Pennsylvania College of Technology

A Penn State Affiliate



School of Nursing & Health Sciences
Physical Therapist Assistant
Clinical Education Manual
2026-2027

Welcome

Welcome to clinical education for physical therapist assistant students at Pennsylvania College of Technology (PCT), also known as Penn College. This manual gives clinical instructors the necessary information to provide a valuable and rewarding clinical education experience for both the student and the clinical instructor.

Contained within this manual is information and guidelines for the clinical instructor and the Center Coordinator for Clinical Education (CCCE) for the clinical education component of the PTA program. Please take the time to become familiar with the contents of this manual before the student arrives at your clinical education site. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments.

Thank you for your efforts and contributions to our program.

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Accreditations

College Accreditation

Pennsylvania College of Technology is an accredited institution and a member of the Middle States Commission on Higher Education (MSCHE or the Commission) www.msche.org. Pennsylvania College of Technology's accreditation status is Accreditation Reaffirmed. The Commission's most recent action on the institution's accreditation status on June 23, 2022, was to reaffirm accreditation. MSCHE is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education to conduct accreditation and pre-accreditation (candidate status) activities for institutions of higher education including distance, correspondence education, and direct assessment programs offered at those institutions. The Commission's geographic area of accrediting activities is throughout the United States.

Program Accreditation

The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Pennsylvania College of Technology is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305; telephone: 800-999-2782; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: http://www.capteonline.org. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 570-320-4439 or email pta@pct.edu.

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Mission and Vision

Mission of the Pennsylvania College of Technology

Inspiring and preparing Tomorrow Makers—the next generation of industry leaders—with real-world experience and innovative spirit.

Mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program

The Pennsylvania College of Technology Physical Therapist Assistant program provides student-centered instruction and diverse real-world experiences to prepare graduates to be competent, ethical, and socially responsible PTAs

Vision of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program

To produce innovative practitioners who advocate for the profession and are committed to lifelong learning and social responsibility.

Program Description

The Physical Therapist Assistant program is intended to prepare students to provide physical therapy interventions under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will be prepared to perform select therapeutic interventions, assess patient response, document responses to interventions, and make recommendations for modifications to ensure patient/client safety. Students learn to provide care to people who have had strokes, spinal cord injuries, head injuries, orthopedic and sports injuries amongst others. They are prepared to communicate with the supervising physical therapist, interact with patients, families, and caregivers, and work collaboratively with other healthcare providers. Students provide care in keeping with the ethical standards of the profession, to individuals of all ages with recognition of individual, cultural, and economic differences. Health and wellness promotion as a component of injury and disease prevention is incorporated. Students participate in a student-led Physical Therapy Assistant organization for the completion of a service project. Because of the advancements in medicine and in the physical therapy profession, students are taught to appreciate the need for life-long learning for their own benefit as well as for the benefit of the profession.

PTA Program Goals

The Physical Therapist Assistant program will:

1. Prepare graduates to support the healthcare needs of the community via employment as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist.
2. Graduate entry-level, competent graduates who are prepared to perform at or better than the national average on the NPTE.
3. Provide one continuing education opportunity for the collective faculty and community annually.

Physical Therapist Assistant faculty commit to:

1. Provide a classroom atmosphere that is supportive of student learning, free from discrimination, and respectful of all individuals.
2. Utilize a variety of instructional methods based on evidence and current standards of practice to provide a contemporary PTA curriculum.
3. Demonstrate professionalism through leadership, advocacy, and service.

A graduate of this major will be able to:

1. Demonstrate the knowledge, skill, and professional behaviors needed to provide entry-level care to patients in an ethical, legal, and safe manner.
2. Work collaboratively and effectively under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist to provide care for patients across the lifespan.
3. Select and provide effective physical therapy interventions and data collection measures within the established plan of care.
4. Demonstrate effective oral, written, and nonverbal communication in a culturally competent manner with a diverse population of patients, family, caregivers, and other healthcare professionals.
5. Demonstrate a commitment to professional growth and lifelong learning to promote contemporary evidence-based practice.

Course Sequence

Curriculum

First Semester		Credits
FYE101	First Year Experience	1
BIO115	Human Anatomy and Physiology I	4
ENL111	English Composition I	3
MTR100	Medical Terminology Survey	1
MNA	MTH 123 or higher	3
PSY111	General Psychology	3
	TOTAL CREDITS	**15**

Second Semester		Credits
BIO125	Human Anatomy and Physiology II	4
FITELC	Fitness Elective	1
PTA100	Introduction to PT	3
PTA121	Clinical Kinesiology	4
PTA130	PT Procedure I	4
	TOTAL CREDITS	**16**

Summer Session		Credits
PTA210	Pathology for the PTA	2
CSC124	Information, Technology and Society	3
SPC201	Interpersonal Communication	3
	TOTAL CREDITS	**8**

Third Semester		Credits
PTA215	Level 1 Clinical Experience	2
PTA220	Therapeutic Exercise	3
PTA230	Clinical Neurology	4
PTA226	Physical Agents	3
	TOTAL CREDITS	**12**

Fourth Semester		Credits
PTA250	PT Procedure II	3
PTA261	Rehabilitation	3
PTA265	Orthopedics and Sports in PT	3
PTA241	Professional Issues for the PTA	2
	TOTAL CREDITS	**12**

Summer Session		Credits
PTA270	Level 2A Clinical Experience (7 weeks)	3
PTA275	Level 2B Clinical Experience (7 weeks)	3
	TOTAL CREDITS	**6**
	TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS	**69**

This sequence of courses is considered to be the optimal sequence for completing the required coursework for the PTA program. Each PTA program-specific course is given only once a year and must be taken in sequence.

PTA Course Offerings

An ever-current description of Physical Therapist Assistant courses can be found in the course catalog, which can be accessed at: https://www.pct.edu/catalog/courses/PTA.

Clinical Education Standards and Requirements

Philosophy of Clinical Education

The clinical education experience is an integral portion of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program, enabling the student to put into practice the concepts, skills, problem-solving techniques, and ideas learned in the classroom and lab environments. This provides an opportunity for the student to bridge the gap from the academic to the clinical setting. Didactic learning in the classroom provides the student with a foundation of knowledge and skills for problem solving while laboratory sessions provide practice time to become comfortable with handling skills and assessment with fellow students. The clinical education experience provides an opportunity for integration of that knowledge, skill, safety awareness, clinical problem solving, resource management, and developing professionalism and communication skills under the direction of a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant/physical therapist team in the healthcare setting. Following successful completion of the academic portion of the program, and all clinical education experiences, students become eligible to take the licensure exam or National Physical Therapy Examination.

