature, I verify that I have read and understand the material presented in this document title: **Essential Requirements of Physical Therapist Education at CSU, Department of Physical Therapy: Technical Standards for Admission, Retention and Graduation of Candidates**. Furthermore, I confirm that I have the ability to perform all the of the above requirements.

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Student Signature

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Date

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Printed Name

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