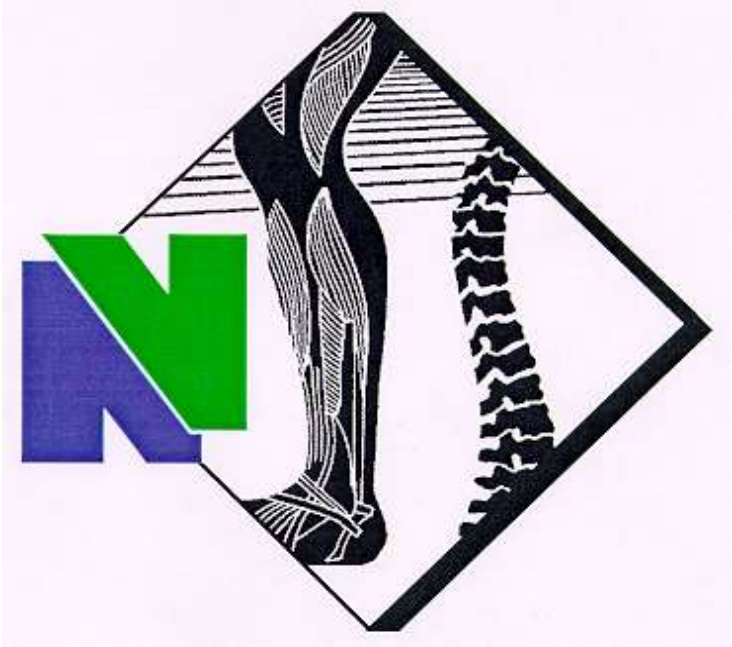
CT STATE NAUGATUCK VALLEY

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM



STUDENT MANUAL OF ACADEMIC AND CLINICAL PROCEDURES FOR THE PTA PROGRAM

January 2025
2025-2026 Cohort

The *Student Manual of Academic and Clinical Procedures for the PTA Program* is a supplement to the xt State Naugatuck Valley *Catalog* and the *Student Handbook*. These procedures apply to all students enrolled in the CT State Naugatuck Valley Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program for the graduating class listed above. Please refer to the *Catalog* for additional information about College polices and services.

CT State College Catalog
https://catalog.ctstate.edu/

CT State Student Handbook
https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/CTS-Student-Handbook.pdf

This manual outlines procedures specific to the Physical Therapist Assistant Associate in Science (AS) Program at CT State Naugatuck Valley. It also provides a framework within which students and faculty can function harmoniously. Students are expected to become thoroughly familiar with its contents and to apply these to govern their behavior in the PTA program. Success will also require student investment in their education with active participation in the learning process.

The provisions of this Manual do not constitute a contract, express or implied, between any applicant, student, or graduate and the faculty or the College.

Please note that the PTA program may make amendments to the *Student Manual of Academic and Clinical Procedures for the PTA Program* as college policies, program procedures, or accreditation requirements change. In the situation that changes occur, students will be given notification that changes have been made and the student is responsible for reviewing the changes in the manual. They are also responsible for adhering to the new policies as written.

Policy on Equal Opportunity and Non-discrimination

The PTA Program Naugatuck Valley and Connecticut State Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race; color; religious creed; age; gender; gender identity or expression; national origin; marital status; ancestry; present or past history of intellectual disability, learning disability or physical disability; veteran status; sexual orientation; genetic information or criminal record. The following person has been designated to respond to inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies: Dr. John-Paul Chaisson-Cardenas, CT State Title IX Coordinator, Connecticut State Community College, 185 Main Street, New Britain, CT 06051. Connecticut State Community College is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages the applications of women, minorities, persons with disabilities, and veterans."

Contents

Physical Therapist Assistant Program 7
Program Description 7
Mission 8
Vision 8
Philosophy 8
Program Outcomes 8
Graduate Goals 9
Technical Standards 9
Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Code of Ethics 12
Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Core Values 12
Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Professional Behaviors 12
Standards of Behavior 12
Expectations of the New Graduate Physical Therapist Assistant 13
Performance Expectations 13
Behavioral Expectations 14
Use of the Title: PTA 15
Academic Advising 15
PTA Program Full Time Faculty 16
PTA Program Faculty Locations 16
PTA Curriculum 17
PTA Course Descriptions 18
ACADEMIC PROCEDURES 21
Grading Policies 22
Minimum grade and GPA Requirement 22
Grading System 23
Grading Standards and Equivalency Table 23
Incomplete Grades 23
Grade Appeals 23
Grading in laboratory-based courses: 24
Course Withdrawal 24
Course Repeat 25
Course Failure 25
Program Withdrawal 25

Re-entry into the PTA Program 25
Attendance 27
Classroom behavior and policies 28
Personal electronic devices 28
Social Media 28
Cell Phone Use Policy 29
Professional Behavior Expectations 29
Performance Improvement Plan 30
Personal Hygiene 30
Dress Code 30
PTA Laboratory Classes 32
Laboratory expectations 32
Open Labs 32
Lab Guidelines 33
Privacy and Draping Policy 33
Confidentiality 33
Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 33
Americans with Disabilities Act and Sect 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended 33
Audio/video recording requests 34
Confidentiality during human simulation scenarios 34
HIPAA 35
Technology, E-mail and Web Access 35
E-mail accounts 35
Weather Related Schedule Changes 35
Class Attendance 36
Exams and Quizzes 36
Exam Testing Guidelines (on-site paper or computerized exams) 36
On-Line Remote Testing Guidelines for LRON courses 37
Testing for Asynchronous Courses 38
Student Conduct 38
Risk Management 38
Participation Expectations 38
Health & Safety 38
Status changes / injury outside of the classroom 39
Pregnancy 39
Infection Control 39
Reporting Injuries Occurring on Campus and College-Sponsored Activities 39

Related Content covered in courses 40
Student Safety 40
Anti-plagiarism detection software 41
Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software: 41
General Information 41
Communication with Faculty 41
Tracking program requirements 41
CPR Certification 42
Criminal Background Check, Fingerprinting, and Substance Screening 42
Substance Use 43
Computer Resources 43
Extra-Curricular Activities 43
The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) 43
Student and Employer Contracts 44
Public Safety 44
Calendar 44
Physical Therapist Assistant Licensure 45
Complaint Process 45
Academic Integrity & Plagiarism 45
Academic Honesty Statement 45
Academic Honesty 46
Plagiarism 47
Copyright Information 47
CLINICAL EDUCATION PROCEDURES 48
Clinic-based Education 49
Clinical Education Courses 50
Clinical Experience #1 50
Clinical Experience #2 50
Clinical Experience #3 51
Clinical Education Procedures 51
Assignment of Clinical Education Experiences 51
Determination of Clinical Locations 51
Determination of Clinical Assignments 51
Clinic Requirements 52
Criminal Background Check/Substance Screening/Fingerprinting 53
Identification as a Student 53
Professionalism and Behavioral Requirements in the Clinic 53

Expectations for Student Conduct 53
Scheduling & Attendance 54
Transportation 55
Electronic Devices 55
Surgeries/Procedures 55
COVID-19 55
DCE Communications with CI/Student 56
Student Responsibilities 56
Prior to the Clinical Education Experience 56
During the Clinical Education Experience 56
End of Clinical Education Experience 57
Evaluations 57
Midterm Evaluations 57
Final Evaluations 57
Grading 58
Full-Time Clinic-based Courses 58
Dismissal following clinical removal 59
Clinical Site Information 59
Criteria for Clinical Sites 59
Roles of Clinical Education Personnel 60
Director of Clinical Education (DCE): 60
Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE): 61
SCCE Responsibilities 61
SCCE compensation 61
SCCE rights 61
SCCE privileges 62
Clinical Instructor (CI): 62
CI Requirements 62
CI Responsibilities 63
CI Compensation 63
CI Rights 63
CI Privileges 64
Clinical Instructor Orientation 64
CT State-Naugatuck Valley PTA Program & College Resources 65
Educator Resources 65

Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Program Description

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program at CT State Naugatuck Valley is a two-year associate degree program, approved by the Board of Regents for Higher Education, designed to develop the competencies and knowledge required for entering the field of Physical Therapy. The PTA program will prepare individuals to work under the direction and supervision of the Physical Therapist in a variety of settings such as acute care hospitals, rehabilitation hospitals, long term care facilities, outpatient rehabilitation settings, school systems, and/or home care settings. The PTA program is designed to prepare students for the national PTA licensure exam.

> The Physical Therapist Assistant program at Naugatuck Valley Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), American Physical Therapy Association, 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22305-3085; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: http://www.capteonline.org. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call 203-596-2168 or email janet.gangaway@ctstate.edu.

If the PTA program receives a change in accreditation status from the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association, all students currently enrolled in the program will be notified in writing of these changes.

With respect to Code 668.43 (a)(5)(v), the program has determined that its curriculum meets the state educational requirements for licensure or certification in all states, the District of Colombia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands secondary to its accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, based on the following:

> CAPTE accreditation of a physical therapist or physical therapist assistant program satisfies state educational requirements in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Thus, students graduating from CAPTE-accredited physical therapist and physical therapist assistant education programs are eligible to take the National Physical Therapy Examination and apply for licensure in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
>
> For more information regarding state qualifications and licensure requirements, refer to the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy website at www.fsbpt.org.

Mission

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program is committed to high standards as it educates students with the knowledge, clinical skills, professional behaviors, and core values essential to evidence-based and culturally competent contemporary physical therapy care.

Vision

The program emphasis on innovative and data-driven teaching methods, technology, and communication facilitates learning in the classroom and the clinic as the program endeavors to educate students who:

- Strive for excellence as physical therapist assistants by providing safe and effective interventions.
- Commit to high ethical standards.
- Appreciate and value racial, social, economic, and cultural diversity.
- Utilize critical reflection.
- Invest in community involvement.
- Engage in lifelong learning.
- Provide patient-centered interprofessional collaborative care.

Philosophy

We believe the Physical Therapist Assistant curriculum:

- Develops appropriate and critical professional behaviors and core values to create ethical practitioners.
- Is based on a liberal arts education and the concentrated study and application of new knowledge in physical therapy.
- Emphasizes the development of written, oral, and technological communication skills.
- Provides a variety of learning experiences to enhance the student's critical thinking abilities, problem solving skills, and values identification.
- Promotes inter-professional education with other disciplines and programs within the college and community.

Program Outcomes

1. 70% or more of admitted students will complete the program within 1 ½ times the length of the program (3 years) as reported using Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) standards.
2. The two-year overall passing rate of the graduates who choose to take the Physical Therapist Assistant national licensure examination will be at least 85%.
3. 90% of the graduates who seek employment as a Physical Therapist Assistant will attain a position within one year of graduation.

The PTA Program administers student clinical performance assessments, alumni surveys, employer surveys, and obtains aggregate data from the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy regarding NVCC graduate performance on the national PTA licensure examination.

Graduate Goals

Upon successful completion of all program requirements, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program will prepare graduates who:

1. Display skill competence in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains necessary to provide safe, effective, and evidence-based physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist.
2. Demonstrate effective communication and education skills through professional interactions with consideration for individual differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs.
3. Demonstrate self-assessment and interest in lifelong learning by participating in professional development activities which include volunteerism, advocacy, and leadership.
4. Adhere to ethical, professional behavior, legal, regulatory, and licensure standards within their scope of work as a physical therapist assistant.
5. Participate in the healthcare environment as an effective member of the healthcare team while providing patient-centered interprofessional collaborative care.

Technical Standards

Preface
Decisions made by the candidate to enter this educational program for physical therapist assistants should be made with consideration of the following technical standards. The physical therapist assistant (PTA) is a licensed health care professional in physical therapy, providing physical therapy interventions after a physical therapist has evaluated the patient and established a treatment plan. The following standards reflect reasonable expectations of the PTA student for the performance of common physical therapy functions. These standards do not reflect what may be required for employment of the graduate PTA.

Physical therapy education and practice requires technical standards to manage patients/clients safely, appropriately, and effectively. In adopting these standards, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is mindful of the patient's right to safe and quality health care by our students and graduates. The PTA student must be able to apply the knowledge and skills necessary to function in a broad variety of clinical situations while providing the spectrum of physical therapy treatments. Each candidate in this Associate in Science degree program must have the ability to learn and perform the following competencies and skills.

Critical Thinking Skills
Student must possess sufficient abilities in the areas of critical problem solving, reasoning, and decision-making in a timely and safe manner.

Student must be able to prioritize, organize, and attend to tasks and responsibilities efficiently. This includes, but is not limited to the:

- Ability to collect, interpret, and analyze written, verbal, and observed data.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information, and make decisions.
- Ability to apply knowledge of the principles, indications, contraindications, and application of physical therapy interventions in the physical therapy plan of care.
- Ability to act safely, legally, and ethically.
- Ability to analyze physical, biomechanical, pathological, behavioral, and environmental factors in a timely manner.

Communication Skills
Student must be able to utilize effective and efficient communications with peers, faculty, patients and their families, and other health care providers, and others in the English language. This includes, but is not limited to the:

- Ability to read and write at a competency level that allows one to safely carry out the essential functions in both academic and clinical settings and assignments (examples: handwritten chart data, printed equipment operations manuals).
- Ability to effectively communicate (interpret and express) information regarding the status, safety, and rehabilitation of patients.
- Ability to effectively communicate (verbally and in writing) with patients/families, health care professionals and others within the community, and with third party payers.
- Document in the medical record within a specific time frame, reflective of industry standards and formats.
- Ability to communicate and document effectively via electronic device.
- Ability to recognize, to interpret, and respond to nonverbal behavior of self and others.
- Ability to initiate conversations with peers, faculty, patients and their families, and others medical professionals.

Motor Skills
Student must have sufficient motor capabilities to execute the movements and skills required to provide safe and effective physical therapy interventions patient/client management. These include, but are not limited to:

- Coordination, speed, and agility to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising, or performing other rehabilitation activities.
- Ability to adjust and position equipment and patients, which involves bending or stooping freely to floor level and reaching above the head.
- Ability to move, transfer, or position patients and equipment, which involves lifting, carrying, pushing, pulling, and guiding weight.
- Ability to continuously guide, resist, and assist patients, or to provide emergency care, which involves the activities of standing, kneeling, sitting, walking, or crawling, for up to 90 minutes.
- Ability to perform, with safe and proper body mechanics, transfer and gait training techniques, and positioning and mobilization procedures used during physical therapy interventions with patients.
- Ability and dexterity to manipulate the devices used in physical therapy, which involves adjusting gauges, dials, small nuts/bolts, equipment settings, etc.
- Manipulate common tools used for screening tests of nerves, joints, and muscles which would include sensation, range of motion, and muscle testing procedures.
- Ability to legibly record/document all records required for academic and clinical coursework
- Ability to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation and First Aid without assistance.
- Ability to elicit information from patients through manual techniques, palpation, auscultation, and percussion for data collection procedures.
- Ability to apply manual therapy techniques.

Sensory Skills
Student must possess the ability to observe demonstrations and participate in laboratory and clinical activities, observe and participate in demonstrations, and observe physical measures applied to patients. This includes the ability to obtain information in classroom, laboratory, and clinical settings through observation, auscultation, palpation, and other measures, including but not limited to:

- Visual ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language, identify normal and abnormal patterns of movement, to read or set parameters on physical therapy equipment, to discriminate color changes, and to interpret and assess the environment.

- Auditory ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and respond to soft voices, auditory timers, equipment alarms, call bells, and to effectively use devices for auscultation measurement of blood pressure and breath sounds.
- Tactile ability to palpate a pulse and to detect changes or abnormalities of surface texture, skin temperature, body segment contour, muscle tone, and joint movement.
- Sufficient position, movement, and balance sensations to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising, or performing other rehabilitation activities.