Purpose of Clinical Education

The purpose of the Penn College PTA program educational process is to produce highly competent entry-level physical therapist assistants who will provide exceptional care to their patients and perform all the duties of a licensed physical therapist assistant under the supervision of a physical therapist. To foster this competence, the students are exposed to clinical settings to perform the appropriate skills, functions, and professionalism necessary to practice as a PTA. The clinical experience is designed to complement academic preparation by integrating knowledge with the application of skills in the clinical setting.

Clinical Education Objectives

The syllabus for each experience may be found on the Pennsylvania College of Technology PTA Program website under the *Clinical Education Resources* tab or at https://www.pct.edu/academics/nhs/physical-therapist-assistant/clinical-education-resources.

Clinical Education Experience Procedures

Selection of the Clinical Education Experiences

The APTA *Guidelines to Promote Excellence in Clinical Education Partnerships* informs the following criteria for the selection of clinical education sites and clinical instructors. The list of guidelines for the clinical site, clinical instructor, and the site coordinator can be found at:

> https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/leadership-and-governance/policies/guidelines-to-promote-excellence-in-clinical-education-partnerships

Scheduling of Clinical Education

Student placements for all clinical education experiences are the responsibility of the Penn College PTA program clinical director. During the second semester of the program, the clinical director meets with students collectively to discuss the clinical education selection process, procedures, and expectations. Availability of clinical placements is based on a site's ability to offer learning experiences that are compatible with the curriculum and the level of education of the student, clinical instructor qualifications, and currency of the Memorandum of Understanding. Each student meets individually with the clinical director and completes a *Clinical Experience Preference Form*, listing one preferred site for each of the following settings: acute, outpatient, and long-term care. Students have access to previous student clinical site evaluation forms and the site's description of the setting to assist them in selecting their preferences.

The clinical director will make every effort to match students with their preferences; however, many factors, including the number of students and the number of qualified sites available, may make this impossible. Students are made aware that they may be expected to travel outside of their geographic locale for clinical education experiences and that driving distances of up to two hours may be necessary. **TRANSPORTATION IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE STUDENT**.

Once a student meets all clinical requirements (e.g., clearances, vaccinations, physical exams) and a clinical placement is assigned, the student will be directed to contact the assigned site to establish initial communications and receive direction. Under no circumstances are clinical sites to be contacted prior to being directed to do so. In addition, students are not permitted to contact potential clinical sites for the purposes of establishing their own placements; all sites must be established and assigned by the program per accreditation requirements.

Preparedness for Full-Time Clinical Experiences

The Penn College PTA faculty will collectively assess each student's preparedness for full-time clinical education at the completion of the didactic coursework. The assessment is based on the following:

- Successful completion of all academic coursework
- Entry-level achievement of the student's professional behaviors as assessed by the faculty on the Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool (PBAT)
- Completion of the first of two Practice Examination and Assessment Tools (PEAT) for the National Physical Therapy Examination

Students who do not meet these criteria will be unable to matriculate to the clinical education experiences and may require remediation as determined by program faculty.

Responsibilities in Clinical Education

Memorandum of Understanding/Clinical Education Agreement

The PTA program maintains a file on all sites with which the College has current Memorandums of Understanding (clinical education agreements). The Penn College PTA program is open to student's requests for additional sites; however, the student may not contact the potential site to request an

agreement. The student may supply the clinical director with contact information for the potential site; the clinical director will follow all leads that may result in a new clinical experience for students. The procedure for establishing a new clinical site is outlined below.

Students are permitted to participate in clinical experiences only at sites in which the college and site have a current signed Memorandum of Understanding.

Maintenance of Current Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and Clinical Education Agreements

To ensure that PTA students are only assigned to clinical facilities that have a current completed MOU, the PTA Clinical Director:

1. Reviews active clinical files each January to ensure the following contents:
    a. Active MOU, including the signature page (Note: the memorandum remains active until one or both parties provide written notification of termination of the contractual agreement.)
    b. Any additional clinical forms required by the clinical facility, including notification of the required background checks, immunization, dress code, etc.
    c. Letters of intent and resumes from clinicians at the site who have agreed to be clinical instructors
2. Follows these steps in the event that a file is found to have outdated information:
    a. Sends an e-mail to the clinical site requesting the necessary updated information within 30 days.
    b. Sends a reminder email, if necessary, after 30 days.
    c. Contacts the CCCE or other clinical contact personnel via telephone if the information has not been received 60 days from the initial email.
    d. Removes the facility from the list of available clinical sites if the necessary information is not provided within 90 days of the initial email.

Establishing a New Clinical Education Site

1. When a new facility agrees to host a PTA student, the clinical director provides the site with a clinical education program information packet that includes the following:
    a. Penn College Memorandum of Understanding for clinical education
    b. Clinical Education Manual
    c. Clinical education course objectives for integrated and full-time experiences
    d. Copy of Penn College liability insurance (upon request)
    e. Sample copy of student liability insurance
    f. Copy of program accreditation
    g. Copies of the Clinical Education Time Sheet, Student Weekly Planning Form, In-service, Evaluation Form, Learning Contract, and Program Evaluation Form for CIs
    h. Clinical affiliation remediation policy
2. When the signed contract is received by the program, the facility becomes an active clinical site.
3. The clinical director follows the procedure (as described above) for maintenance of current memorandums of understanding to ensure that the site remains active.

Responsibilities of the Clinical Director

The clinical director will be responsible for:

1. contacting, developing positive relationships, securing new clinical education sites, and completing all appropriate paperwork;
2. coordinating and developing clinical instructor professional development activities;
3. assessing/determining student preparedness for clinical experience in collaboration with program faculty;
4. meeting with students collectively to discuss requirements and expectations of the clinical education experience;
5. meeting with students individually to discuss clinical site selection and goals related to clinical experience;
6. arranging and coordinating all clinical assignments for students;
7. ensuring that students are exposed to a variety of clinical experiences to best prepare them for entry-level clinical practice;
8. maintaining and updating clinical site database;
9. maintaining and updating memorandum of understanding (clinical contract) database;
10. maintaining and updating Clinical Education Manual;
11. providing access to the current Clinical Education Manual to all clinical instructors, center coordinators of clinical education, and students;
12. ensuring that all student forms and information, including the appropriate clinical education syllabus, is provided to clinical site and clinical instructor 6-8 weeks prior to the first day of a clinical experience;
13. contacting clinical instructor by phone mid-way through clinical experience for each student, or as needed via feedback from clinical instructor;
14. performing a site visit during each clinical experience for every student, or schedule site visits, as needed, or when requested by the student or the clinical instructor;
15. completing and coordinating site visits for Clinical Education I, Clinical Education IIA, and Clinical Education IIB as needed;
16. serving as a resource to the student and the clinical instructor;
17. reviewing and commenting on journal entries from Self-Reflection journal; coordinate follow-up discussion as needed;
18. conferring with the student and the clinical instructor regarding student learning needs and progress toward meeting objectives;
19. facilitating conflict resolution and problem-solving strategies;
20. assessing students' overall clinical performance based on methods of evaluation;
21. ensuring that clinical education sites receive a copy of Penn College's liability insurance on an annual basis if requested;
22. ensuring that clinical education sites and clinical instructors meet selection criteria;
23. participating in and promoting consortia activities for development of clinical education;
24. maintaining compliance with CAPTE standards for clinical education; and
25. participating in state, regional, and national professional activities related to clinical education, and then keeping students, clinical instructors, and CCCEs updated with changes that impact clinical education.

Responsibilities of the Student

In preparation for full-time clinical education experiences, the student must:

1. complete all didactic coursework, including practical examinations, with a grade of C or higher;
2. achieve entry-level status on the Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool, as determined by faculty;
3. complete the first of two Practice Examination and Assessment Tools (PEAT);
4. become credentialed for the use of the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI 3.0) for student evaluation of performance;
5. complete and submit all PTA paperwork to the program office by the deadline determined by the clinical director in compliance with the clinical site affiliation agreements, including:
    - Background clearances
    - Health requirements
    - CPR verification
    - Verification of current personal health insurance
    - Malpractice insurance certificate
    - HIPAA training
    - Additional requirements that are specific to the clinical site. Students are not permitted to participate in clinical education unless all college and site-specific mandates are met
6. contact the clinical education site **two to four weeks** prior to start of the clinical experience to introduce themselves and gather information regarding such details as:
    - Directions to site
    - Parking
    - Housing availability if needed
    - Hours of clinical experience
    - Appropriate dress and personal appearance
    - Preparation reading prior to start of experience
    - Cell phone usage guidelines
    - Expectations of affiliation Site expectations and policies
7. purchase Penn College-approved uniform for clinical experiences. If a clinical site requires a specific dress code, the student will comply with the site's dress code at the student's expense;
8. secure College name tags from the clinical director for use during clinical education;
9. arrange for housing and transportation as needed.

During the Clinical Education Experience:

1. If the clinical site or the clinical instructor has a special area of expertise, or special programs and learning experiences are available, the student is encouraged to participate and take advantage of these opportunities.
2. During full-time clinical experiences, the student is required to present an in-service education session to the staff of the clinical site; topic and time of presentation to be discussed and agreed upon with clinical instructor.
3. Students are required to participate in any learning opportunities outside of the normal clinical day, when able, including professional association meetings, department in-services, professional rounds, staff meetings, etc.

4. Complete all homework and weekly Self-Reflection Journal entry and submit to clinical director on time.
5. Complete Midterm and Final Performance evaluations and discuss with clinical instructor.
6. Complete Clinical Site Evaluation Form and discuss with clinical instructor.

Responsibilities of the Clinical Site

(Reference: APTA Guidelines to Promote Excellence in Clinical Education Partnership HOD G06-19-62-59, 9/19)

All physical therapy education programs, including their clinical partners, are accountable for meeting quality standards. The individual and collective efforts of academic programs and clinical partners shall strive to ensure excellence in education. The following guidelines describe aspects of the clinical partner site, the site coordinator of clinical education (SCCE), and the clinical instructor (CI) necessary to promote excellence in clinical education.

The Clinical Site:

1. Clinical sites engage in collaborative partnerships with academic programs that provide benefit to all stakeholders.
2. The philosophies of the clinical education site and of the provider of physical therapist services and clinical education are compatible with that of the academic institution.
3. Clinical education experiences for students are planned and resourced to meet specific objectives of the academic program, the provider of physical therapist services, and the individual student.
4. Physical therapy personnel provide services in a legal and ethical manner.
5. The clinical education site is committed to the principle of equal opportunity and affirmative action as required by federal legislation.
6. The clinical education site demonstrates administrative support of physical therapy clinical education.
7. The clinical education site has a variety of learning experiences available to students.
8. The clinical education site provides an active, stimulating environment appropriate to the learning needs of students.
9. The clinical education site identifies selected support services available to students.
10. The clinical education site defines and responsibilities of physical therapy personnel.
11. The clinical education site has requisite physical therapy personnel to provide an educational program for students.
12. The clinical education site selects a site coordinator of clinical education (SCCE) based on specific criteria.
13. The clinical education site selects physical therapy CIs based on specific criteria as listed in Section 3: The Clinical Instructor.
14. The clinical education site provides students access to the special expertise of its personnel.
15. The clinical education site encourages clinical educator (CI and SCCE) training and development.
16. The clinical education site supports active career development for its personnel.
17. The clinical education site has an active and viable process of internal evaluation of its affairs an d is receptive to procedures of review and audit approved by appropriate, relevant external age ncies and consumers.

Responsibilities of the Center Coordinator of Clinical Education

(Reference: APTA Guidelines to Promote Excellence in Clinical Education Partnership HOD G06-19-62-59, 9/19)

In preparation for and during clinical education, the SCCE/CCCE:

1. The SCCE is encouraged to be a member of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA), if eligible, and is active in professional activities.
2. Is responsible for coordinating the assignments and activities of students at the clinical education site
3. Demonstrates effective communication and interpersonal skills
4. The SCCE demonstrates effective instructional skills.
5. The SCCE demonstrates effective supervisory skills.
6. The SCCE demonstrates effective performance evaluation skills.
7. The SCCE demonstrates effective administrative and managerial skills.
8. The SCCE seeks opportunities to engage in continuing education related to the roles of supervisor, educator, and/or manager.

Note: If there is no CCCE, the department or facility director is responsible for the items listed above.

Responsibilities of the Clinical Instructor

(Reference: APTA Guidelines to Promote Excellence in Clinical Education Partnership HOD G06-19-62-59, 9/19)

Consistent with APTA guidelines, in preparation for providing instruction to a Penn College PTA student, the CI:

1. Is encouraged to be a member of APTA and active in professional activities
2. The CI demonstrates clinical competence and legal and ethical behavior that meet or exceed the expectations of members of the physical therapy profession.
3. The CI demonstrates effective communication skills.
4. The CI demonstrates effective behavior, conduct, and skill in interpersonal relationships.
5. The CI demonstrates effective instructional skills.
6. The CI demonstrates effective supervisory skills.
7. The CI demonstrates effective performance evaluation skills.
8. The CI seeks opportunities to engage in continuing education related to the role of an educator

Qualifications of the Clinical Instructor

In order to serve as a clinical instructor for PTA students at Penn College, the physical therapist or physical therapist assistant must meet the following qualifications:

1. Clinical instructor is a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant with a minimum of one year of full-time (or equivalent) post-license clinical experience
2. Clinical instructor is an effective role model and clinical teacher

Clinical Education Requirements

Health Requirements

The student must complete the Penn College Health Questionnaire Form and submit it to College Health services before the first day of the fall semester to ensure that all of the necessary requirements have been met prior to beginning course work. Any questions regarding this can be directed to College Health Services at (570)320-5234.