Behavioral Skills

Student must be capable of professional behaviors required for the successful conduct of physical therapy in all environments. Student must be able to exercise good judgment, develop empathetic and therapeutic relationships with patients and others, and tolerate close and direct physical contact with a broad and very diverse population of peers and patients. This will include people of all ages, races, genders, sexual orientations, socioeconomic statuses, ethnic backgrounds, as well as individuals with varied physical, medical, or mental health problems. This also includes, but is not limited to:

- Ability to work with multiple patients/families and colleagues at the same time.
- Ability to work with faculty, staff, clinical instructors, classmates, patients, families, healthcare providers, and others. under stressful conditions, including but not limited to medically or emotionally unstable individuals, situations requiring rapid adaptations, the provision of CPR, or other emergency interventions.
- Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information, and make decisions in a timely manner.
- Ability to foster cooperative and collegial relationships with faculty, staff, clinical instructors, classmates, patients, families, other health care providers, and others.
- Ability to follow college, program, and clinical procedures in a professional and timely manner.
- Demonstrate interpersonal skills necessary for productive classroom discussion and respectful interaction with classmates, faculty, staff, and others.
- Maintain general good health, self-care, and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with which one interacts.

Capstone

The capstone experience of this educational program occurs during the final semester, with the student providing physical therapy interventions services in clinic settings under the direction and supervision of physical therapist. The student must have the capacity to work varying schedules for an average of 35 hours per week, to participate in clinical education experiences, for a full semester. Outside of scheduled hours, the student must also have the ability to independently prepare for activities in the clinical environment, for example, reviewing information related to the following day’s activities. The clinical education experience provides for a truly integrative measure of the student's capabilities and requires that the student consistently demonstrates entry-level performance of the abilities of the Physical Therapist Assistant.

Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Code of Ethics

The *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA* delineate the ethical obligations of all physical therapist assistants as determined by the House of Delegates of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). The *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA* provide a foundation for conduct to which all physical therapist assistants shall adhere. Fundamental to the *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA* is the special obligation of physical therapist assistants to enable patients/clients to achieve greater independence, health and wellness, and enhanced quality of life. No document that delineates ethical standards can address every situation. Physical therapist assistants are encouraged to seek additional advice or consultation in instances where the guidance of the *Standards of Ethical Conduct* may not be definitive. (https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/leadership-and-governance/policies/standards-of-ethical-conduct-for-the-physical-therapist-assistant)

Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Core Values

The physical therapy profession, through the American Physical Therapy Association, has adopted 8 core values *(Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant)* that represent professionalism in physical therapy: 1) excellence, 2) accountability, 3) altruism, 4) compassion and caring, 5) cultural competence, 6) duty, 7) integrity, and 8) social responsibility (https://www.apta.org/apta-and-you/leadership-and-governance/policies/core-values-for-the-physical-therapist-and-physical-therapist-assistant).

Professionalism in Physical Therapy: Professional Behaviors

Throughout the program, students will be expected to demonstrate progression in the professional behaviors that comprise these ethical principles and core values. Program policies, instructional activities, self-assessment exercises, and faculty feedback are designed to guide development in order to facilitate meeting the behavioral expectations for the entry-level physical therapist assistant.

Students' professional behaviors will be assessed on an ongoing basis while in the PTA program and feedback will be provided to the student. This feedback is designed to foster reflective self-assessment, and students are encouraged to solicit the faculty's insights about their development.

Students who demonstrate deficits in the behaviors will be given written notice. Continued demonstration of behaviors that hinder growth in professionalism may result in a review by the PTA Program faculty. Their decision and action may include, but is not limited to, dismissal of the student from the PTA Program.

Standards of Behavior

Students in the CT State Naugatuck Valley PTA Program are required to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the high standards of the physical therapy profession, in accordance with the Board of Regents (BOR)/Connecticut State Colleges and Universities (CSCU) Student Code of Conduct (BOR Student Code of Conduct) and the American Physical Therapy Association Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant and Value Based Behaviors for the PTA (https://www.apta.org/your-practice/ethics-and-professionalism/apta-guide-for-conduct-of-the-physical-therapist-assistant and https://www.apta.org/your-practice/ethics-and-professionalism/values-based-behaviors-for-the-pta-self-assessment).

The faculty relies on the integrity and sound judgment of the students to demonstrate acceptable behavior in the classroom, on or off-campus when representing CT State Community College and/or the PTA program or when identified as an CT State Naugatuck Valley student, and in the clinic. The policies and regulations of the program are considered to be in accord with sound judgment and acceptable behavior. The following are considered unacceptable standards of behavior and constitute grounds for dismissal from the PTA Program.

- Possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages on campus or during clinical experiences. Intoxication in no way relieves students from full responsibility for their actions.
- Possession or use of illegal substances or controlled drugs that are not prescribed by a physician, or the inappropriate utilization of prescribed medications that are controlled drugs. Utilization of such substances in no way relieves students from full responsibility for their actions.
- Falsification of medical reports, college records, or clinical affiliate records, including the intentional omission of personal medical information that may impact performance in the clinic.
- Unauthorized use of college or medical records or disclosure of information found in these records to unauthorized individuals.
- Possession of a deadly or harmful weapon on campus or during clinical experiences.
- Verbal or physical violence, as defined as an overt act or threat of harm or intimidation to a person or property, or any act that poses a substantial threat to the safety of any person or property.
- Disregard of one's personal hygiene, appearance, uniform, or dress.
- Failure to comply with institutional fire and safety policies or procedures.
- Failure to comply with program, division, and college policies and standards for academic honesty.
- Failure to demonstrate respectful, professional behavior to faculty, staff, and students at all times.

Expectations of the New Graduate Physical Therapist Assistant

The education to become a physical therapist assistant is both a challenging and a rewarding adventure. Each day students will learn new knowledge, develop new abilities, and gain invaluable insights into themselves and their future patients. The faculty has designed this curriculum to foster student learning and development so that they may achieve the American Physical Therapy Association's performance and behavioral expectations for entry-level physical therapist assistants. Expectations are taken from contemporary guiding documents from our professional organization.

Performance Expectations

Intervention

- Review the plan of care established by the physical therapist prior to initiating patient/client intervention.
- Provide safe interventions as directed by the plan of care and under the supervision of a physical therapist.
- Provide effective instruction to the patient/client and others to achieve the goals and outcomes as described in the plan of care.
- Collect data to quantify the patient/client's response to interventions under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist.
- Critically think and use sound reason to progress and regress the patient/client interventions within the plan of care according to the patient response.
- Complete documentation that follows professional guidelines, health care system, and physical therapy policies.
- Respond effectively to patient/client and environmental emergencies in the work setting.

Communication

- Expressively and receptively communicates in a culturally competent manner with physical therapists, patients/clients, family members, caregivers, other health care providers, students, interdisciplinary team members, administrators, payers, and consumers.

Education

- Effectively educate others using teaching methods commensurate with the needs of the learners.
- Educate others about the role of the physical therapist assistant and the physical therapy profession.

Resource Management (human, fiscal, systems)

- Utilize human and material institution-based resources and services to provide high-quality, efficient, and cost-effective physical therapy services.
- Comply with facility procedures and payer regulations consistent with the health care delivery system and the practice setting.

Career Development

- Participate in learning and development activities to ensure continued competence.
- Participate in and respond to self-assessment activities and develop goals for improvement.
- Identify resources available to assist in the transition to a physical therapist assistant graduate in the workforce.
- Participate in clinical education

Behavioral Expectations

Accountability

- Adhere to federal and state legal practice standards and institutional regulations related patient/client and fiscal management.
- Act in a manner consistent with the *current guiding documents of the APTA*.
- Change behavior in response to understanding the consequences (positive and negative) of the physical therapist assistants' actions.

Altruism

- Place patient's/client's needs above the physical therapist assistant's self-interests.

Compassion and Caring

- Exhibit compassion, caring, and empathy in providing services to patients/clients.
- Promote active involvement of the patient in his/her own care.

Cultural Competence

- Identify, respect, and act with consideration for the patient's/client's differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs in all physical therapy activities.

Duty

- Demonstrate behaviors, conduct, actions, attitudes, and values consistent with the roles, responsibilities, and tasks of the physical therapist assistant.
- Support and participate in organizations and efforts that promote physical therapy.

Integrity

- Demonstrate integrity in all interactions with patients/clients, family members, caregivers, supervising physical therapists, coworkers, other health care providers, students, other consumers, employers and payers.

Social Responsibility

- Value and support the physical therapy profession in society.

Use of the Title: PTA

Under Connecticut statutes only licensed physical therapists and physical therapist assistants can provide "treatment of human ailments by physical therapy" (Sec. 20-73). Therefore, until students have completed their A.S. degree and achieved licensure with the State of Connecticut as a PTA they cannot promote themselves, or their services, as a PTA. Students must identify themselves as a SPTA – student physical therapist assistant and can only do so when working in that role under the supervision of a clinical instructor. This constraint also applies if, during the education process, the student is employed as a physical therapy aide. The skills and techniques taught in this program exceed those of an aide and should not be applied in the clinic.

Academic Advising

The faculty is dedicated to assisting students to achieve the learning objectives of the PTA curriculum. Students will be assigned a faculty advisor from the PTA program. Students are encouraged to meet with their program advisor whenever there are concerns or questions.

Students will meet with their advisor(s) in the PTA Program at least once each academic semester (excluding the summer semester) to review progress regarding degree requirements, performance in PTA courses, progress with professional behaviors, and professional development reflections that are significant to learning. It is strongly recommended that students meet with their advisor prior to the first half of the semester so that they can review your performance and discuss strategies for success. It is the student's responsibility to initiate scheduling an appointment with their advisor each semester.

At the time of the meeting, students are expected to complete a reflection on professional growth using the prompts provided (semester 1 & 2). Professional growth is also measured using the *Core Values for the PT/PTA* self-assessment tool. This meeting is also the opportunity to identify learning objectives, resources, and strategies to foster academic development.

If students are having trouble meeting learning goals, or the learning objectives of any course, they are encouraged to contact their advisor as soon as any problems occur. This includes any course grades that are below 79% including projects, assignments, examinations, and practical exam testing.

Students should meet with their advisor if they are considering dropping any course, resigning from the program, or altering their position in the program in any manner.

Office hours will be posted at the start of each semester, but these are not the only times faculty is available. Contact advisors by e-mail or phone to arrange a meeting.

All didactic PTA and general education courses required for the degree must be completed by August 1st before Semester 4. Students who have not completed all general education courses will not be allowed to begin the final semester coursework, unless approved by the PTA Program Director.

PTA Program Full Time Faculty

Janet Gangaway, PT, DPT **Professor of Physical Therapy and Program Director, PTA Program.** Received B.S. in Athletic Training from the University of Connecticut; MPT from the University of Southern California; DPT from Simmons College. She is a Certified Orthopedic Specialist and Certified Athletic Trainer with interests in orthopedics, sports medicine, and aquatic physical therapy. She is also certified in aquatic therapy through the Aquatic Therapy and Rehabilitation Institute. Her research interest is in the efficacy of aquatic physical therapy.

Patricia Beaupre PT, MS **Professor of Physical Therapy and Director of Clinical Education (DCE) PTA Program.** Received a B.S. in General Science and her MSPT at Springfield College. Clinical practice areas include medically complex patients, acute care, acute inpatient rehabilitation, sub-acute rehabilitation, long-term care, homecare, hospice, and wound care.

PTA Program Faculty Locations

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is located in Founders Hall / Center for Health Sciences on the 2nd floor. The program director and clinical education coordinator faculty offices are located on the 1st floor.

	Location	**Phone**	**Email**
Janet Gangaway (Program Director)	F117	203-596-2168	janet.gangaway@ctstate.edu
Patricia Beaupre (DCE)	F108	203-596-2156	patricia.beaupre@ctstate.edu
Cheryl Marie (Division Secretary)	F105	203-596-8746	cheryl.marie@ctstate.edu
Program Fax		203-575-8146	

Academic Spaces:	**Location**	**Phone**
Classroom/laboratory	F207	4-9130
Mobility laboratory	F208	4-9131
PTA Storage	F209	4-9132
Debriefing Room	F210	4-9133
AV Control Room	F201A	4-9134
Acute Care laboratory	F211	4-9135
OP Exam Room	F211A	4-9136
Student locker room	F212	4-9137
Adjunct faculty office	F229	6-2158

PTL/Clinical Educational Assistants	**Email**
Paul Higgins PT, DPT, ATC, CSCS	paul.higgins@ctstate.edu
Lisa Presutto-Curley PT	lisa.presuttocurley@ctstate.edu
Emily Ponce PTA, MS	emily.ponce@ctstate.edu
Kathleen (Kate) Sileo PT, DPT, MS, MBA	kate.sileo@ctstate.edu
Lou Fabozzi, PTA, LSVT	louis.fabozzi@ctstate.edu

Other important contacts:

One Stop	NV-OneStop@ct.edu
Mental Health & Wellness Services	CTState-MentalHealthWellness@ct.edu
Timely Care	https://app.timelycare.com/auth/login
Disability Services	NV-Disabilities1@ctstate.edu
Distance Learning / Blackboard®	SO_BbHelpDesk@ctregents.onmicrosoft.com
Financial Aid	NV-FinancialAid-DL@nvcc.commnet.edu
Public Safety:	**General:** 860-575-8113 **Emergency:** 203-575-8112

PTA Curriculum

The curriculum is designed as a progression of increasing complexity and all courses must be taken during the designated semester. Students who are unable to abide by the curriculum sequence for non-PTA courses must submit in writing to the PTA Program Director which non-PTA course(s) will be out of the sequence stated below, the reasoning for this issue, their plan of when they will be taking the documented course(s).

The coursework is progressive in nature and each successive course is built on the foundations from previous coursework. Students are responsible for all of the skills, knowledge and safety learned in pervious courses and lack of retention of the material could affect their grade in a current or future course and/or jeopardize their status in the program. Successful completion of the requirements for one course may require the student to be competent in coursework from a previous or concurrent course.

PTA Program of Study

Pre-requisites	**Course Title**	**Credits**
BIO 1210*^	General Biology I or BIO 1111 Cell Biology w/Organ Systems	4
ENG 1010	Composition	3
MAT 1200*	Statistics I	3
PSY 1011	General Psychology	3
CCS 1001	College and Career Success (unless transfer 24+ credits)	3
	Total:	**16**
Semester 1	*Spring*	
PTA 1200	Introduction to Physical Therapy	3
PTA 1250	Foundational Skills in Physical Therapy	4
PTA 1300	Clinical Anatomy & Kinesiology	3
BIO 2111^	Anatomy & Physiology I	4
	Total:	**14**
Semester 2	***Fall***	
PTA 1450	Physical Agents in Physical Therapy	3
PTA 1500	Physical Therapy Interventions in Orthopedics	4
PTA 1550	Pathology for the PTA I	3
BIO 2112^	Anatomy & Physiology II	4
	Total:	**14**
Semester 3	***Spring***	
PTA 2500	Physical Therapy Interventions in Special Populations	3
PTA 2550	Pathology for the PTA II	3
PTA 2580	PTA in the Healthcare Arena	1
PTA 2694P	PTA Part Time Clinical Experience I	1
ARTX	Arts & Humanities (must meet diversity requirement)	3
WRIX	Written Communication II elective	3
	Total:	**14**
Semester 4	***Fall***	
PTA 2794P	PTA Full Time Clinical Experience I	3
PTA 2894P	PTA Full Time Clinical Experience II	3
PTA 2990P	Physical Therapy Seminar	3
	Total:	**9**
	Degree total:	**67**

PTA Course Descriptions

PTA 1200: Introduction to Physical Therapy
3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Acceptance into PTA Major
Course description: Learning opportunities in this course assist the student to recognize the roles of physical therapy within various practice settings. Students differentiate functions of physical therapists and physical therapist assistants as members of the health care team through study of the history of physical therapy, documentation, ethical & legal principles, evidence-based practice, and medical terminology important to the provision of services. Learning also includes development of knowledge and abilities within the domains of professional conduct, interpersonal and professional communication, and sensitivity to individual and cultural differences.