The following requirements must be met in order to participate in all clinical education experiences:

- Physical Exam annually. To help save on costs, students are encouraged to compare the cost of services from their regular provider to those offered here at College Health Services.
- Hepatitis B series of vaccinations
- Hepatitis B titer results
- 2-Step PPD (updated annually)
- Tdap vaccination for Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Pertussis
- Current Tetanus vaccination
- MMR including titer
- Mumps and varicella titer
- Flu Shot

Clinical Education sites may have other requirements or time frames. The student will be made aware of any variances from these stipulations and will be responsible for adhering to any specific site mandates. If a student has a positive drug screen or history of a positive drug screen, the site may refuse placement.

Guidelines for Student Drug Testing

Every student who enters into the technical component of a Nursing & Health Sciences program at Pennsylvania College of Technology will be required to submit to testing, in keeping with the *School of Nursing & Health Sciences Drug and Alcohol Policy.* Please see the section Drug and Alcohol Policy below for a link to the full policy.

Drug and Alcohol Policy

The Penn College PTA program maintains a drug-free learning environment. Within this environment, alcohol, illegal drugs, and legal drugs obtained without a prescription or which may impair a student's ability to perform his/her educational responsibilities are strictly prohibited. This extends to the clinical education site as well. Use of marijuana for medicinal purposes, even if a student has a medical marijuana card, is prohibited for all students of the PTA program.

Background Checks

All students are required to have a criminal background check prior to the first integrated clinical experience and then again prior to the final two full-time clinical experiences. All records will be maintained in the student's file in the physical therapy office. In addition, students will send all background checks to their respective clinical education sites prior to start date of the experience. Any affiliation site reserves the right to refuse placement of a student with a positive criminal background check. All clearances are to be completed in accordance with the Nursing and Health Science guidelines.

Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation

All students are required to maintain current CPR certification through the American Heart Association throughout the duration of the PTA program and each clinical assignment. Proof of certification will be kept in the student's file. CPR classes through the American Heart Association are offered through the Health Sciences School and the PTA program on a yearly basis for a fee payable to Penn College: Workforce Development.

Professional Liability Insurance

The APTA, Penn College, and the clinical site require students to carry professional liability insurance. The minimum coverage limits of $1,000,000 per occurrence and $3,000,000 annual aggregate is required throughout the program. Proof of insurance coverage must be provided to the clinical director prior to clinical education assignments. Information on obtaining insurance is provided to all students. A student who does not provide proof of insurance is not permitted to participate in the clinical education opportunity. The program makes this insurance available from an established agent through the PTA program.

Personal Medical Insurance

Students are required to carry personal health insurance. Current proof of insurance must be submitted to program prior to all clinical education experiences. The student must also supply the clinical director with the expiration date of the insurance policy to assure currency of coverage. Health insurance coverage identification card should also be in the possession of the student during clinical experiences. In the event that insurance changes, updated insurance information must be given to the PTA department and current clinical site for keeping records up to date.

Name Tags

A College-provided name tag must be worn at all times for all clinical education experiences. This ensures proper identification for security purposes and entitles the student access to the clinical site. The use of a name tag also identifies the personnel providing the care to all patients and protects the student from being accused of interpreting himself/herself as a PT or PTA. Penn College will provide two name tags prior to the start of the clinical education experience. One name tag spells the student's entire name and the other displays only the first letter of the last name. The tag that meets the requirement of the site should be worn during clinical hours. If a tag should be lost, it is the student's responsibility to pay for a replacement tag. The clinical site may also require that the student wear a facility name tag.

Guidelines for Dress Code for Clinical Education

Students are expected to dress and maintain proper hygiene throughout the clinical education experience. All dress should be in accordance with the policy of the site. This includes good personal hygiene and being neatly dressed and groomed.

Students are required to meet the following dress code standards:

- Penn College embroidered scrubs tops and bottoms with a Penn College jacket (optional) issued by the College Bookstore are required
- Layering of a matching shirt under the scrub top is permitted

- Some clinical sites require an alternate dress code. Students are subject to the requirements of the clinical site and may be required to purchase additional uniforms
- Closed-toed shoes and socks are required. Clean athletic shoes are permitted.

Personal Grooming

The following standards must be met by all students:

- Hair should be clean and not interfere with the provision of care. Hair color and hairstyle must be of natural appearance. Long hair must be pulled back if interferes with treatment implementation.
- Individuals with facial hair should be neatly shaven and/or trimmed and clean.
- Due to environmental allergies or patient sensitivities, no perfumes or aftershaves shall be worn.
- Fingernails must be clean and well-trimmed, not extending past the fingertips. No artificial nails, nail wraps, nail tips, or other nail jewelry or gems.
- The student should not wear any jewelry that may interfere with treatment. Students are required to remove all jewelry from eyebrows, lips, and/or tongue. No gauges or large hoops in ears are acceptable. A small "stud" nose piercing no larger than 1.5 mm is acceptable.
- No offensive tattoos, including tattoos of nudity, profanity, or of a discriminatory nature are permitted and must be covered at all times.

Cell Phones and Other Personal Electronic Devices

The student is expected to remain in compliance with the clinical site's guidelines for cell phone and other electronic device usage. It is the student's responsibility to discuss the appropriate use of a cell phone as permitted by the CI and the facility. If the facility does not have a specific policy regarding cell phone usage, all cell phones or other electronic devices must be turned off upon arrival at the clinical site and only utilized during lunch break.

In-Services

Students are required to present an in-service educational session during each of their two full-time clinical education experiences, or as directed by the facility. The topic and date of the presentation will be chosen in collaboration with the CI. The topic should be mutually beneficial for the student and the clinical staff at the site. Example topics could include new interventions, an uncommon pathology, or research about a procedure.

Following the in-service presentation, the student will request that the clinical site staff in attendance provide feedback using the *Student In-service Feedback Form* located under *Clinical Education Resources* on the PTA webpage or visit: https://www.pct.edu/academics/nhs/physical-therapist-assistant/clinical-education-resources. Feedback to students includes the content of the material presented and the ability to teach the chosen topic.

Homework and Clinical Education Assignments

The student is expected to come to the clinic prepared each day. At the discretion of the clinical instructor, the student is responsible for all assigned homework that the instructor feels will enhance the learning experience in the clinic. The student is responsible for the investigation of knowledge and information of areas that will assist the patient/client and help the student to fully understand the

patient's problem. The instructor will take responsibility for homework and discussions related to homework.

The student is responsible for weekly documentation on the *Weekly Planning For*m. The purpose of this form is two-fold:

1. Facilitate student self-reflection regarding strengths, areas to work on, and goals for the following week. The clinical instructor also makes comments regarding progress.
2. Foster communication with the CI to enhance the learning experience in areas of professionalism and communication, handling skills, clinical problem solving, documentation, and other areas of physical therapy.

In addition, each student is required to complete a weekly entry in a self-reflection journal. The purpose of this journal is to help each student synthesize the material learned in the classroom with patient interventions in the clinical setting in "real-life" situations. Although the population of individuals being treated will be similar, the experiences each student will have will be vastly different. This will also provide an opportunity for the student to articulate thoughts regarding the clinical experience in order to achieve the best possible learning experience. The journal entry will be submitted to the clinical director at the end of each week for grading.

Expenses

The student is responsible for all expenses incurred in preparation for clinical education, including professional liability insurance, CPR certification, vaccinations, medical insurance, drug testing, malpractice insurance, and criminal background clearances. The student is also responsible for the cost of Penn College PTA scrubs and any site-specific uniforms for participation in clinical education.

The student is responsible for all transportation costs and housing costs during clinical education experiences. The affiliation site, faculty, and classmates may be resources for finding housing.

Disability Accommodations

Pennsylvania College of Technology affirms the rights of students with disabilities to equal opportunity and treatment in all aspects of education. In order for a student to receive accommodations based on disability, they must present the clinical instructor with the appropriate paperwork from Disability and Access Resources prior to the start of the clinical experience. If the student presents for the clinical experience without the necessary paperwork, then no accommodation will be made. If a student chooses to leave the clinical experience to retrieve the necessary paperwork, it will be considered an absence.

Reasonable accommodations will be made that will enable students with disabilities to enjoy equal education opportunities. In order to receive accommodations, a student must follow the procedure as outlined by Disability and Access Resources at Pennsylvania College of Technology.

For further information visit:

Disability and Access Resources: https://www.pct.edu/student-life/disability-services

Clinical Education Attendance

Regular and prompt attendance is critical to foster your future success as a PTA. For all clinical education, as per the PCT Attendance Policy statement, P 4.26 Attendance, it is expected that each student will attend all clinical education days and arrive on time.

Guidelines for Attendance:

1. Students are responsible for their own transportation to/from clinical sites.
2. Students are required to attend all scheduled clinical education days per attendance policy P 4.26 Attendance.
3. Notifications of tardiness or absence is a two-step process. First, the student must notify the clinical instructor before the scheduled arrival time. Second, the student should notify the clinical director via e-mail, text, or phone on the same day that the missed time occurs. Failure to notify the clinical site or the clinical director will result in disciplinary action of a written warning.
4. Students are expected to arrive on time for a clinical experience. Utilize the following guide: "Arriving on time is late; arriving 10 minutes early is on time."
5. If the student misses clinical time without prior approval from the clinical instructor and without notification of the clinical instructor and the clinical director (unexcused absences), the student will be subject to disciplinary action of a written warning.
6. If a student becomes ill or gets called away from a clinical experience due to an emergency, the clinical instructor is to be notified immediately, and the clinical director is to be notified as soon as reasonably possible.
7. Need for making up time/days will be determined by the clinical director and clinical instructor.

Attendance Policy and Procedure:

1. If you must be absent for clinical education, contact your clinical instructor before the normal start time of the day or as soon as possible via text, phone, or email. Follow with a text or phone call to the clinical director at 570-320-2400 ext. 7614, and email at cat19@pct.edu. If the clinical director is not available, contact the program secretary via phone @ 570-320-4439.
2. Clinical absences beyond **two days** during part-time or full-time clinical education will require the student to make up those missed days. If a student misses more than 5 days (one week's worth of clinical education), he/she will be withdrawn from the course, resulting in course failure.
3. Scheduling makeup days is ultimately determined by the clinical instructor and clinical director to ensure the student meets course requirements.
4. Any days to be made up may be added to the end of a clinical experience and will be at the convenience of the clinical instructor with the approval of the clinical director. This may result in delays in course progression or graduation.

Tardiness Policy and Procedure:

1. Contact the clinical instructor immediately via text, phone, or email if you are tardy.
2. Notify the clinical director immediately following notification of the clinical instructor if you are tardy by texting or calling at 570-320-2400 ext. 7614, and emailing cat19@pct.edu.

3. Tardy is considered any arrival 1 minute or more after the designated starting time of clinical education. Any student tardy more than **30 minutes total during a clinical education experience** will be considered to have excessive tardiness and will be required to make up the missed time. If a student is tardy more than five days during the experience, he/she will be withdrawn from the course, resulting in course failure per the PCT attendance policy P 4.26 Attendance.
4. Any time to be made up may be added to the end of a clinical experience and will be at the convenience of the clinical instructor with the approval of the clinical director. This may result in delays in course progression or graduation.

Weather-related delays and closures procedure:

PTA215 (part-time clinical)

1. In the event of Penn College closure, the student is not required to attend his/her clinical experience.
2. If Penn College has a delay in opening, the student is required to report to his/her clinical experience at the time the college opens. Note: Normal business day for the college is 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM. For example, if a two-hour delay is called, the student should report at 10:00 AM. If the student's normal start time is 7:00 AM, the student should still report at 10:00.
3. If the college should close and the student is already at the clinical site, the student is permitted to leave.
4. If the student and clinical instructor feel that it is safe to attend clinical education, the student may do so at his/her discretion and the discretion of the clinical instructor.
5. Absences in the event of college/facility delays or closings will not be counted against the student, and any make-up time for these will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

PTA270/275 (full-time clinicals):

1. If the College has a closing at any time during the final two full-time experiences, the student must follow the guidelines of the clinical facility. If the clinical facility is open, the student is expected to be present.
2. In the event the clinical site recognizes a holiday or is closed due to limited staffing/treatments scheduled, students are not expected to participate in clinical education the student will not be required to make up those hours. In the event any time off is scheduled by the clinical site, the student must inform the clinical director before the date of the occurrence.

Pregnancy

Missed clinical time due to pregnancy shall follow the *School of Nursing & Health Sciences Protocol Relating to Pregnancy and Parenting. For full details of the* protocol, please *contact the clinical director of the PTA program.*

Work Hours

Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants often work hours that may extend into the evening, and weekends, or start early in the morning in order to provide maximal coverage of patient care. Students should anticipate working an 8-hour day but will need to discuss work hours with the clinical instructor prior to the clinical experience or during first day orientation. Students will most likely follow

the same work hours as the clinical instructor and also the holiday schedule that is adopted by the facility. However, if the College is closed for a holiday that the facility does not observe, the student is expected to follow the College holiday schedule.