PTA 1250: Foundational Skills in Physical Therapy
4 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week; lab: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Acceptance into PTA Major
Course description: This lecture and lab-based course provides the student with introductory concepts and techniques regarding physical therapy interventions for function and mobility. Emphasis is placed on enhancing the students' problem-solving abilities and comprehension of the physical therapist assistant's role in delivering the plan of care. The importance of modification of physical therapy interventions within the plan of care developed by the supervising physical therapist is highlighted. The laboratory section of this course allows the student to develop psychomotor skills, critical thinking, and affective skills through simulated patient scenarios.

PTA 1300: Clinical Anatomy and Kinesiology
3 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week, lab: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Acceptance into PTA Major
Course description: This course is designed to enable students to identify the structure and function of the human body including the spine, upper, and lower extremities through computer simulation and application. The course includes the study of skeletal, muscular, connective tissue, nervous, and circulatory structures involved in human movement. Students will understand movement control and elements of movement dysfunction. The student will also gain an understanding of biomechanical forces, neuromuscular control, and pathological influences through analysis of biomechanical forces on the body.

PTA 1450: Physical Agents in Physical Therapy
3 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week; lab: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1200, 1250, and 1300
Course description: This course is designed to enable students to identify the structure and function of the human body including the spine, upper, and lower extremities through computer simulation and application. The course includes the study of skeletal, muscular, connective tissue, nervous, and circulatory structures involved in human movement. Students will understand movement control and elements of movement dysfunction. The student will also gain an understanding of biomechanical forces, neuromuscular control, and pathological influences through analysis of biomechanical forces on the body.

PTA 1500: Physical Therapy Interventions in Orthopedics
4 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week; lab: 6 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1200, 1250, and 1300
Course description: This course uses a case study approach to enhance problem solving skills and provide integration of various patient examination, goal setting, and intervention techniques within the scope of physical therapist assistant practice. Topics covered include foundational PT skills of goniometric and muscle strength assessment and exercise prescription. The student will achieve competency in the following patient care techniques: data collection skills, exercise prescription, communication and documentation skills including appropriate billing, and patient safety. Manual muscle testing and goniometric measurement of joint range of motion will be incorporated into laboratory exercises. Professionalism, verbal and written communication skills, and ethics are considered throughout.

PTA 1550: Pathology for the Physical Therapist Assistant I
3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1200, 1250, and 1300
Course description: This is the first course of a two-course pathology sequence designed to provide the physical therapist assistant student with the knowledge of human pathology of selected body systems including implications for patient management and the effects of exercise. Topics covered include inflammation, lab tests & values, and the immune, lymphatic, cardiovascular, respiratory, integumentary, and musculoskeletal systems. This foundational course promotes an understanding of the disease processes and guides the student in application and analysis of medical pathology to evidence-based patient care. Emphasis is placed on the relationship of medical presentation signs/symptoms/treatment and its implication on physical therapy treatment.

PTA 2500: Physical Therapy Interventions in Special Populations
3 credits: lecture: 2 hours per week; lab: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, and 1550
Course description: This course uses a case study approach to enhance problem solving skills and provide integration of various patient intervention techniques within the scope of physical therapy practice. Topics covered include interventions for special populations such as status post amputation, neurological diagnoses, and pediatric conditions. The student will achieve competency in advanced patient care techniques and will expand on knowledge from previous courses. Emphasis will be placed on appropriate application of advanced treatment techniques, critical thinking, and progression in order to facilitate patient recovery with the goal of improving functional outcomes.

PTA 2550: Pathology for the Physical Therapist Assistant II
3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, and 1550
Course description: This is the second course of a two-course pathology sequence designed to provide the physical therapist assistant student with knowledge of human pathology of selected body systems including implications for patient management and the effects of exercise. Topics covered include disorders of the nervous system, the hepatic, pancreatic and biliary systems, the endocrine and gastrointestinal systems, the male and female reproductive systems, as well as amputation, oncology, and hematology. This foundational course promotes an understanding of the disease processes and guides the student in application and analysis of medical pathology to evidence-based patient care. Emphasis is placed on the relationship of medical presentation signs/symptoms/treatments and its implication on physical therapy treatment.

PTA 2580: PTA in the Healthcare Arena
1 credit: lecture (Naugatuck Valley campus: 1 hour per week for 15 weeks)
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, and 1550
Course description: This course is an introduction and preparation to clinical education experience for the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) student. Students will learn about the different types of Physical Therapy settings and become oriented with the clinical education process. Students will learn about legal and professional standard practices, PTA reporting responsibilities, responses to ethical situations, effective communication as healthcare

providers, accurate and timely billing, and professional development opportunities to remain current in the Physical Therapy field.

PTA 2694P: PTA Part Time Clinical Experience
1 credit: Approximately 8 hours per week of clinical experience
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, 1550, and 2580.
Course description: This course is an integrated part-time clinical experience. Students will apply principles of the curriculum and physical therapy services as a Student Physical Therapist Assistant (SPTA). Students will implement general skills, data collection, and interventions in a physical therapy clinical setting under the direction and supervision of a licensed Physical Therapist.

PTA 2794P: PTA Full Time Clinical Experience I
3 credits: Approximately 40 hours per week of clinical experience
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) of PTA 2500, PTA 2550, PTA 2580, and C or better or Pass in PTA 2694.
Course description: This course is an advanced clinical experience designed for students to integrate and apply physical therapy concepts to effectively perform interventions and data collection as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will develop daily organizational and management skills of a patient caseload and effectively contribute to the health care team. This course is a full-time clinical experience (approximately 40 hours per week) in the first half of the semester.

PTA 2894P: PTA Full Time Clinical Experience II
3 credits: Approximately 40 hours per week of clinical experience
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better or Pass) in PTA 2794
Course description: This course is the final clinical experience designed for students to integrate and apply physical therapy concepts to effectively perform interventions and data collection as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will develop daily organizational and management skills of a patient caseload and effectively contribute to the health care team consistent with entry-level performance. This course is a full-time clinical experience (approximately 40 hours per week) in the second half of the semester.

PTA 2990P: Physical Therapy Seminar
3 credits: lecture: 3 hours per week
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) of PTA 2500, PTA 2550, PTA 2580, and C or better or Pass in PTA 2694
Course description: This course will provide the physical therapist assistant student with the necessary knowledge for understanding the healthcare processes of the clinical setting as well as facility standards and design. Research based decision-making will also be covered. Other topics such as licensure, continuing education, data collection, and problem-oriented management will be discussed.

ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

Grading Policies

The faculty members of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are responsible for the evaluation of the learning achieved by students. The following is a supplement to the grading policies contained in the College Catalog.

Grades assigned in the PTA Program reflect the instructor's evaluation of the learning achieved relative to the objectives defined in the course syllabus. These course objectives will include learning expectations in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains. This program, in part, uses a competency-based grading system. A passing grade reflects that the student has demonstrated competence for each of the criteria defined for the course. The grade is determined based on demonstration of successful achievement of the criteria defined for each course.

A grade of "C" or higher designates competence in a lecture or lecture with laboratory-based course, and a grade of "P" (pass) designates competence in the clinic-based education courses.

Minimum grade and GPA Requirement

Students must achieve a grade of C or better in all physical therapy courses AND maintain a 2.3 or higher PTA GPA throughout the entire PTA Program to progress into the next semester of the curriculum sequence and meet degree requirements.

- Students who do not achieve a C in any PTA course cannot move forward to the next semester and will need to seek re-entry (see re-entry section on page xxx)
    - This will delay graduation for the student
    - Courses may only be retaken once
    - Students repeating a course in the third semester must also repeat the integrated clinical experience, even if passed the first time.
- Students who do not achieve a 2.3 or higher PTA GPA will receive a letter that they have ONE semester to bring up their PTA GPA to the required letter or they may be dismissed from the program.
- Students must have a cumulative PTA GPA of 2.3 or higher at the end of the third semester or they will need to repeat coursework within the Program of Study during the summer session prior to semester 4.
    - Those who do not have a 2.3 or higher GPA at the start of semester 4 cannot move into the clinical courses and will need to request re-entry for the following year while repeating classes to improve their GPA.

A minimum grade of “C+” is required for Biological Science, Anatomy & Physiology I, and Anatomy & Physiology II. A minimum grade of “C” is required for all other general education courses.

Students must have an overall PTA GPA of 2.3 in order to graduate from the Physical Therapist Assistant program.

Grading System

To compute numerical credit point averages, grades are evaluated as follows for each semester hour of credit. Grades on exams, papers, and quizzes, will be based on this grading system.

Grading Standards and Equivalency Table

Letter Grade	Grade Scale	GPA Equivalency	Description
A	93-100	4.0	Distinguished achievement in all phases of the course or assignment
A-	90-92.99	3.7	
B+	87-89.99	3.3	
B	83-86.99	3.0	High level of achievement in some phases of the course or assignment
B-	80-82.99	2.7	
C+	77-79.99	2.3	
C	73-76.99	2.0	Basic understanding of the subject of the course or assignment
C-	70-72.99	1.7	
D+	67-69.99	1.3	
D	63-66.99	1.0	Minimal performance in the course or on the assignment
D-	60-62.99	0.7	
F	<60%	0.0	Failure
P	-	-	Pass grades do not count in GPA

Please note that a course grade of F will be assigned following a documented violation of the Academic Integrity & Plagiarism Policy.

Final grades and academic standing can be obtained from https://my.ctstate.edu/. Grades listed in a courses' electronic gradebook (such as Blackboard Learn) are not necessarily the final, weighted grade assigned in the course.

Incomplete Grades

The college allows, at the discretion of the instructor, the grade of incomplete, "I" if at least 60% of the coursework has been completed. This is not allowed for excessive absences or missing examinations without just cause. Since the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is taught in a sequential pattern, all requirements must be met within the semester as assigned. Therefore, in the PTA Program, this grade will only be used in extenuating circumstances after review by the faculty of the Program. When a grade of "I" is allowed a deadline for the completion of course requirements must be established and met by the deadline determined by the program faculty, typically no later than the start of the next academic term or add/drop date for that term. Students cannot progress into the next academic semester unless the incomplete grade is resolved.

Grade Appeals

Please see the NVCC Student Handbook:
https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/CTS-Student-Handbook.pdf

Grading in laboratory-based courses:

Many courses in the curriculum have both lecture and laboratory components: PTA 1250, PTA 1300, PTA 1450, PTA 1500, and PTA 2500. When this occurs, 50% of the course grade is based on the lecture component and 50% of the grade is based on the laboratory component. Students must pass both components with at least a 73% score to pass the class. Students who do not achieve a 73% on both components will receive a final course grade no higher than a C-.

Competency must be achieved for all parts of each procedure, function, or task in order to successfully complete each course. Students must demonstrate the standard of competence required for all competency and practical examinations. Failure to apply safe and competent practice/procedures in any component of the hands-on testing designated as a Critical Task (marked by an asterisk*, on the evaluation forms) will result in failure of that test. That test must then be repeated.

Performance on each of the *components* of the task/procedure is assessed for safety and effectiveness. Performance measures designated as "lab competency" or "practical examinations" are designed so that competence is demonstrated with a score of 73 or higher.

- A score lower than 73 represents performance that does not demonstrate the required behaviors or skills required to demonstrate competence.
- The examination must then be repeated on a separate day following remedial practice and preparation by the student. Students must arrange to meet with one of the faculty members in the course to determine the remediation plan.
- The repeated test is for demonstration of competence only and will be graded on a pass/no pass basis using the same grading form. A passing score will result in a final grade of 73.
- Failure of the repeated test will result in a 0 for that examination and an “F” for the course.
- If a student receives a failing grade on a practical examination and does not repeat the test, this will result in a 0 recorded for that examination and an “F” for the course.
- Re-examination for hands-on tests must be completed within two weeks of the original test, or as instructor schedule allows.
- Retests for the last practical examination must occur within a week of the original testing date.
- The class schedule does not accommodate for re-testing. Students are required to initiate and schedule with the instructor for remediation and testing outside of the appointed lab times. Remediation and re-testing may need to occur outside of normally scheduled class time.

It is the *student’s responsibility* to seek assistance from instructors, faculty, or program advisor if they not progressing satisfactorily.

Course Withdrawal

If a student withdraws from a course, the student may not continue taking any physical therapy courses in successive semesters. The student must complete the course(s) from which the withdrawal with a C or better to resume participation in the physical therapy curriculum if granted re-entry.

A student that is considering withdrawing from a physical therapy course should meet with the course instructor to develop a plan for strategies to facilitate success in that course. This plan may include

accessing additional academic or counseling resources and/or reducing the workload during the semester (general education courses or employment hours) through conversations with the faculty advisor.

Students will need to request re-entry following a course withdrawal. Students will be dismissed from the program if there is no request to re-enter within a year of the withdrawal.

Course Repeat

If granted re-entry, the student must successfully pass the course that was failed, or from which the student withdrew, prior to the continuation in the remaining physical therapy courses.

Course Failure

If the grade and/or GPA requirements are not met, the student's status in the program will be reviewed by the faculty. Students who fail a single course, more than one course in a single semester, or have withdrawn from a course(s) may request re-entry following the guidelines below.

Program Withdrawal

Unexpected events may interfere with your ability to effectively apply yourself to this program of study. If a significant personal, family, or other non-medical reason interferes with a student's education and prohibits the student from maintaining the curricular sequence, the student may submit a formal request to the Program Director for voluntary withdrawal from the program.

Students desiring to voluntarily withdraw from the PTA Program should put this request in a letter to the Program Director, including a description of the event/situation impacting the student's participation at that time. Students should meet with Financial Aid to discuss implications of this withdrawal. The student's major will be changed to "General Studies" and the student will no longer be considered a PTA student unless there is an application for re-entry.

Students will need to request re-entry following a program withdrawal. Students will be dismissed from the program if there is no request to re-enter within a year of the withdrawal.

Re-entry into the PTA Program

Students who are unsuccessful in coursework or who withdraw from courses and/or the program may return to the program only through re-entry or re-application. Students can only re-enter once and can only reapply once. Students who have re-applied and are then unsuccessful in coursework will not have the opportunity to re-enter a second time.

Re-application: students who withdraw from, do not successfully complete two, or are dismissed from the first semester must re-apply to the program to be considered for admission a second time. Students who have not been successful following a re-entry may re-apply to the program once. Students who reapply are not allowed a second re-entry.

Re-entry: Students who are unsuccessful in one (1) PTA course in the first semester may apply for re-entry only once. Students who are unsuccessful in one or more courses in semesters 2, 3 or 4 may request re-entry into the program only once.

If re-entry into the program is desired a student may apply by submitting a written request.