Employment

For those students who choose to work, work schedules must be adjusted around clinical education and must not interfere with clinical time. **No special arrangements can be made to accommodate work hours.**

Students are not permitted to work as a PTA until they successfully complete all course work and pass the licensure exam. Pennsylvania law prohibits anyone other than a licensed PT or PTA from performing physical therapy services. The state of Pennsylvania does permit PTA graduates to work with a temporary license for 6 months or until they take the licensure examination, whichever comes first.

Safety and Professionalism

Patient Safety

Patient safety is of paramount importance during clinical education, and extends also to caregivers, staff, and students. Students demonstrate competence in critical safety elements in all skill checks and practical exams in all coursework and, therefore, are expected to continue these behaviors into the clinic during all interventions or data collection activities.

Repeated evidence of unsafe practices will be documented by the clinical instructor and may result in disciplinary action.

Examples of unsafe practice include, but are not limited to:

- An incident with potentially life-threatening consequences
- An incident contributing to the injury of another
- Repeated failure to follow through on accepted guidelines for safe clinical practice (i.e., adherence to standard precautions, adherence to guidelines for safe patient handling, adherence to specific limitations of a physician's orders or therapist's plan of care, etc.).

The program follows the Nursing & Health Sciences' Investigation Algorithm for incidents during clinical education experiences.

Professionalism

Clinical Education is the beginning of the student's professional career. Impressions that students leave with supervisors will follow them throughout their careers. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that these impressions are positive! A healthcare worker is expected to be reliable, respectful, and responsible. To promote these necessary professional qualities, the student is expected to follow all rules, regulations, and procedures at the clinical site.

A critical part of the development of professional behaviors is maintaining patient confidentiality, following standard safety procedures, and responding positively to supervisory feedback. While professors, supervisors, and other staff will provide guidance and direction in the development of professional behaviors, each student is responsible for following through and committing to

demonstrating professional behaviors. The *Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool* is used for student self-assessment as well as faculty assessment of a student's progress in developing professional behaviors appropriate to the PTA.

The PTA program draws upon documents published by the American Physical Therapy Association as the expectation for each student's growth in areas of ethical decision-making, professional conduct, and behavior for a PTA. Students are introduced to this content in PTA100 *Introduction to Physical Therapy* and are responsible for conducting themselves in a manner consistent with the expectations established in these documents, at a level appropriate to their level of education. For full copies of these documents, please refer to the Penn College PTA webpage under *Clinical Education Resources* or click on the following link:

https://www.pct.edu/academics/nhs/physical-therapist-assistant/clinical-education-resources

Each semester, students are responsible for completing a self-assessment of their professional behaviors using the ***Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool***. After the student makes comments, the faculty adds appropriate comments on the student's form. The student and faculty member meet individually and discuss the student's progress with the development of professional behaviors. The expectation is entry-level performance by completion of the final full-time clinical education experience. To access a copy of the *Professional Behavior Assessment Tool*, visit the PTA webpage at Penn College and click on *Clinical Education Resources* or visit:

https://www.pct.edu/academics/nhs/physical-therapist-assistant/clinical-education-resources

Students who display unprofessional behavior at any time during the clinical experience will face disciplinary action by Penn College.

Confidentiality

Protecting the privacy of patients and patient information is of utmost importance and is protected by federal law, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). Students MUST adhere to the APTA ethical guidelines and HIPAA regulations during all clinical experiences without fail. All clinical facilities are expected to have policies on the confidentiality of records and other personal information. Additionally, facility policies should be in place concerning the informed consent of patients seen by a student. These policies should be reviewed with the student affiliating at that facility.

Students should be aware that information regarding individuals with whom they come in contact during the course of their educational experiences must be maintained in a confidential manner. No identifying information should appear on written assignments or in conversation regarding any clinical experiences. Rather, use only initials, first names, or false names to identify individuals. Failure to comply with this rule will result in the student receiving disciplinary action. Once the CCCE or CI becomes aware of the violation, they are requested to contact the clinical director who will determine the appropriate disciplinary action.

Informed Consent

Patients will be informed by the student under the direction of the clinical instructor, or by the clinical instructor, when a student is involved in patient care. Students are required to identify themselves as a

student physical therapist assistant and should obtain consent for treatment from the patient. Students should explain that all treatment will be under the observation or supervision of a licensed PT or PTA. Patients have the right to decline to receive care from a student participating in the clinical education program and can do so by informing either the student or the clinical instructor.

Infection Control

All students will have completed formal education and completed skill checks regarding infection control, standard precautions, and Blood-borne Exposure guidelines during their first technical semester of the PTA program. However, during a clinical experience, exposure to infection is always a risk. To minimize this risk, students are expected to follow standard precautions at all times during clinical experiences. Any additional procedures that a specific facility utilizes should also be adhered to, either as a facility policy, or on a case-by-case basis.

Standard Precautions

- Whenever there is a possibility of coming into contact with blood or body fluids, mucous membranes, or open wounds/ broken skin of any patient/client, **WEAR GLOVES.** Wear gloves if handling items soiled with blood or body fluids. **WASH HANDS** immediately after removing gloves.
- During any procedure that may cause splattering of blood or other body fluids, wear masks, protective eye wear, and gowns.
- Wash hands and other skin surfaces immediately if they become contaminated with blood or other body fluids.
- Take proper care when handling needles, scalpels, and other sharp instruments, especially when cleaning used instruments and disposing of needles. Do not recap needles, bend, break needles; do not remove needles from disposable syringes or manipulate them in your hand.
- Discard disposable syringes, needles, scalpel blades, and other sharp items in puncture-resistant containers designed for proper disposal.

Any violation of these safety standards will result in disciplinary action per the Penn College School of Nursing and Health Sciences Investigation Algorithm.

Blood-borne Exposure Guidelines

Current standards of medical practice require a specific plan with written protocols addressing student exposure to blood-borne pathogens. For a complete copy of the Nursing and Health Science policy on blood-borne pathogens, please visit the PTA program webpage under *Clinical Education Resources* or visit:

https://www.pct.edu/academics/nhs/physical-therapist-assistant/clinical-education-resources

Off-Campus and Contract Sites Incidents

If a student has a blood-borne pathogen exposure incident while at an **off-campus or contract site**, the following actions should be taken:

- The student is to inform the instructor, faculty, clinical supervisor, or academic clinical director at the time of the exposure.

- **If the clinical site is a hospital**, the student is to go to the hospital's Emergency Department or designated care area immediately after the incident for evaluation and treatment. A hospital Incident Report form must be completed. The student should have baseline testing completed for appropriate blood-borne pathogens (HBV, HCV and HIV) and treatment options discussed/administered per current CDC protocols. The Program Director/Supervisor/Dean of the respective program shall be informed and will have the College Accident/Injury/Illness Report (refer to Attachment A) completed and sent to College Health Services within 24–48 hours. The hospital will contact the patient involved in the episode and request that he or she has baseline testing completed for appropriate blood-borne pathogens (HBV, HCV and HIV) at the hospital. If the patient already has a positive result on file for HIV, then the testing should be done for any other appropriate blood-borne pathogens.
- **If the clinical site is not a hospital**, the student should be directed to go to College Health Services or to the local hospital Emergency Department or designated care areas (whichever is closer) to undergo baseline testing for appropriate blood-borne pathogens (HBV, HCV and HIV) and counseling within one day of the incident. If the source patient is known to be HIV positive or high risk, both the employee and the source patient should report to the local Emergency Department.
- For **off-campus** patients/clients involved in an exposure incident with a student, the student will pay for the cost of the initial baseline testing and counseling and thereafter at the appropriate intervals, per College Health Service's guidelines. It shall be College Health Services' responsibility to monitor the confidentiality of records and track the testing of individuals including reminding them when it is time for follow-up testing.

Hazardous Chemical Products

If a student is exposed to a potentially hazardous substance during their clinical education experience, the student should notify their clinical instructor immediately. The clinical instructor should assist the student in identifying the proper treatment as outlined on the *Safety Data Sheet(SDS)* for that product. The PTA Clinical Director should be notified immediately, and an appropriate course of action will be followed, depending on the level of exposure. It should be noted that students are responsible for any fees incurred in the management of the exposure.

Equipment and Safety

All clinical facilities are expected to have policies in place regarding safety regulations governing the use of all equipment and the storage and use of any hazardous materials. These policies should be reviewed with the student affiliating at that facility. Equipment should be inspected regularly, and safety regulations should be posted and reviewed periodically.

Accidents or Injuries – Incident Reports

All accidents occurring at a clinical site that result in patient injury, staff injury, personal injury, or damage to equipment must be reported to the clinical instructor immediately. Students may also be required to complete a facility incident report. If there is a student injury involved, the student will then be required to be examined by Penn College Health Services and complete a Penn College Health Services Incident Report.

Students are required to understand the safe method of all interventions and the operation of all equipment prior to undertaking them. Students are responsible for any incurred cost of their individual medical care that may result from an accident during clinical affiliation.

To ensure the safety of all, students will observe the following safety standards:

- wash hands thoroughly before and after handling patients, supplies, and equipment
- consistently ensure a safe environment by recognizing safety hazards and taking necessary steps to prevent injury
- ask for assistance when unable to safely handle patients independently
- use proper guarding techniques
- use proper body mechanics while handling equipment and working with patients
- adhere to established precautions and contraindications
- demonstrate awareness of the facility's emergency procedures and equipment
- follow the manufacturer's instructions for the safe use of equipment as presented in the operator's manual

Consistent documented failure to observe proper safety standards will result in disciplinary action per the Penn College School of Nursing and Health Sciences Investigation Algorithm.

Pennsylvania Law Regarding Delegation to Students

In accordance with Pennsylvania state law governing the practice of physical therapy, the following activities may NOT be delegated to a student physical therapist assistant:

- Patient/client examination
- Intervention planning
- Initial intervention
- Initial or final documentation

Any documentation written by the student must be signed with the student's full name followed by the designation "SPTA" (Student Physical Therapist Assistant). All documentation must be read and co-signed by the physical therapist. If at any time during a clinical education experience, the student feels that they are being asked to perform activities that are not in keeping with state and federal laws, the student should contact the clinical director immediately

Assessment of Student Performance

Site Visits and Communication

The clinical director will attempt to visit each student at least once during their three clinical experiences. The purpose of the visit is to:

1. Determine if the student can effectively and efficiently integrate classroom information into the clinical setting
2. Observe the facility and its physical therapy operations
3. Assess the effectiveness of the clinical instructor in their role as a PCT PTA program clinical instructor

The clinical director will phone the clinical instructor during the second week of the clinical as a "check-in" to ensure that things are going well and to answer any questions that the clinical instructor may have. At that time, if the clinical director plans to visit the site during the student's experience, a date

and time will be agreed upon to visit. A phone conference or video conference will be completed if a site visit is not scheduled. The purpose of the site visit and/or phone call is to discuss student progress and performance. Further phone calls and/or visits will be made at the discretion of the clinical director, clinical instructor, or the student as deemed necessary. The clinical director is responsible for the facilitation of all follow-up communication. The student and clinical instructor may contact the clinical director of the PTA program at any time when concerns arise. The clinical director will make every attempt to respond to communications within 24 hours.

During the first clinical experience, students will have ample opportunity to discuss the clinical experience and any questions or concerns during regular office hours or during pre-arranged meeting times on campus. When the student is participating in one of the full-time clinical experiences, he/she may contact the clinical director to arrange a phone conference or, if needed, a site visit to discuss any issues or concerns the student may have.

An on-site visit will be made, if possible, in the following circumstances:

- The clinical instructor indicates that the student is having difficulty with clinical performance, attendance, behavior, safety, or any other problem that may cause the student to be unsuccessful in clinical education.
- The clinical instructor or center coordinator for clinical education (CCCE) requests a visit from the program faculty
- Program faculty have concerns about the quality of the clinical experience
- The student requests a visit from the program faculty

All communications via phone, email, or on-site visit will be documented, kept confidential, and retained in the student's file in the clinical director's office.

Supervision of Students during Clinical Education

All clinical facilities are expected to provide direct supervision of students to ensure patient safety and to enable the successful completion of the program's educational objectives. All students require on-site supervision by a licensed physical therapist or physical therapist assistant/physical therapist team. Preferably, this should be the student's clinical instructor. If the clinical instructor is not available on-site, another licensed therapist who is on-site must be assigned to that student for that time period. The clinical instructor should have adequate "release time" to appropriately supervise the student and be available to answer questions, assist, and mentor. All clinical faculty are expected to demonstrate positive role modeling for the students. If there is no PT in the building for a portion of the day when the student is in the building on their clinical experience, the student may perform non-patient care duties such as chart reviews, assignments given by the clinical instructor, documentation, in-service preparation, and/or observation of other healthcare professionals. Students should contact the clinical director immediately if supervision does not follow these guidelines.

Communication between Student and Clinical Instructor

The student and the clinical instructor should remain in regular communication, providing ongoing verbal feedback regarding performance. The manner and frequency in which this is done should be discussed at the beginning of the clinical education experience. The clinical instructor is required to be credentialed in the *APTA's Clinical Performance Instrument* (CPI) for PTAs. The clinical instructor and the student are required to review the completed CPI both at midterm and at final completion of the

experience. The student is required to perform a self-assessment of performance concurrently and provide feedback during that time. In addition, the student is required to provide a facility evaluation and review it with the clinical instructor at the culmination of the experience.

If the clinical instructor is not credentialed in the CPI for PTAs, he/she can access this from the APTA website through the APTA Learning Center and take the course online free of charge.