- If a student requests to return, and a vacancy is available based on the availability of openings and clinical education resources, they *may* re-enter the program the following year when the course(s) are available again. Please note that the faculty cannot guarantee that students will be allowed re-entry.
- Re-entry requests for the fall semester must be submitted no later than **April 1**, and requests for the spring semester must be submitted no later than **November 1**.
- Students allowed re-entry must pass the comprehensive practical exam that occurred at the end of the semester **prior** to re-entry, even if pass the previous year. Failure to pass the comprehensive practical exam will prevent the student from moving forward in the program.
- Students who re-enter the program will be required to repeat any course in that re-entry semester that has a grade lower than a B- as part of their re-entry. Students who received a B- or higher may Audit the course if that is determine to assist with their success moving forward. Auditing the course is highly encouraged.
- For lab courses that are not repeated, students will have a skill checklist for those labs not repeated.
    - Skill checklists must be completed during the week that material is covered in lab, but no later than the respective practical date in the event of illness or unforeseen emergencies.
    - Students can get checked off on no more than 2 skills in a single open lab session at instructor discretion.
- Students allowed re-entry must pass the comprehensive practical exam at the end of the semester that they return into, even if passed the previous year. Failure to pass the comprehensive practical exam will prevent the student from moving forward in the program.
- Students who fail the comprehensive practical exam as part of the re-entry process and are not allowed to move forward may re-apply if they have not already done so.
- Re-entry requests following a clinical course failure or withdrawal in the final semester of the program must be received within 48 hours.
- . Students must complete the individualized re-entry plan as outlined by the Program Director and Director of Clinical Education.

Re-entry to the program is subject to, but not limited to, a review of:

- Reason for withdrawal from the program
- Academic achievement
- Professional behavior
- Evidence of interim efforts to strengthen areas of weakness
- Use of available resources (Open Lab, retention)
- Clinical evaluations (if any)
- PTA faculty review and recommendations

Consideration for re-entry to the program can only be granted if there are available openings and sufficient clinical resources and faculty. In the event there are more re-entry requests than available openings, a ranking system will be applied using the evaluation criteria as stated above. Eligibility requirements for students to be considered for re-entry are as follows:

1. Minimum PTA GPA of 2.3 inclusive of all PTA courses taken.
2. Completion of an exit interview (if requested by the program director) with the PTA Program Director within thirty days after withdrawal from the course.
3. Written request for readmission submitted by April 1st for the fall semester and November 1st for the spring semester; unless prior arrangements have been granted by the program director.
4. Requests should be addressed to the PTA Program Director, should identify areas needing improvement, reflection on the circumstances surrounding the unsuccessful coursework, and address remediation efforts to the areas of concern.

Evaluation criteria for students requesting to re-enter include, but are not limited to PTA GPA, compliance with code of conduct, attendance, ability to deliver safe and competent care, adherence to college and program policies, use of remediation resources, and completion of the recommended exit plan as applicable. An available seat does not guarantee the request for re-entry will be approved.

Documentation of current health requirements, Basic Life Support training (professional level CPR and first aid), Health and Safety training, a criminal background check, and a toxicology screening may be required upon re-entry into the PTA program with the specific timing identified to the student. All program requirements as tracked through Castlebranch® must be current (green check) before re-entry is allowed based on clinical placement requirements (for those re-entering semesters 2, 3, 4). Additional items may be required of the student to complete the re-entry process.

Any student who has been separated from the PTA Program for more than one year regardless of reason will not be considered for re-entry and will be dismissed from the program. *All curricular requirements must be completed within 3 years of the student's start of the PTA curriculum to earn this degree.*

Students who re-enter the program will be required to complete the program in sequence. Upon re-entry students are subject to, and must abide by, the policies and procedures currently in place.

Failure to meet the re-entry requirements as stated in a timely manner will have the re-entry rescinded and will be dismissed from the program.

Attendance

The Program's faculty encourages students to understand that this is a challenging program of education. Understanding and applying the art and science of physical therapy requires competence with a broad base of knowledge and clinical abilities. Experience has demonstrated that studies must be a student's first priority to succeed in this program. Timeliness and arriving fully prepared are also essential to success in physical therapy.

The program design is such that the first-year physical therapy classes and lab/clinic experiences are scheduled 2-3 days weekly, and general education courses must be fit into the remaining times. **Students should expect to spend *at least* 2-3 hours in preparation, practice, and studying for *each* hour on campus**. Additional on campus time is expected each successive semester. There is the potential that students may have a full credit load each semester. Individuals who have completed the general education courses prior to entering the PTA program will have a decrease in the credit load per semester.

There are occasional learning opportunities which may require student attendance on non-class days. Students will be given as much notice as possible for these learning opportunities; some of these learning opportunities will be mandatory, others may not be mandatory. There may be an additional cost for these learning opportunities.

Physical therapy educational responsibilities extend beyond those days on which classes are scheduled. Obligations such as advisory meetings with faculty, time for practice of clinical skills, meeting with study groups, lab competency/practical examinations and re-tests, library, or computer lab assignments, etc. must be met outside of the days on which physical therapy classes are scheduled.

Attendance and punctuality are expected for all lecture and laboratory classes. Class and laboratory experiences are designed to allow students to meet specific learning objectives essential to safe and competent clinical performance. *Excessive absence, tardiness, and/or leaving early may result in students not achieving the student learning outcomes essential to a competent physical therapist assistant.* In addition, this is considered un-professional behavior and may have consequences.

Students are responsible for all information discussed in class as well as the material assigned from the texts, other reading, and supplemental material provided.

Excessive absenteeism is defined as having more absences per semester than the number of times the class/lab meets per week. (i.e. for a class that meets twice per week, more than two absences is considered excessive.) For absences due to extenuating circumstances, it is the responsibility of the student to contact the instructor in a timely manner. Specific attendance policies are included in the syllabus for each course.

Notification to the course instructor *prior* to the class, with justification for the cause of tardiness or lapse in attendance, is expected from each student.

Classroom behavior and policies

The classroom and laboratory are educational environments and other students are entitled to freedom from unnecessary interruptions in these settings. Therefore, please note the following classroom guidelines:

- It is the student's responsibility to arrive prepared for class or laboratory / clinical experience by having studied the day's assignment.
- Do not damage, mark, or otherwise abuse college property (desks, lab equipment, etc.).
- Students are responsible for leaving their work area clean and neat.

Personal electronic devices

Cellular phones and other portable electronics should not be used during class time, unless needed to take notes. Such electronics should be turned off and put away so it is not a distraction. Texting and accessing information on cell phones and any electronic device is also prohibited during class time. If a student is expecting an urgent call, notify the instructor at the start of the class period. In this case, have the device in a "vibrate" or mute mode to limit distractions. Refer also to the CT State policy.

Social Media

Students are reminded that posts to any and all social networking or social media (including personal Facebook, Twitter, personal blogs, and other types of social media accounts) must reflect the same behavioral standards of honesty, respect, consideration, and professionalism that are expected in college and clinical environments. In any social media posts or communications, students must adhere to the same restrictions related to privacy and respect for fellow students, faculty, and clients as they do in a classroom or clinical environment in accordance with federal *Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) standards.* Inappropriate use of social media by users with regard to the college, its faculty, students, clinical agencies, or clients is subject to disciplinary action.

Cell Phone Use Policy

Cell phones are allowed in class only if they are turned off or turned to a silent mode. Under no circumstances are telephones to be answered in class. Students who ignore this policy may be asked to leave class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require a student be available by phone, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement concerning the device.

Portable electronic devices are not to be turned on during class time (phones, texting, etc). If there are extenuating circumstances and you are expecting an important phone call, please notify the instructor(s) at the start of the class and place your phone on 'vibrate' to keep class disruption to a minimum. Computers/tablets, etc are acceptable for following along with the instructor's presentation and taking notes. If laptops are used to assist your learning in lecture, only the presentation and/or word document for taking notes may be open. There is to be no checking of email or other activities during class time. If it is discovered that other applications are being used, then ALL students will lose the privilege of using laptops during class. There is a zero-tolerance policy for texting or use of portable electronic devices during class. Each violation will result in a one-point deduction from the final course grade when determining final letter grades.

Please see the Clinical Education Procedures section of this manual for the policy regarding personal electronics in the clinic.

Professional Behavior Expectations

This is a professional program and it is our goal to help students develop into respectful, empathetic health care professionals. Professional students are expected to attend class regularly and to be on time for each class. One mechanism to achieve that goal is to have high expectations for classroom and laboratory behavior.

All students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in all activities in a professional manner conducive to learning. Students who have a pattern of tardiness will be noted. Students are expected to be full participants in each lab including as a 'therapist' (practicing skills) and as a 'patient' (having skills performed on them). Students unable to fully participate as a 'patient' or a 'therapist' need to have proper clearance to attend lab.

Personal issues, program requirement status, exam questions, etc should be addressed with the faculty member during scheduled office hours and not at the start of an instructional period.

Areas of concern: Tardiness/attendance, disruptive behavior during class, not engaged in classroom activities/participation, rudeness/disrespectful, unprepared for class, unprofessional attire / violation of dress code. Repeated instances of unprofessional behavior (more than 2 in a semester) will result in a loss of one point on the final course grade for each additional occurrence.

Students who violate the professional behavior expectations will enter the following pathway:

1. First violation – verbal warning / reminder of the expectations.
2. Second violation – student will receive a written warning and the Program Director notified.
3. A third violation will result in the student receiving a PIP with an action plan to modify the behavior with a 1-2 week follow up / re-assessment. The Program Director will sign all components (initial notification / action plan / re-assessment. Students will

receive a copy of the completed form.

4. Any repeated violations of the professional behavior expectations, or failure to meet the requirements of the action plan will result in a meeting with the program director and the student will be placed on program warning.
5. Any additional violations and the student will be referred to the Dean of Students for possible dismissal from the program for violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Depending on the seriousness of the violation, this process could start with number 3 or 4

Performance Improvement Plan

A Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) is designed to draw attention to behaviors inconsistent with professional expectations in any setting and performance areas needing improvement before program success is compromised.

1. A PIP can be initiated by any faculty member, clinical faculty / instructor, lab assistant, and/or program director and is maintained as a permanent part of the student's educational record.
2. A PIP can be given for academic, laboratory, clinical performance, or for professional behavior issues.
3. The action plan identified in the PIP is time-limited and designed to assist the student in meeting course learning outcomes (SLOs).
4. Documentation that the student has successfully completed the action plan and has met the cited SLOs and competencies, or has failed to do so, is included in the PIP.
5. A student that fails to meet the SLos and competencies identified in the PIP will be placed on Program Warning or potentially receive a clinical failure for the course.

Personal Hygiene

The close physical contact that is necessary in the physical therapy lab and clinic requires consistent attention to personal hygiene. To prevent offending patients or lab partners please use deodorant appropriately and use minimal perfume, lotion, aftershave, etc. This also includes environmental odors such as tobacco and/or other inhaled products. Any noted odors may result in the individual being asked to leave until such time as the odors are no longer noticeable. Time lost from class is considered an absence and may affect the student's grade as per the Professional Behavior policy.

Dress Code

The Dress Code provides for an effective learning environment and to promote the safety of students and their patients or lab partners. Instructors have the final decision concerning the dress code. Alterations to the dress code are made on a case-by-case basis and requires a documented medical reason.

For laboratory-based experiences: a bathroom is available for changing. There is also a locker room available for PTA students. Students are welcome to place a lock on one locker and use this for personal storage. At the end of the academic year (May), the student should clean out their locker and remove the lock. Failure to do so will result in the lock being cut off and items discarded.

- Shorts, T-shirt, and appropriate footwear are required attire for lab. Sweatshirt and sweatpants may be worn over these and removed quickly for appropriate lab activities. Denim/jeans are not appropriate lab attire.
- Females are required to wear a sports bra or similar garment, and males will be required to remove

their shirt during appropriate lab topics.

- Fingernails must be trimmed sufficiently to allow the practice of techniques for the provision of physical therapy without risking damage to the skin of the lab partner.
- Undergarments must not be visible, including when performing physical therapy interventions.
- Hair must be maintained away from the face and not impact the student's performance of skills or the lab partner's learning experience.

Repeated occurrences of failure to comply with the dress code during lab may include dismissal from the lab, resulting in an unexcused absence.

For all Interprofessional Education experiences: Students must dress professionally for all designated Interprofessional Education (IPE) experiences. This includes:

- An CT State student picture identification badge
- The PTA program polo shirt (semester 3)
- Slacks/dress pants or skirt
    - Jeans and yoga pants are not acceptable
    - Well-worn sneakers are not acceptable
- Clothing must be clean and free from stains and wrinkles.
- Shoes must have closed toes and flat heels, and rubber soles are recommended for comfort.
- Undergarments must not be visible, including when performing physical therapy interventions.
- Hair must be maintained away from the face.
- Students with a beard or mustache must keep it neat, clean, and well-trimmed.
- Fingernails must be trimmed sufficiently to allow performance of physical therapy interventions without risking damage to the skin of patients.

For all clinic-based learning experiences (including the lab classes held in a clinic): Apparel and grooming must conform to current health, sanitation, and safety standards. The complete uniform is to be worn during clinical experiences, and as otherwise directed by the faculty or clinical instructor.

- Students are to follow the clinic specific dress code. When allowed and appropriate for the setting, the PTA program polo shirt should be worn during the part-time clinical experience.
- The required attire is an CT State student picture identification badge, a watch with a second hand, shoes and socks (and lab coat, when required by the clinical facility).
- Male students wear dress shirt and slacks. Female students a dress shirt with slacks as appropriate for the clinical setting.
- Jeans, yoga pants, and T-shirts are not acceptable.
- Well-worn (dirty/scuffed/torn) sneakers/shoes of are not acceptable. No boots/Uggs/Crocs.
- Clothing must be clean and free of stains and wrinkles and must be of a type that does not limit your ability to professionally perform patient care activities.
- Shoes must have closed toes and flat heels, and rubber soles are recommended for comfort in the clinic.
- Undergarments must not be visible, including when performing physical therapy interventions.
- Students must follow the clinical partner's procedures regarding the visibility of tattoos and the presence of jewelry.
- Hair must be maintained away from the face.
- Students with a beard or mustache must keep it neat, clean and well-trimmed.
- Students who are required to be fit tested for an N-95 mask are not allowed to have any facial hair.
- Fingernails must be trimmed sufficiently to allow performance of physical therapy interventions without risking damage to the skin of patients.

Failure to comply with the dress code will result in dismissal from the clinical area resulting in an unexcused absence. On clinical experiences, the student will follow policies and procedures specific to the facility at which they have been placed, including, but not limited to, the above dress code.

PTA Laboratory Classes

The purpose of laboratory-based training in physical therapist assistant education is to allow students, through practice on other people, to demonstrate safe, professional, and competent behaviors (performance) in the administration of physical therapy measurement and intervention procedures *before* applying these techniques to patients in a clinic. During the laboratory-based training component of education in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program, students practice on one another under faculty supervision.

Laboratory expectations

- The Physical Therapist Assistant Program adheres to the policy that students are entitled to an atmosphere conducive to learning. *Privacy and Draping Policies* and compliance with the PTA Program's policy for *Standards of Behavior* will be observed at all times in the laboratory-based clinical classes.

- Adherence to the *Dress Code* for laboratory and clinical experiences is required.
    - Failure to comply with the dress code may include dismissal from the lab, resulting in an unexcused absence.
    - No offensive slogans or attire may be worn.
    - Undergarments and related areas (gluteal cleft, breast cleavage, midriff) should not be visible at any time during lab.
    - Repeated failure to comply with the dress code will be reflected in the professional behavior assessment for that semester/course.

The patients being treated in the clinic will be a diverse population. To prepare for this skill practice in lab requires training with a variety of body types, personalities, communication styles, etc. The lab portion of this education (practice for providing interventions and for receiving interventions as a "patient") requires that students participate in these learning experiences with *all* classmates during the program.

No equipment or supplies may leave the laboratory or classrooms. Any equipment failure or breakage should be reported to the staff at once.

Open Labs

All instruction of new skills will occur <u>only</u> during the scheduled lab hours. The program supplements these learning experiences with scheduled "open labs". The open labs are provided to foster student practice and learning under the guidance of a faculty member / instructor. Review of previously instructed skills occurs during open lab hours, faculty office hours, or any appointments scheduled with an instructor or retention specialist.

Guests and children are not allowed in open lab. Students are required to sign in and out of open lab. All lab guidelines are to be followed during open lab.

The PTA laboratory area and equipment is only available for PTA students outside of class time during Open

Lab hours. Schedule of availability will be provided at the start of each semester. Skill practice can only utilize non-electrical devices or equipment if there is no faculty present. Application of physical agents/modalities is never allowed unless a faculty member is present and in the room.

Students must attend their assigned lab section unless they have made prior arrangements with the faculty member teaching that course.

Lab Guidelines

- No shoes/sneakers on the mats/plinths
- Appropriate lab attire required (see dress code)
- Closed beverage containers are allowed in lab spaces.
- A faculty member must be present if you are practicing with electrical equipment
- Clean up the lab area and put away any equipment used; wipe down any tables/equipment used with appropriate sanitizing wipes
- Report any equipment that is broken or malfunctioning to faculty or staff member immediately

Privacy and Draping Policy

The program's laboratory is designed to re-create the clinical setting. Lab partners are to be addressed at all times with the same courtesy, dignity, and respect that would be provided to a patient receiving professional services. Lab sessions addressing specific areas of anatomy require that the associated body parts be exposed. It is the student's obligation as the 'treating' student to provide proper 'patient' positioning and draping such that the 'patient' remains covered at all times for these areas:

- Posteriorly from the superior aspect of the gluteal cleft extending distally to the middle of the thigh.
- Anteriorly from the level of the anterior superior iliac spines extending distally to the middle of the thigh.
- Anteriorly from the clavicles to the xiphoid process and sufficient to cover the breasts of female 'patients'.

Confidentiality

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

Student records and grades are confidential. The college follows policies on the retention of student records, both physical and electronic, including abiding by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as set by the Connecticut State Library Office of the Public Records Administrator. Policies on the retention and deletion of electronic records are part of the AIT Policies, Standards, Procedures, and Guidelines created by the former CCC System Office. Any communication, either verbal or written, requiring information about the student's academic records or progress will not be done without the consent of the student. Faculty may keep daily journals for their information that will assist them in the evaluation process or for the documentation of incidents or problems. The journals are property of the faculty and may not be viewed by students.

Americans with Disabilities Act and Sect 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended

Any student with a documented disability seeking accommodations must contact the Office of Disability and Accessibility Services (ODAS). After disclosing the nature of their disability and providing appropriate

documentation, students are urged to discuss their needs with individual instructors with accommodation letters provided to them. Discussions with faculty should occur at the beginning of every semester or anytime an accommodation is sought. Instructors, in conjunction with appropriate college officials, will provide accommodations only to those students who have completed the disclosure and accommodations process in a timely manner.

It is the responsibility of each student to voluntarily contact the Office of Disability and Accessibility Services (ODAS) to disclose their disability and complete the required forms. Disclosure will also include providing appropriate documentation validating the nature of their diagnosed disability.

Eligibility for accommodations must be supported by appropriate documentation validating the need for these services based on the individual's current level of academic functioning in an educational setting. The college reserves the right to determine the nature and extent of appropriate accommodations. This process must be completed *prior* to the implementation of accommodations (a student **cannot** receive accommodations retroactively), and it is the responsibility of the student to initiate and follow through with the process.

Given the clinical nature of the profession and the critical areas of safety, communication, and providing legal and ethical care in a professional manner, it is the student's responsibility to demonstrate safe, competent, and professional practice prior to clinic-based education. A discussion about accommodations needed in the laboratory and clinic should occur as soon as the student has been accepted into the PTA program.

Students are encouraged to disclose and request accommodations early in the curriculum through the Office of Disability and Accessibility Services (ODAS). and each semester thereafter. In an attempt to help students achieve the entry level status required at the end of the clinic-based education, accommodations will be made on a case by case basis in consultation with the Office of Disability and Accessibility Services (ODAS), the Department of Allied Health, Nursing, & Physical Education, and the appropriate clinical partner.

Audio/video recording requests

The CT State Naugatuck Valley Physical Therapist Assistant program allows students to audio and/or video record classes and on campus laboratory sessions upon student request for enhancement of their studies as long as it does not interfere with class administration. These recordings are for the private use of the student and cannot be shared with current or future classmates or anyone outside of the program.

Confidentiality during human simulation scenarios

During participation in simulated clinical experience scenarios, lecture, and laboratory experiences (i.e practical exams) while in the CT State Naugatuck Valley Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program students will be both an active participant and an observer. The primary objectives are to support and enhance clinical learning. The faculty believe that these experiences will provide students with an additional method to identify their learning needs and to improve their performance. Clinical simulations are designed to challenge students' response and judgment in a variety of clinical situations. Due to the possible sensitive nature of any simulated clinical scenarios/cases, as well as to maintain optimal simulation experiences for all learners, strict confidentiality regarding the specific scenarios/cases, including what occurred during the experience, is required by all participants and observers. Students are expected to maintain confidentiality

regarding cases, their performance, and the performance of others. Violations of this will be considered unprofessional behavior and treated as such.

HIPAA

The Healthcare Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 is a US law that established federal standards to protects patients' sensitive health information, limiting the disclosure of Protected Health Information (PHI) without the patients' consent as one of its 5 main rules. There are civil and criminal penalties for the violation of HIPAA including fines and potential imprisonment.
https://www.hhs.gov/hipaa/for-professionals/index.html

During practical examinations students are expected to treat this as a clinical interaction and maintain strict patient confidentiality. During clinical education experiences patient confidentiality must be strictly maintained at all times. No student is allowed to voice record, screen capture, video record, or save any information that occurs in the clinic or simulated clinical situation. This is unprofessional and will also be considered under the Professional Behaviors section of this manual.

Violation of HIPAA is subject to disciplinary action including, but not limited to failure of the practical exam or clinical course and dismissal from the program.

Technology, E-mail and Web Access

College emails will be used in all courses. It is the student's responsibility to save "sent" emails as opposed to requesting an instructor reply following submission. Updates and supplementary material will be done through ***Blackboard®***. It is the student's responsibility to back up their work. It is the student's responsibility to ensure the "@ctstate.edu" email is working and able to receive messages. Crashed hard disks or stolen computers will NOT be considered extenuating circumstances for late submission of assignments.

E-mail accounts

It is the responsibility of each student to maintain his/her school e-mail account until graduation. The faculty will use these e-mail accounts to communicate with students. **Students must check college email accounts daily, at least once, for any current communication**. When in the clinical component of the program, it is recommended that students check their emails multiple times daily; at minimum the night before and morning of clinic. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that this account remains active until graduation from the PTA Program and following graduation the program has been provided with a personal or alternate email for continued communication.

Weather Related Schedule Changes

In the event of inclement weather, the college offers an alert system via **myCTstate**. Please access the college website for details on how to sign up. Please see Blackboard® for further information or assignments for the scheduled class.

For laboratory-based classes when a delayed opening occurs on a lab day, students are expected to arrive on campus at the time of the opening to utilize the remaining lab time. Students will be notified via Blackboard® or email by the course instructor of the plan for that day.

Class Attendance

If a student is unable to attend class due to an emergency, illness, or religious holiday, they should contact each instructor in writing on or before the start of class. Students are expected to arrive on time and stay for the full time of the course. Consequences of absenteeism, tardiness, or leaving early will be found in the course syllabus and is considered unprofessional behavior.

Exams and Quizzes

All exams and quizzes are the property of the faculty. Unauthorized possession of a test by a student will result in disciplinary action. Students are prohibited from taking photographs of exams and/or quizzes with any media and/or printing exam questions from Blackboard®. This would be considered a violation of academic integrity and may result in a 0 for the unauthorized possession of testing materials. Faculty will make every attempt to return exams and evaluations to students promptly.

Tests & exams will be kept on file for on campus courses for no more than one year. Exams may be reviewed with course instructor(s) or retention specialists with prior arrangements.

If a student arrives late for an examination they will not be given additional time to complete the examination, including online exams and exams being taken in the Testing Center. If a student will be unable to take an examination due to an emergency, they must notify the instructor ***prior*** to the start of the examination. Failure to meet this requirement will result in a grade of zero (0) for the exam. If a student misses an exam due to illness, medical documentation may need to be provided and the exam scheduled for as soon as the student returns. Allowing a remotely proctored exam in place of an in person exam is at the discretion of the instructor and the availability for remote proctoring.

If the college is closed on a scheduled exam day, that exam will be given at the next scheduled class meeting. Please see Blackboard® for further information or assignments for the scheduled class.

Exam Testing Guidelines (on-site paper or computerized exams)

1. Students are required to attend exams at the scheduled exam start time. Students who arrive late will not have the exam end time extended.
2. Do not begin the exam until instructed by the proctor.
3. You may not write on a paper exam.
4. An 8.5” x 11” white board or laminated piece of paper may be used during the exam; nothing can be written on the board before the start of the exam and must be erased prior to leaving the room.
5. Length of time allotted for the exam will be announced at the start of the exam.
6. Mobile devices must be turned off. If needed for an anticipated emergency, the student will discuss with the proctor before the start of exam. Only the exam, answer sheet, and writing utensil (if paper exam) or computer are allowed on the desk. Hats and dark glasses cannot be worn unless accommodations have been granted prior to the exam.
7. Headphones and earbuds cannot be worn during the exam. Students may bring in an unopened package of earplugs (for inspection by the instructor prior to the exam) if needed to reduce any

unwanted noise. If there is a need for noise cancelling headphones the student must request formal accommodations through the Office of Disability Services.

8. Exams are graded only from the Scantron answer sheet if used. NO consideration will be given to answers recorded on test paper. Carefully darken the letter of the answer you choose. Do not write anything else on the Scantron. Erase incorrect choices completely. (paper exams)
9. Please return all items provided to you before leaving the room.
10. The CT State academic misconduct policy is in full effect during all exams and quizzes. Violations of the policy will be addressed accordingly. Any student observed looking at another student's exam, recording or photographing the exam, or sharing answers in any way will be addressed immediately and the manner will be dealt with according to the college and BOR student conduct and disciplinary policies.

On-Line Remote Testing Guidelines for LRON courses

(subject to change based on available proctoring software and is at the discretion of the instructor)

1. Students will log into Teams/WebEx/Blackboard Collaborate at their scheduled class time unless otherwise directed by course faculty. The exam will start 5 minutes into the class period. Proctoring will occur using a personal device (ie phone/tablet) that has a camera and the exam will be taken on a computer. A hard-wired computer connection is recommended.
2. Students who arrive late will not have the exam time extended.
3. Students must have their cameras/web cams turned on for the duration of the exam.
4. Please be aware of your testing space. Windows at your back cause a glare across your face; please make sure there is not an uncovered window behind you. Please make every effort to take the exam at a table or a desk. Sitting in soft chair or sofa can make it difficult for the instructor to see you.
5. No personal items (including coats, hats, bags, books, and ALL ELECTRONIC DEVICES) are allowed in the exam space.
6. If you are using a laptop computer, please make sure it is fully charged or plugged in during the exam.
7. Prior to beginning the exam, all headsets and ear buds must be removed. Ear plugs may be used and must be shown to the instructor before putting in the ears. If there is a need for noise cancelling headphones the student must request formal accommodations through the Office of Disability Services.
8. If you need to communicate with the instructor use the chat feature. The group chat feature will be disabled during the exam. You may chat only with the instructor.
9. After logging into the appropriate platform, students will then log into Blackboard®. At the exam start time, the instructor will make the exam available to students.
10. Read the exam directions carefully before starting the exam.
11. Keep your eyes straight ahead. The instructor must always be able to view your face during the exam.
12. Students are expected to remain in the virtual classroom until they have finished and submitted the exam. If the instructor has planned activities following the exam, return to the "classroom" at the designated time.
13. The CT State academic misconduct policy is in full effect during all exams and quizzes. Violations of the policy will be addressed accordingly.

Testing for Asynchronous Courses

1. Fully online courses may have exams and quizzes that must be completed online.
2. These exams/quizzes will be administered via Blackboard®.
3. Proctoring is at the discretion of the instructor during the semester. Final exams are proctored.

Any violation of the above test guidelines will result in disciplinary action which may include dismissal from the Physical Therapist Assistant program.

Student Conduct

Students determined to be in violation of the Board of Regents Policy on Student Conduct or are in violation of any policies in the CT State Community College *Student Handbook* will not be eligible for readmission to their respective program.

Risk Management

Participation Expectations

PTA students agree to participate in educational demonstrations and the practice of physical therapy that occur in the classroom, lab, and related clinical experiences. Instructors will provide instruction and training in equipment use and storage, universal body substance precautions, and manual procedures.

A component of this instruction to students includes hands-on contact to the student by another student and/or faculty and the requirement that the student practice hands-on contact with other students and/or faculty members. Body parts may need to be exposed for visual and manual inspection (touching) as part of this practice and care we provide to our patients/clients and is an integral part of instruction. In select situations, if hands-on contact makes a student feel uncomfortable, they have the right to let the instructor know.

If a physical therapist assistant student is unable to participate in the role play of a patient due to medical history or condition, the student is responsible for informing the instructor during each appropriate session and receiving accommodations through the Office of Disability and Accessibility Services (ODAS). CT State Naugatuck Valley and its instructors are not liable for injury, disease, or other damage resulting from instruction and training in physical therapy.

Health & Safety

Health requirements have been developed to maximize both student and client health and safety. Completion and submission of this information is a requirement for participation in the PTA program clinical experiences. Students must be cleared for participation via their physical exam. **Students will not be allowed to attend clinical experiences without this clearance.** Students found to be non-compliant with any health and program requirements are not allowed to attend clinic experiences.

Status changes / injury outside of the classroom

Students are expected to meet all course requirements. A change in physical/mental health status, hospitalization, or visit to the emergency department/urgent care center, including any medication(s) with the potential for effects such as impairment in movement, judgment, vision, or thought processes may affect the students' ability to perform safely in the classroom and/or clinic.

Changes in health status that affect the student's ability to perform safely in the classroom and/or clinic will require documentation of medical clearance that indicates the students' ability to fully participate in laboratory activities or clinical experiences or specify the restrictions (with duration), from a medical physician/APRN.

Documentation of medical clearance should be submitted to the Program Director. Documentation or restrictions must also be submitted to the Program Director if temporary accommodations are needed.

- No specific medical information should be provided directly to the program.
- The Program Director will determine if the restrictions are reasonable and still allow for safe participation in lab activities. The PD will notify the involved courses instructors of the nature of the restriction and timeframe.

Pregnancy

It is strongly recommended, for the health of the fetus, that a student becoming pregnant while enrolled in the program voluntarily notifies faculty and the Program Director. Students who are pregnant are expected to meet the same learning outcomes as classmates but may be excused from playing 'patient' in certain laboratory experiences.

Infection Control

Individuals who are contagious, or suspect a communicable disease, should not attend class/lab/clinic in accordance with CDC guidelines. Masks and gloves may be worn in class on an as needed basis. Students will need to provide their own mask/gloves.

Individuals with infections or medical illness should follow Standard Precautions.

Any open wounds need to be covered with an appropriate dressing.

Students may be exposed to contagious or communicable diseases as they are working in close proximity with peers and faculty during lab experiences. In the clinic, students may be exposed to patients with contagious or communicable diseases. Students have the opportunity to wear appropriate PPE following Standard and transmission-based precautions and have access to handwashing stations and hand sanitizer for infection control.