The student must complete the *Physical Therapist Assistant Student Evaluation: Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction* form and review it with the CI prior to the end of the clinical experience. If the student is not comfortable sharing this document, it is the responsibility of the clinical director to share feedback from this form with the clinical instructor. This document is available on the APTA website and on the Penn College PTA website under Clinical Education Resources.

Student Grading

All clinical education experiences are graded on a Satisfactory/Pass or Unsatisfactory/No-Pass basis. The Program utilizes the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) to measure entry-level performance of students prior to graduation. However, the Clinical Director is ultimately responsible for making grading decisions and determining if students have demonstrated entry-level performance in clinical education prior to graduation. If a student does not achieve entry-level on all criteria, the Clinical Director considers the rigor of the clinical setting, patients/clients seen in that setting, and the student's opportunity to demonstrate skills, in addition to CPI ratings and feedback.

In order to receive a Satisfactory/Pass grade, students are required to meet the following:

1. Satisfactory attendance for the clinical experience as outlined in the PTA program policy
2. Completion of all assignments given by the clinical director and clinical instructor
3. Entry-level performance on all 11 criteria on the CPI

If the CPI does not reflect entry-level performance on all 11 criteria, the Clinical Director will work with the Clinical Instructor to determine if grading on the CPI is accurate, if exposure to an element was not possible in the clinical setting, and/or if remediation is warranted. The Clinical Director is responsible for ensuring the student meets entry-level performance on all criteria by graduation. If remediation is necessary, the clinical education experience may be extended, which could delay graduation.

Early Termination of a Clinical Experience as a Disciplinary Procedure

Clinical/Patient-care Related Incidents

The School of Nursing & Health Sciences utilizes the *Nursing & Health Sciences' Investigation Algorithm* to determine student culpability and resulting sanctions for incidents occurring within patient-care settings. As noted in the *Investigation Algorithm*, certain behaviors are mapped directly to dismissal with no option for remediation or deceleration. These are conscious behaviors that are carried out with the intent to harm or with knowing disregard for substantial and unjustifiable risk to self or others. Within the PTA program, *examples* of such behaviors may include:

- Disregard for patient confidentiality
- Intentional safety violations with patient care
- Fabrication or falsification in any documents/communication pertaining to patient care

Students charged with these serious violations will be removed from patient-care settings while the investigation is underway. Termination of the clinical experience may be necessary as a result of the investigation.

Clinical Reassignment

If a student is not able to complete the required hours for a clinical education experience, an alternate clinical experience may be provided. Possible reasons for this include:

1. Family crisis
2. Health status
3. Conflict with the clinical instructor
4. Insufficient patients at a clinical site to provide an adequate clinical experience

The clinical director and PTA program director will decide whether a student is eligible for a clinical reassignment on an individual basis. A student is permitted just one opportunity to be considered for a clinical reassignment during participation in the PTA program. The student will not be considered for a clinical reassignment if they have been removed from a clinical site due to disciplinary reasons.

Tips for Clinical Instructors

Scheduling a formal meeting at least one time per week to review the student's progress and goals to be addressed the following week is recommended. The required *Weekly Planning Form* may facilitate this conversation. It is suggested that the student come to this meeting prepared with the *Weekly Planning Form* completed for the week. The purpose of the form is to have the student reflect on strengths, areas to work on, goals from the week, and set goals for the coming week. The clinical instructor is encouraged to discuss these comments and add their own comments that will be helpful for student progress and growth.

The clinical instructor should review the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) 3.0 with the student at the beginning of the clinical affiliation. The purpose of this is to familiarize the clinical instructor and the student with the individual skills and their objectives. This also enables the clinical instructor to identify which skills the facility is able to address. The clinical instructor and the student can then design learning experiences to facilitate mastery of the identified skills. At midterm and final both student and clinical instructor must complete all elements of the CPI 3.0 assessment tool, review contents together, and sign off on each other's assessment. This facilitates optimal growth in all areas.

It is helpful to have a student information packet to email to the student prior to the affiliation. Information that is helpful includes, but is not limited to:

1. Confirmation of the dates of the affiliation
2. Name of the clinical instructor and the CCCE
3. Time the student should report to the site
4. Facility policies and procedures
5. Dress code for the affiliation
6. Directions to the PT department
7. Parking information
8. Direct phone number to the PT department
9. Medical forms, if needed

10. Any orientation the student may need prior to seeing patients (HIPPA, Standard Precautions, etc.)
11. Meals - is there a cafeteria or does the student need to bring lunch?
12. Housing information, if applicable
13. Any information regarding other tests the student may require for this affiliation
14. Any additional orientation information you want the student to read prior to the start of the clinical affiliation

Resources

For full access to all APTA documents addressing expectations and competency of PTA students, please refer to Pennsylvania College of Technology PTA program website. Go to bottom of page and click on *Clinical Education Resources.* You will see a full listing of resources that will be helpful for working with students. Alternatively, you may access clinical education resources here: https://www.pct.edu/academics/nhs/physical-therapist-assistant/clinical-education-resources

Policy and Procedure for Handling Complaints

The PTA Program is committed to the highest standards and welcomes all comments, suggestions, and feedback. External concerns from prospective students, clinical education sites, employers of graduates, and the general public are to be heard and addressed in a timely manner.

The following procedure is for concerns or complaints that fall outside of the institution's internal due process:

1. Formal complaints must be submitted in writing to the Program Director:

   PTA Program Director or Clinical Director
   Pennsylvania College of Technology
   One College Avenue
   Williamsport, PA 17701
   Email: pta@pct.edu
   Phone: 570-320-4439
   Fax: 570-321-5559

2. The PTA program director will respond within ten days of receipt of the formal written complaint.
3. The program director will investigate and attempt to resolve complaints fairly and promptly. If necessary, complaints may be directed to the Assistant Dean of Health Sciences at:

   Assistant Dean of Health Sciences
   Pennsylvania College of Technology
   One College Avenue
   Williamsport, PA 17701
   Email: wendy.miller@pct.edu
   Phone: 570-327-4519
   Fax: 570-321-5556

4. If a resolution cannot be reached, appropriate parties within the college will be engaged in resolving the complaint.
5. Records of the complaints about the program, including the nature of the complaint, shall be maintained by the program director for three years in an electronic format on a password-protected network.
6. In accordance with the following policies and procedures, the college and program will not tolerate retaliation in any form against anyone who files a complaint (copies of these policies are available upon request):
   P/PR 1.06 – Protections and Protocol for Reporting Wrongful Conduct
   P/PR 7.30 – Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment
   P/PR7.31 – Harassment and/or Discrimination Based on Protected Class
7. If the complaint cannot be resolved after exhausting all remedies through the institution, individuals may file a complaint with the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) at https://www.capteonline.org/complaints