Reporting Injuries Occurring on Campus and College-Sponsored Activities

Students and faculty who may be injured during lecture and/or laboratory experiences need to notify the primary faculty member immediately following the incident after appropriate first aid has been applied. An Incident Report form should be completed in a timely manner using the following procedure. The Program Director should also be notified. Emergency Medical Services should be contacted for any injury beyond minor bleeding.

An incident resulting in an injury (including infectious disease exposures/needle sticks where follow-up and treatment may be necessary) or chemical exposure to any student that occurs on campus or while participating in CT State sponsored activities is reported by completing the NV Incident Report Form within 3 days of the incident. The responsible staff or faculty member ensures that the form is completed and submitted.

In addition to the College policy, students who are injured at a clinical facility are required to follow the facility's injury reporting policy and procedures. Students who are injured while participating in program activities, should report the injury to the program director within 48 hours of the incident. The faculty or staff who were supervising the student at the time that the incident occurred must also report the incident to program director within 48 hours of the incident.

Students injured while participating in College activities may be covered by the College's accident insurance policy. It is the student's responsibility to follow the procedures listed in the NVCC Student Handbook in order to receive reimbursement for costs incurred.

The Incident Report Form (a fillable PDF) is available in the Allied Health Department office or it may be obtained by contacting the offices of the Dean of Student Services (203-575-8012) or Dean of Administration (203-575-8089).

The completed form is sent to the Dean of Administration's office, K706. A copy of the form should be given to the party involved in the incident. The Dean of Administration's office will then send the forms to the Dean of Student Services.

Reference: NVCC Procedure for Reporting Injuries Occurring on Campus and College-sponsored activities (February 28, 2018).

Related Content covered in courses

- Semester 1 – standard and transmission-based precautions, Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) donning/doffing, CT Hospital Association (CHA) Health and Safety Training
- Semester 2 – sterile wound care
- Semester 3 – CHA Health and Safety Training, HIPAA training e-module via Castlebranch, review of PPE donning/doffing

Student Safety

Procedures in accordance with current administration recommendations will be followed to maintain a safe environment and minimize distractions to students.

The PTA Program adheres to the policies established by CT State related to safety in the College Catalog: https://catalog.ctstate.edu/

The policy can also be found in the Student Handbook:
https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/CTS-Student-Handbook.pdf

Anti-plagiarism detection software

SafeAssign, Turn It In, or other anti-plagiarism detection software products may be used in this course. Anti-plagiarism detection software products assist faculty and students in preventing and detecting plagiarism. Professors may utilize such software in order to check the originality of the academic work students submit in a course by comparing submitted papers to those contained in its database consisting of submitted papers and other sources. Anti-plagiarism detection software returns an "originality report" for each submission. The report is limited in scope to merely identifying passages that are not original to the author of the submitted work and which may include correctly cited quotations and information. Professors and students must carefully review such reports. No adverse action may be taken by a professor with respect to a student solely on the basis of an originality report which indicates the potential for plagiarism.

In this course you may be asked to submit your academic papers and other creative work containing personally identifiable information for originality reporting. By doing so, your work along with personally identifiable information will be retained in the product database and may be subsequently reported out containing your personally identifiable information not only to your professor, but also to professors of the other twelve Connecticut Community Colleges as part of subsequent originality reports.

You may decline to submit your work for originality reporting. If so, you must be provided an alternative method in which to submit your work. However, your professor, after removing your personally identifying information, may nonetheless submit limited portions of your academic work for originality reporting.

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) software:

ChatGPT and other AI generative tools (Bard, Bing, Perplexity, Claude, etc.) are very popular both inside and outside the classroom. While it may be tempting to delegate all your work to an AI, AI systems are not perfect and prone to errors, hallucinations, and biases. As the human using the AI, you are responsible for your own work and any AI output presented in your work. This includes checking the reliability of sources and including your own unique perspectives and insights.

Use of AI in the physical therapist assistant courses is NOT appropriate. It is expected that all student work submitted is of their own effort and that AI software has not been used. See also the Academic Integrity and anti-plagiarism sections of this syllabus.

General Information

Communication with Faculty

Faculty will respond to email communication within 2 business days during the academic semester schedule.

Tracking program requirements

The PTA program utilizes a company that provides on-line tracking of program requirements. This company is called Castlebranch® (www.castlebranch.com). Any questions related to documents uploaded to Castlebranch® can be addressed to their helpline. Students are responsible for monitoring their status regarding program requirements. Detailed information regarding each requirement is available in Castlebranch® using the '+' feature found with each item. Failure to remain current with program

requirements will result in a review of the student's status and will reflect in their professional behavior evaluation. Students who do not remain current with program requirements CANNOT attend any clinic-based experiences/activities which will be reflected in their grade for that course.

CPR Certification

It is the students' responsibility to pass the American Heart Association Basic Life Support (BLS) CPR & AED Training for Healthcare Professionals or American Red Cross CPR for Healthcare Providers or equivalent. Students must maintain this certification through the completion of clinical education courses or students will not be allowed to attend clinical education experiences.

Criminal Background Check, Fingerprinting, and Substance Screening

All students are required to complete a criminal background check and substance screening prior to the third semester of the program when the clinical education experiences begin. There may be additional clinical requirements for substance screening and criminal background checks (including potentially fingerprinting) for additional clinical education experiences.

- Student refusal of either the background check or substance screening will result in dismissal from the PTA program due to inability to complete clinical learning requirements.
- *Positive toxicology screens can prevent students from participating in a clinical assignment per facility contractual agreements. A positive substance screen may result in dismissal from the program.
- The following guides the response to a positive toxicology screening for any student:
    1. All specimens identified as non-negative/positive on the initial test shall be confirmed, reviewed, and interpreted by the vendor.
    2. The student is required to provide documentation by a healthcare provider in the event there is a medical explanation for a positive result (i.e., the result of a prescribed medication). In accordance with federal law, a positive toxicology screen for legally prescribed marijuana can prohibit a student from being placed in a clinical setting that accepts federal funding.
- A positive criminal background check / fingerprinting / substance screen may preclude participation in clinical education experiences, impact eligibility to take the licensure exam, and impact eligibility to obtain a PTA license or future employment.
    - The clinical coordinator (DCE) will attempt to contact no more than three confirmed clinical education facilities to obtain clinical placement in the event of a positive background check, fingerprinting, or substance screen.
    - Administration may need to share details of positive results with the clinical site in efforts to obtain clinical placement if required by contractual agreement and/or clinical placement attestation requirements. Otherwise, the program/division is not responsible for finding an alternate clinical placement for a student who fails to pass a background check/fingerprint/substance screen.

<u>Procedure following a positive substance screen, background check, or fingerprinting –</u> Currently under review. The finalized procedure, if different, will be disseminated at that time.

1. Student completes the required elements via Castlebranch®.
2. A positive finding (anything other than a green check) will result in the student's name being shared with the Associate Dean of Allied Health and Nursing.
3. The Associate Dean will contact the student for any additional information needed.
4. The Associate Dean will notify the clinical coordinator if the student is cleared for clinical placement or not.
5. Clinical sites will be notified that the screening has occurred if required as part of the contractual

agreement between the clinical site and the school or if part of the attestation packet required before student arrival. The clinical partner must receive the results of the substance screen, background check, or fingerprinting directly from the student if required contractually or if part of an attestation document requirement.

Substance Use

See Drugs and Alcohol Policy in CT College Catalog https://catalog.ctstate.edu/

See the Student Handbook: https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/CTS-Student-Handbook.pdf

Computer Resources

The PTA Program relies on computers to enhance learning experience. Assignments, interactive tutorials, communication with classmates and faculty, and many other computer- based resources are available to promote learning and foster success in this program. The Community College System offers computing services to students through local campus computer centers. It is to the student's advantage to be familiar with local resources. Computer requirements to be successful can be found at: https://websupport.ct.edu/shp/cscu/viewarticles?articleId=1551795&currentPage=3&selectedValue=minimum%20computer%20requirements

Extra-Curricular Activities

Social and recreational activities play an important part in life as a student. Students are encouraged to participate in the events which are sponsored by and for the students at NVCC. The Student Physical Therapist Assistant Club through the Student Government Association (SGA) is a student-driven club comprised primarily of student members of the PTA program and facilitated by a PTA faculty member. This club is an opportunity to get more involved in the field of physical therapy, develop leadership skills, and generate club funds for identified physical therapy class activities or attendance at professional conferences.

The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

The APTA is the national organization dedicated to promoting physical therapy. The profession's association is an outstanding resource. It is a program requirement for all students to join the APTA once being admitted into the program. Annual student costs are approximately $100 and provides resources that will help with coursework (professional journals, online resources/articles, reduced fees for conferences) – *consider the cost as that of a very valuable textbook.* The APTA can be contacted at (800) 999-APTA, or through their website at www.apta.org.

APTA Connecticut (APTA-CT) is a chapter of the APTA. Students joining the APTA automatically become members of the APTA-CT. The APTA-CT addresses regional issues regarding physical therapy and can be contacted at (857) 702-9915 or via the website: www.ctpt.org. The APTA-CT sponsors local conferences, meetings, and lectures which students will find beneficial to the development of understanding of physical therapy. There is also a student special interest group (SSIG) which students are encouraged to join.

Student and Employer Contracts

The following guidelines for fairness in offering financial assistance in exchange for a promise of future employment have been developed by the American Physical Therapy Association. Students are urged to consider each of these points when considering one of these contracts and, as with any contract, legal guidance is recommended.

The APTA Guidelines for Student and Employer Contracts® (HOD 06-92-14-28):

- Notification by the employer if the place of employment may be in an isolated area or as a solo practitioner such that the new graduate will not have ready access to mentoring and regular collegial relationships or any resources for professional growth and development.
- Disclosure by the employer of ownership of the practice.
- Notification by the employer to the student if the practice is involved in any situation in which a referring practitioner can profit as a result of referring patients for physical therapy and notification that the American Physical Therapy Association is opposed to such situations.
- Student awareness of any potential future tax obligations that may be incurred upon graduation as the result of deferred income.
- The agreement must not, in any way, interfere with the process and planning of the student's professional education.
- It should be understood that the school is not a party to the agreement and is not bound to any conditions of the agreement.
- There should be a clearly delineated, fair, and reasonable buy-out provision in which the student understands the legal commitment to pay back the stipend with reasonable interest in the event that there is dissatisfaction or reason for release from the contract on the student's part at any time during the term of the agreement.
- A no-penalty bailout provision should be provided in the event of change of ownership, but the student may be required to adhere to a reasonable payback schedule.
- Avoidance of non-compete clauses is recommended, but if there is one, a reasonable limitation of time and distance should be incorporated.
- A student's interest may best be served by obtaining appropriate legal counsel prior to signing the contract.

Public Safety

For emergencies call the Public Safety Office at **203-575-8112** or use an assistance phone. Notify the dispatcher that you are reporting an emergency or crime and provide them with your location and related information. Members of this department are police empowered with all rights and responsibilities of their position. Emergency phones connect directly to Public Safety

For routine calls call **203-575-8113.** Students should download the "LiveSafe" app which provides a 24/7 link to the campus public safety, virtual escort services, and safety resources.

Calendar

The PTA Program follows the Common Academic Calendar that can be found on the CT State website: https://ctstate.edu/academic-calendar.

**There will be a different schedule to accommodate final exams and practical exams for the PTA program

in the months of December and May. This schedule will be distributed at least 2 weeks before the start of final exams. **Students should remain flexible for the week of final exams as exams may occur on days/times other than normal class time.**

Physical Therapist Assistant Licensure

Upon graduation from the PTA program, students will be required to pass a national computerized licensure exam to gain employment as a physical therapist assistant in the State of Connecticut. The licensure process requires the submission of fees to the Department of Public Health and the submission of fees to the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. Upon successful completion of the exam and licensure application, graduates will be eligible for a PTA license, which is renewed annually. Unsuccessful completion of the licensure exam will require the submission of an additional examination fee in order to retake the exam. Detailed information is located at the Connecticut Department of Public Health website, under Licensing & Certification (http://www.ct.gov/dph/site/default.asp). For more information regarding the national licensure exam, please visit: www.fsbpt.org.

Complaint Process

A complaint in regard to the PTA program can be submitted on the PTA Program Complaint Form. The form can be found on the PTA Program website:
https://nv.edu/Portals/0/Documents/AcademicPrograms/PTA/PTAComplaintForm.pdf.

Complaints can be originated by, but not limited to, PTA students, non-PTA students, clinical site personnel, NVCC and other consortium college personnel, and the general public.

The written complaint form will be reviewed by the PTA program director with a response within two weeks. The form will be kept on file in the PTA Department for one year.

If the response by the PTA program director does not result in a resolution, the person filing the complaint can choose to forward the documentation to the Associate Dean of Health Sciences.

**A formal complaint does not need to be completed in all situations. All PTA students who have a concern in a specific course should discuss their concern with the specific course instructor.

Academic Integrity & Plagiarism

Please see the Student Handbook:
https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/CTS-Student-Handbook.pdf

Allied Health and Nursing students are entering professions that require academic, professional, and personal integrity. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards of that profession and the program in which they are enrolled. Any violation of appropriate conduct will be dealt with according to the policies outlined in the program handbook and the CT State College Student Handbook.

Academic Honesty Statement

We expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic dishonesty is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Trustees' student discipline policy (BOR Student Code of Conduct). This policy prohibits

cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally. Anyone who violates the Board policy may fail the course at the discretion of the instructor. (Please see the Student Handbook on the College website link for more information.)

A student may not obtain a transcript notation of "W" in a course if there exists substantial reason to believe the student has engaged in academic misconduct in the course. A transcript notation of "W" will only be permitted for such students when the final resolution results in finding the student did not commit academic misconduct in the course.

Academic integrity is demonstrated by not engaging in conduct that has as its intent or effect the false representation of a student's academic performance, including but not limited to:

- cheating on an examination,
- collaborating with others in work to be presented, contrary to the stated rules of the course,
- plagiarizing, including the submission of others' ideas or papers (whether purchased, borrowed or otherwise obtained) as one' s own,
- stealing or having unauthorized access to examinations or course materials,
- falsifying records or laboratory or other data,
- submitting, if contrary to the rules of a course, work previously presented in another course, and
- knowingly assisting another student, in any of the above, including an arrangement whereby any work, classroom performance, examination, or other activity is submitted or performed by a person other than the student under whose name the work is submitted or performed.

From: Connecticut Community Colleges Board of Trustees 5.2.1 Policy on Student Conduct. Section 3: Expectations for Student Conduct

False representation of a student's academic performance also includes knowingly giving or accepting assistance in the clinical area contrary to the stated rules of the course.

Academic Honesty

We expect the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct is prohibited in accordance with the Board of Regents ***Student Code of Conduct***. This policy prohibits cheating on examinations, unauthorized collaboration on assignments, unauthorized access to examinations or course materials, plagiarism, and other proscribed activities. Academic misconduct extends to any student who aids in another's student's cheating. Plagiarism is defined as the use of another's idea(s) or phrase(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally.

The first offense of academic misconduct may result in a grade of "F" or "0" for the assignment and/or failure in the course at the discretion of the instructor. Please see the Student Handbook on the College website link for more information: https://ctstate.edu/uploads/Forms-Documents/CTS-Student-Handbook.pdf. Any subsequent instances of academic misconduct will require the student to meet with the Dean of Academic Affairs. The Dean, in collaboration with the instructor, will determine the consequence for the subsequent instances of academic misconduct. In addition, as academic misconduct is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct, referral will be made to the Dean of Student Services and addressed as appropriate.

A student may not obtain a transcript notation of "W" in a course if there exists substantial reason to believe

the student has engaged in academic misconduct in the course. A transcript notation of "W" will only be permitted for such students when the final resolution results in finding the student did not commit academic misconduct in the course.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the intentional copying of another's idea(s) or phrases(s) and representing that/those idea(s) as your own, either intentionally or unintentionally. This includes copying a friend's paper as well as a published work. Penalties for plagiarism are as follows:

First incident: The first incident of plagiarism will be documented as unintentional plagiarism and as such will be treated as follows: Conference with instructor followed by the mandatory resubmission of the work with all materials correctly documented as stated in the course syllabus. The appropriate professional behaviors form will be completed and placed in the student file.

Second incident: The second incident of plagiarism will be documented as intentional. There will be no opportunity to re-submit the paper and the grade for that paper will be recorded as an "F" and will result in a grade of "F" for the course. A copy of the paper will be sent to the Associate Dean who may forward it to the Dean of Students for additional sanctions.

Copyright Information

Selected portions of the curriculum are taught, reinforced or reviewed through the use of educational software/instructional media such as videotapes, computer programs, audio cassettes, and/or online learning activities. Students are required to adhere to all copyright polices.

CLINICAL EDUCATION PROCEDURES

Clinic-based Education

The academic portion of the physical therapist assistant program is designed to utilize didactic and laboratory experiences in preparing students in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains. Learning progressions are incorporated within each course and throughout the program to activate students' critical thinking skills, and ultimately their clinical decision-making skills.

Didactic instruction and collaborative learning provide the framework for a working knowledge base within this curriculum. Laboratory experiences provide the opportunity and repetition necessary to gain proficiency in the skills and procedures necessary for successful clinical performance as a student physical therapist assistant (SPTA). Although students will experience clinically oriented teaching in the laboratory, it is necessary to provide ample opportunity for students to observe actual patients and practice the application of their cognitive, psychomotor, and affective skills in the clinic. It is through this clinical experience that students will gain the competence and skills of an entry-level PTA.

The clinical education courses provide students a forum for participation in the provision of physical therapy. Each clinic-based education course consists of supervised clinical experiences through agencies affiliated with the CT State NV PTA Program. Students will be assigned to and supervised by clinicians in the physical therapy community. Clinic experiences are designed to provide students learning experiences with patients and associated activities such as coordination with other health care providers, utilization of support staff, and/or time management. These experiences provide a truly comprehensive learning experience to the provision of patient care and the performance of the PTA student.

This program is designed to gradually introduce simulated patient interaction and measurement and treatment skills into the curriculum in the first, second, and third semesters of didactic coursework (PTA 1250, PTA 1450, PTA 1500 and PTA 2500). Clinic/lab-based experiences, such as functional mobility, range of motion & strength testing, and neurological skill practice, will allow the students the opportunity to practice their skills on individuals playing the role of actual musculoskeletal, neurological, and/or systemic conditions.

The curriculum utilizes a part-time integrated clinical experience (ICE) to introduce students to problem-solving skills, treatment interventions, and the role of the PTA following successful completion of the second semester. The curriculum is designed to provide a part-time clinical experience approximately 96 hours in length incorporated into a third semester course (PTA 2694P). This semester-long clinical exposure will typically be conducted one full day per week during the semester and provide the students with the opportunity to demonstrate basic patient communication skills, data collections skills, and intervention techniques. Students will be developing their skillset of gathering, interpreting, and synthesizing information towards making effective clinical judgments; with the ability of providing a rationale for their clinical decisions emerging. Students will be exposed to chart reviewing and documentation; with exposure to billing/coding.

The program culminates in the completion of two full-time clinical experiences (PTA2794, PTA2894) within physical therapy settings in Connecticut. Objectives for these clinical experiences are based on terminal competencies of the PTA program. At the completion of each clinical experience, students should be consistently meeting objectives in the major performance categories. It is expected that frequent guidance will be necessary in the early phases in the experiences for areas relating to critical thinking and case management, while only occasional guidance and/or confirmation will be necessary in the final stages of the clinical experiences. Successful completion of the second full-time clinical experience will result in the ability to practice as an entry-level PTA and meet the final requirements of the PTA program.

Clinic-based education is the capstone to the student's education as a physical therapist assistant student, and it is expected that students will develop and then demonstrate clinical performance and behaviors that are consistent with those of an entry-level PTA. Successful completion of the clinic-based education requires that students consistently demonstrate competence of the knowledge and performance of the abilities unique to the PTA, including demonstration of professional behaviors expected of an entry-level therapist.

The clinic-based education is an extension of the educational experience provided through the PTA program. As such, all responsibilities and rights outlined in this manual are extended to students while participating in clinical education.

Clinical Education Courses

Clinical education experiences are a vital component to the development of competent physical therapist assistants. The clinical education faculty of the site are instrumental in providing an active, stimulating environment for our students. An effective relationship between the clinical site and the educational program exists with the purpose of educating our PTA students. The site coordinator of clinical education (SCCE) and the clinical instructor (CI) have a crucial role in providing a supportive and appropriate learning experience, while keeping in consideration the learning needs of each individual student. The students' experiences at the clinical sites lead to further development of the knowledge, skills and behaviors identified in CT State-NV PTA Program's mission, goals, and objectives.

During the CT State-NV PTA Program, students participate in three clinical education experiences, for a total of approximately 650 hours of clinical learning experiences, meeting current Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) requirements. Clinical experiences are sequenced throughout the curriculum to allow students to build on academic knowledge and theory taught in the classroom while practicing skill sets gained in the laboratory setting. Each semester students are taught new skill sets and theory, while continuing to practice skills learned during previous terms. Students will be expected to complete their clinical experiences in at least two different facilities; complex and non-complex. By the end of the final clinical experience course, students will have attained the competencies essential to function independently as an entry-level PTA.

Clinical Experience #1

<u>PTA 2694P: PTA Part Time Clinical Experience</u>
1 credit: Approximately 8 hours per week of clinical experience
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) in PTA 1450, 1500, 1550, and 2580.
Course description: This course is an integrated part-time clinical experience. Students will apply principles of the curriculum and physical therapy services as a Student Physical Therapist Assistant (SPTA). Students will implement general skills, data collection, and interventions in a physical therapy clinical setting under the direction and supervision of a licensed Physical Therapist.

Clinical Experience #2

<u>PTA 2794P: PTA Full Time Clinical Experience I</u>
3 credits: Approximately 40 hours per week of clinical experience
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) of PTA 2500, PTA 2550, PTA 2580, and PTA 2694P.
Course description: This course is an advanced clinical experience designed for students to integrate and apply physical therapy concepts to effectively perform interventions and data collection as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will

develop daily organizational and management skills of a patient caseload and effectively contribute to the health care team. This course is a full-time clinical experience (approximately 40 hours per week) in the first half of the semester.

Clinical Experience #3

PTA 2894P: PTA Full Time Clinical Experience II
3 credits: Approximately 40 hours per week of clinical experience
Pre-requisites: Successful completion (C or better) of PTA 2794
Course description: This course is the final clinical experience designed for students to integrate and apply physical therapy concepts to effectively perform interventions and data collection as a physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. Students will develop daily organizational and management skills of a patient caseload and effectively contribute to the health care team consistent with entry-level performance. This course is a full-time clinical experience (approximately 40 hours per week) in the second half of the semester.

Clinical Education Procedures

Please note these procedures are continually reviewed and updated according to college, program, and accreditation changes. If any policies or procedures are revised, students will be provided with the updated procedures in the course syllabus.

This portion of the education is done through collaboration with the physical therapy community. These procedures are designed to promote a successful learning experience *and* to ensure that the students meet the professional community's standards for physical therapy providers. Therefore, *please attend to these procedures diligently*. If problems arise, discussion should first occur with the Clinical Instructor (CI) and/or the Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE). Students should feel free to contact the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) at any time with questions or unresolved conflicts.

Assignment of Clinical Education Experiences

Determination of Clinical Locations

Every March, CT State-NV PTA program sends a mass request to clinic sites throughout Connecticut, asking for commitment to student placements for the following year's clinical experiences in accordance with (American Physical Therapy Association) APTA national mass mailing adopted guidelines. Each facility/company will determine the number of students for each clinical experience and the type of rotation they are accepting, according to each facility's clinical education policies. The SCCE typically is the individual responsible for this coordination and then she/he will return this information to the CT State-NV PTA program/DCE.

Determination of Clinical Assignments

The program provides a rich diversity of learning experiences by affiliating with a range of agencies that provide physical therapy.

Clinic-based education is an essential learning experience, and as such the assignments are designed to meet students' needs for a comprehensive education. Students' preferences will be considered during assignment of clinical sites, but the final determination rests with the Director of Clinical Education (DCE).

In preparation for determining the student placements, the students are provided a list of the placement opportunities, and upon request, have access to previous student assessments of clinical sites through the *Physical Therapist Assistant Student Evaluation: Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction* (section 1). Upon request, students are also able to review further information on file for each facility, such as the Clinical Site Information Form (CSIF). Students are able to submit their top two choices for each experience and are also able to provide comments to the DCE, which will be taken into consideration with student placements. The DCE's considerations in determining student placements are that the facility is able to confirm ability to accept the student and an active contract between the college and the facility exists. The DCE will review all of the above information and will determine the best student placements to provide optimal learning experiences for all students. The DCE makes the final decision regarding student placements.

Students, or their family members and friends, are not to make direct contact with any facility/site in efforts of securing a student placement for a clinical experience.

Scheduling of student placements for the part-time clinical experience will be handled during the second semester of the curriculum, and full-time clinical experiences during the third semester of the curriculum. Students who are interested in going to a specific site for a clinical education experience are encouraged to notify the DCE by email. The DCE will make every attempt to place students in local areas for at least one clinical experience; however, the final determination will be based on the availability of sites balanced with the learning needs of the students in the program. Students may be required to travel over seventy-five (75) minutes to their experiences. The SCCE/CI is provided with the student name and contact information assigned for the specific clinical experience.

It is the student's obligation to utilize assigned sites in order to successfully complete the learning experiences inherent in the education of a PTA. If a student chooses not to accept an assignment, the student will not be able to meet the course learning outcomes and the program curriculum requirements will not be met resulting in an inability to graduate.

Many students will have worked in health care settings prior to admission to the PTA Program or will continue to work part-time while enrolled. While it is realized that the experience will be valuable, it will not be awarded credit in lieu of clinic-based education time. Students may not be allowed to attend a clinical education experience where they or a family member are, or have been, employed. **Please see the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) if you are in this situation.**

Clinic Requirements

Clinic sites may have their own specific documentation or requirements of the student. Students are responsible for providing the necessary documentation of those requirements (as needed) to their designated clinical sites <u>at least</u> two weeks prior to the clinical experience, or earlier if requested by the clinical site. Failure to do so will preclude attendance at clinical sites until compliance is met. This will place the students' status in the program at risk. Liability ("malpractice") insurance will be provided through a blanket liability policy for all students while on clinical experiences.

Criminal Background Check/Substance Screening/Fingerprinting

Some medical facilities require substance screening, finger printing, and/or checks for criminal records for students participating in clinical education experiences**.** Facilities may require students to complete these requirements with the specific vendor of their choice and within more stringent timeframes than the CT State-NV PTA Program. **Students attending clinical education experiences will be subject to the policies and standards established by the clinical education facilities at the student's expense.**

***Please see more information related to positive results in the manual (approximately page 39 & 40) under "General Information" section of the manual.**
Clinical sites will be notified that the screening has occurred if required as part of the contractual agreement between the clinical site and the school or if part of the attestation packet required before student arrival. The clinical partner must receive the results of the substance screen, background check, or fingerprinting directly from the student if required contractually or if part of an attestation document requirement.

Identification as a Student

According to the State of Connecticut, health care providers must display photographic identification badges during work hours. This act applies to students on clinical education experiences in the PTA program. Student identification badges will be obtained at CT State Community College-NV. These badges are to be worn at all times while completing the clinical experience at the designated facility. If the student does not have proper identification, they are not allowed to be present at the clinic and it will be considered an unexcused absence, subject to the policies noted within the course syllabi.

Professionalism and Behavioral Requirements in the Clinic

During clinical education experiences, students are expected to adhere to the standards and requirements of the PTA program (as defined in the *Student Manual* and any addendums to college/program policy & procedures provided) **AND** those of that facility (i.e., dress, behavior, professional standards, confidentiality, etc.). Lack of the ability to demonstrate professional behaviors, as assessed by the clinical site staff/CI/SCCEs and/or the DCE/Program Director, may include failure of the clinic experience, pending a thorough review of the situation.

Expectations for Student Conduct

Physical therapist assistant students are entering a profession that requires a high level of personal integrity. Compliance with recognized standards and policies of conduct provides an opportunity for students to develop and practice skills in leadership, group process, decision making, and ethical and moral reasoning.

Please note the following when dealing with conflicts or problems while on clinic-based educational experiences. All problems are to be brought to the immediate attention of the student's Clinical Instructor (CI). If this does not achieve an effective resolution, the Site Coordinator for Clinical Instruction (SCCE) at that facility should be consulted. Students should notify the DCE when the SCCE is consulted. Students are not to use an argumentative tone with the patients, staff, or classmates. Unprofessional behavior or communication (verbal/nonverbal) in a clinic setting may lead to dismissal from the PTA program.

Inappropriate professional behavior/communication skills (verbal and non-verbal) may result in the student

being removed from the clinical experience. The student will receive a failing grade in the course and may result in dismissal from the program.

Students are to continue to follow the policies and procedures set forth in the *Student Manual of Academic and Clinical Procedures for the PTA Program* while on their clinical education experiences. Students are also expected to follow the safety procedures at each facility and will be oriented to such by facility personnel. The *Affiliation Agreement (contract)* addresses student safety during clinical educational experiences.

The clinic is an extension of the academic learning environment. Students are expected to be prepared daily, and to complete any assignments given by the CI in a timely manner.

Scheduling & Attendance

Students are expected to adhere to, and attend, the clinic for a "full-time" schedule (PTA 2794, PTA 2894) for the final semester clinical experiences. Depending on the work hours of the clinical instructor, a full-time clinic schedule may include "flexible" hours (various days & hours; could include weekends/evening hours). Unless otherwise approved by both the DCE and the SCCE, students are expected to follow the schedule of their CI. **If a student has any concerns with their schedule, they must first have a discussion with the DCE.** Repeated tardiness/leaving early, will trigger involvement of the DCE and review of the situation by the PTA Program faculty. Action may include (but is not limited to) dismissal of the student from the PTA Program

Daily attendance is required. In the event of illness, the student is responsible for notifying the DCE/PTA Program **AND** the CI prior to the start of the workday. Time lost from the clinic may need to be made up at the discretion of the DCE with input from the SCCE, CI, and PTA Program Director. In the event of a natural disaster/state of emergency, the DCE and PTA Program Director will make decisions regarding make-up time on a situational basis.

The clinical facility has the final decision in determining if a student will be allowed to attend clinical learning experiences if the student has an acute illness.

Students will follow the clinic's schedule for holiday time-off while on clinical experiences. Students are required to attend clinic during the assigned hours regardless of weather-related college closing or delayed-openings if the clinic is open. It is the responsibility of the student to plan other arrangements for travel or family obligations in the event of inclement weather. If it is likely that you will be late due to road conditions you should notify the clinical instructor in a timely manner and provide an estimated time of arrival.

Students may be required to travel considerable distances to their clinic site. In the event that the student feels it is a risk to their safety to travel to the clinic site, they may choose not to travel, but will be required to make up all lost time, which could result in an extension of their clinical experience, or an inability to meet the requirements of the clinical course. The DCE and clinical site need to be notified prior to the scheduled start time of the student's inability to travel. Make up time and potential extension of the clinical experience, is at the discretion/ability of the clinical site to do so. The student is required to meet the learning outcomes of the clinical course by the last day of the clinical experience, as agreed upon between the PTA Program and the clinical partner.

Clinical education experiences must occur during the standard college semesters, unless otherwise approved by administration. If a student suffers a medical issue that does not allow them to attend the clinic, it is

possible that the student will need to medically withdraw from the course. It is the student's responsibility to follow the CT State-NV guidelines regarding medical withdrawal as well as notify the DCE in a timely manner. The DCE will notify the PTA Program Director. Depending on the timing, it may not be possible to repeat the course within the given semester. This will affect the student's ability to complete the PTA Program within the standard timeframe and will delay graduation.

Transportation

Students are required to provide their own transportation, living expenses (as necessary), and any other expenses while on clinical education experiences. Students are responsible for transportation to and from clinical education sites. Neither the college nor the affiliating clinic site is responsible for any personal injury or injury to property which may occur while traveling to or from clinical education sites. Students may be required to travel over seventy-five (75) minutes to their experiences, which is not counted as part of your clinical hours. Students should adhere to all parking rules as violations may result in their car being ticketed. Violators who are ticketed or towed will incur the associated costs.

Electronic Devices

Students **WILL NOT** be allowed to answer any cell phone call or text while working with patients or if in a patient treatment area and should not carry such devices on their person while doing patient care unless official accommodations have been requested and approved. Students must have cell phones on vibrate mode in the clinic. If there is an **emergency situation**, in which the student anticipates the need to have communication with an individual outside of the clinic, the clinical instructor should be notified in advance. Unapproved use of a cell phone during clinic hours will affect the student's grade. If the clinical facility has more stringent policies in place regarding cellular devices, the student must follow the facility policies. No student is allowed to voice record, screen capture, video record, or save any information that occurs in the clinic. Use of personal electronic devices in the clinic or outside of the clinic is not allowed to view or document patient information.

Surgeries/Procedures

Students will not be allowed to observe surgeries or procedures, as there is no supervision by their clinical instructor during these activities. If there are any questions, please contact the DCE.

COVID-19

Students are to follow the clinical partner's policies regarding students treating COVID positive patients or patients who are presumed positive. As procedures are continually changing with COVID-19, students will confirm with their clinical site just prior to the start date, current requirements of the clinical site for the student to enter the clinical facility. Students are to follow the clinical site policies & procedures regarding the need to obtain an N95/fit-test. Students are to follow the clinical partner's requirements, including potential vaccination for COVID-19. Students who are not able to meet the clinical partner's requirements, may not be able to complete a clinical experience, which will impact the student's ability to meet the learning outcomes of the course; which will potentially impact the student's ability to graduate on time, or graduate.

DCE Communications with CI/Student

The DCE will contact the CI at the start of the clinical experience to provide support and ensure the student's transition to the clinic has been successful thus far (approximately week 3 during part time experience; week 2 for full time experiences). The DCE will schedule a midterm conference with the CI and/or the SCCE for assessment of student performance during each clinical education experience either through telephone communication and/or an on-site visit. The DCE will speak with the CI and/or the SCCE and the student. The student's progress relative to the defined learning outcomes will be discussed, as well as any additional issues needing to be addressed. Additional follow-up between the DCE, CI, and student will be as needed, according to each student's progress.

Students can contact the DCE at any time for support or to discuss any concerns. If there are any legal, ethical, or safety concerns, the student is to contact the DCE immediately. If the DCE is unavailable, the student should contact the PTA Program Director.

Student Responsibilities

Prior to the Clinical Education Experience

1. **Make contact with the clinical site** at least one month prior to the start of the experience or upon receipt of confirmation of their student placement. This contact is to introduce themselves, confirm their schedule, as well as identify and complete any clinic specific requirements.
2. **Complete a Student Data Form**. Completion and submission of the Student Data Form is necessary to let the SCCE and/or the CI know the student's past experience and learning style. Students will mail/email/hand-deliver the Student Data Form in a timely fashion so that the clinical instructor receives it two weeks prior to the start of the clinical experience. If it is not submitted in a timely manner, it may jeopardize the student's ability to participate in this educational experience at the clinic.
3. **Review the course syllabi** for the experience to be familiar with the course objectives, student learning outcomes, and expectations for the clinical education experience.
4. **Review the grading assessment tool** including completing the APTA PTA Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) training (only for full time clinical experiences) as instructed, and clarify any questions with the DCE.
5. **Complete/maintain all requirements.** Confirm that all medical and non-medical documentation, required per CT State-NV and NV PTA Program policy, is completed/maintain compliance and on file with Castlebranch®. All necessary documentation and requirements of the facility are completed according to their policies.

Clinical sites may or may not send out information to the student prior to the start of the clinical experience regarding an orientation to the facility, work hours, dress code, parking, etc.

During the Clinical Education Experience

1. Discuss with the CI their learning styles and preference for constructive feedback
2. Discuss with the CI their personal goals while on the clinical education experience
3. Create weekly goals to assist in progression of their performance with guidance from their CI
4. Accept and seek out constructive feedback from the CI and make appropriate changes in response to the information
5. Offer feedback to CI on how the experience is progressing and offer ideas as to what would assist in

the optimal learning experience for you

6. Completed midterm and final self-assessment grading assessment tool (ex. PTA CPI), including signatures, according to instructions
7. Review the ***CT State NV PTA Program Clinical Exposure Checklists*** with your CI, so the CI is aware of the goals of this document. The student is required to track and document experiences within the tables; including tracking of clinical hours.
8. Complete the ***Physical Therapist Assistant Student Evaluation: Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction*** at midterm and final, and share this information with your CI and/or the SCCE
9. Complete an in-service/presentation (if noted in your syllabus and/or required by your site) on a topic appropriate for the setting in which you are completing your experience and approved by your CI
10. Prepare daily and/or nightly for your patients (full-time clinical experiences). Prepare weekly for your patients (part-time clinical experience)
11. Complete assignments as requested by your CI
12. Bring any concerns to the attention of your CI and/or SCCE and to the DCE as appropriate in a timely manner

End of Clinical Education Experience

1. Complete the *APTA Physical Therapist Assistant Student Evaluation: Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction* and share this information with your CI and/or the SCCE
2. Complete the *CT State-NV PTA Program Clinical Exposure Checklist,* including total clinic hours with student and CI signature on the signature page.
3. Complete all surveys provided to you in Blackboard or via email (or in any other method). (If forms are revised, updated forms will be provided to the student)

Evaluations

Midterm Evaluations

The CI will perform an evaluation at midterm of each clinical experience, that provides the student with feedback on their performance. Each student must complete a self-evaluation to share with the CI during this meeting. Midterm signatures (hard copy and/or electronic) of both the student and CI will be recorded on the evaluation tool to signify the above indeed did occur. Major problem areas, including but not limited to, professionalism, safety, and/or low performance scores for skill or competence at mid-term will trigger active involvement of the DCE. In these cases, the DCE will have a discussion with the CI and/or SCCE and the student to develop a Performance Improvement Plan that will target student objectives to meet competency requirements of the clinical experience and how the CI will support the student in their objectives.

Final Evaluations

The CI will perform an evaluation at the end of each clinical experience that provides the student with feedback on their performance. Each student must complete a self-evaluation to share with the CI during this meeting. Final signatures (hard copy and/or electronic) of both the student and the CI will be recorded on the evaluation tool to signify the above indeed did occur.

Successful achievement of the learning outcomes of the clinic-based learning experience ("Pass" grade) will

be based on the recommendations of the clinical site. Final determination will rest with the DCE and academic faculty.

Conditions which place the student at risk for a grade reflecting unsuccessful achievement of learning (Withdrawal or Failure) include, but are not limited to:

- Unprofessional behavior (see *Student Manual*) and/or not adhering to the ethical standards established by the APTA. Unprofessional behavior includes but is not limited to a student's inability to communicate with patients appropriately which interferes with patient care and/or poses potential safety concerns related to patient care.

- Unsafe clinical performance.

- Excessive clinical tardiness and/or absenteeism.

- Inability to safely and accurately manage the required schedule and caseload.

- Unsatisfactory performance in the attainment of all student learning outcomes related to that clinical experience and/or incompetent execution of prior fundamental skills learned in previous semesters.

- Failure to adequately meet the objectives previously outlined in a Performance Improvement Plan.

Grading

Evaluation in the clinic-based courses (PTA*2694P, PTA*2794P and PTA*2894P) is based on a pass/fail ("P/F") grading system. The student must achieve a passing grade in all learning outcomes in order to earn a "P" for the course and also must earn a grade of "P" in each clinic-based education course to meet the degree requirements. Students with unsuccessful completion of a clinic-based course will earn a grade of "F"; please refer to re-entry procedures.

Full-Time Clinic-based Courses

- Unsuccessful completion of a Pass/Fail full-time clinic-based course (PTA*2794P, PTA*2894P) will result in a final course grade of "F".
- A remedial clinical education experience may be offered based on (1) student following program procedures for re-entry as applicable (2) resource and site availability for a clinic-based education experience, (3) only upon the first occurrence of a student not meeting the criteria for a passing ("P") grade, and (4) on the approval of the PTA faculty.
- The student must request re-entry to be considered for a remedial experience within 2 days of the removal from the clinic, for full-time clinical experiences.
- Due to the sequencing of courses in the curriculum and the availability of clinical education resources, it is unlikely that a remedial clinical education experience can be completed in the same semester, resulting in a delayed graduation.
- The student will need to register for a second section of the failed clinical education-based course.
- **Failure to complete the remedial experience successfully or to complete a remedial experience, will result in dismissal from the PTA program.**

A student who is determined by the faculty to be **clinically unsafe** will be removed from the clinical setting immediately and receive an "F" for the course.

Students who do not maintain **patient confidentiality** will be removed from the clinic immediately, receive an "F" for the course, and are subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action.

Students will also be removed from the clinic when **absenteeism or tardiness** make it impossible for the student to safely continue in a clinic-based education course and will receive an "F" for the course.

Each individual situation will be assessed by the PTA faculty, with possible consultation of the situation (without identifying the student) by the PTA Program Advisory Board. Based on the situation, it is possible that the student may be offered a remedial experience. It is also possible that given the situation of what occurred in the facility, that a student may not be offered a remedial experience and will receive an "F" for the course.

If it is identified that a student is not likely to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes for a clinic-based learning experience within the scheduled time frame, as a result of extenuating circumstances outside of the student's/program's control, the DCE reserves the option of allowing the experience to continue for up to 5 additional days; but finishing by the end of the semester. This may result in a delay of graduation. This option, on a case-by-case basis, can occur if: 1) there is reasonable expectation that such an extension would provide the student with the learning opportunities needed to meet the learning outcomes, and 2) the facility agrees to and can accommodate this request.

Dismissal following clinical removal

A student who is determined by the faculty to be **have violated standards of practice, violates professional standards of conduct, or has made egregious safety errors** will be removed from the clinical setting immediately and receive a failing grade for that course.

Situations that may result in faculty-initiated removal, will result in a course failure (F) and possible dismissal from the program for clinical education related coursework, includes:

- Students who do not maintain patient confidentiality (they will also be subject to appropriate disciplinary and/or legal action).
- Students who are asked to leave the clinic due to professional conduct violations.

Violation of the Board of Regents (BOR) student code of conduct will result in dismissal from the PTA Program and the student is not eligible for re-entry or re-application.

Clinical Site Information

Criteria for Clinical Sites

The following are criteria utilized in the selection of clinical education sites.
The clinical education site will:

1. Be licensed and/or accredited as applicable
2. Function within legal and ethical standards
3. Assign a SCCE who is responsible for coordinating clinical education of students

4. Provide a safe and nurturing environment for student learning
5. Promote staff participation in clinical education activities
6. Provide learning experiences for students appropriate to meet the expectations of each individual clinical experience
7. Provide feedback to CT State-NV PTA Program regarding academic preparation of students, including comments on the curriculum
8. Provide orientation for students, including location of manuals regarding policies and procedures regarding patients' rights, safety procedures, etc.
9. Expose students to non-patient care activities such as: quality improvement, billing/coding/reimbursement considerations, and other health care disciplines; as appropriate
10. Provide information necessary for students to be aware of for their clinical, such as: facility specific documents or policies/procedures for student to attend internship, parking, or cafeteria information

Roles of Clinical Education Personnel

Director of Clinical Education (DCE):

The DCE is a CT State-NV employee in the PTA program responsible for the coordination of the clinical education component of the program. The DCE responsibilities include:

1. Identify potential clinical education sites
2. Communicate with clinical education sites to initiate obtaining clinical contracts
3. Communicate with clinical education sites to ensure student placements for each individual clinical experience
4. Provide orientation to clinical instructors (CIs) and/or site coordinators of clinical education (SCCE) to CT State-NV PTA Program, clinical experience dates with expectations to be achieved for each specific clinical experience, grading assessment tool, clinical education policies and procedures, clinical education rights and privileges, and other clinical education information
5. Obtain information through communications with CI and/or SCCE to place students at sites that are safe and conducive to meeting the objectives of the clinical experience
6. Informing clinical education site of program changes in policy and procedures related to clinical education
7. Assigning students to clinical sites and ensuring an active contract exists prior to any student placement
8. Communicating with clinical education faculty and/or PTA student during the clinical experience as appropriate and as indicated, through phone calls and/or on-site visits for development of the clinical education program and to ensure program procedures are followed
9. Maintaining clinical education records
10. Evaluating overall effectiveness of the clinical education component of the program and reporting findings to the program director
11. Assist in the professional development of the clinical education faculty of the program as indicated by areas self-identified by the CI/SCCE, from assessments from the clinical experience, and as noted during communications with the CI/SCCE/SPTA during clinical experiences including the mid-term assessment

Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE):

The SCCE is an individual assigned by the facility responsible for assignment of students to appropriate and qualified clinical instructor(s) and coordinating of clinical education activities.

SCCE Responsibilities

The SCCE responsibilities include:

1. Acting as a liaison between the college, DCE, and the clinical site
2. Assuring an active contract exists between the facility and college
3. Assure student is in a safe environment conducive to learning
4. Assure confidentiality regarding CT State-NV PTA students, by assuring files regarding students are in a secure and confidential location
5. Assigning the student to a qualified CI; CI has appropriate degree, license, at least one year of clinical experience, and are effective role models and teachers
6. Assisting in the student's schedule as appropriate with CI input
7. Serving as a resource and/or mediator for student/CI for student progression during clinical experience and/or conflict resolution
8. Ensuring that students are provided appropriate supervision by the CIs to provide education necessary for student progression and students are not used in lieu of regular employees
9. Provide feedback to the DCE regarding the effectiveness of CT State-NV PTA clinical education program
10. Provide DCE with updates in the field and any other pertinent information that could be utilized for consideration for the curriculum and PTA Program at CT State-NV
11. Provide current information about the clinical site and clinical education faculty, including but not limited to the Clinical Site Information Form (CSIF)
12. The SCCE's rights and privileges are the same as the Clinical Instructor (CI). Please see below.

SCCE compensation

Clinical education faculty, SCCEs and CIs, are voluntary roles and receive no compensation in the form of salary or benefits from CT State-NV.

SCCE rights

SCCEs have the right to:

1. Be kept informed of any substantive CT State-NV PTA program changes
2. Request a conference with DCE and/or program director as you feel appropriate
3. Concerns related to clinical education or didactic/laboratory courses within the curriculum can be voiced to the DCE and/or the program director
4. Be aware of the ability to file a complaint involving the PTA program (see complaint process form under PTA Program Resources tab on PTA homepage on website;
   direct link: Complaint Process & Form

SCCE privileges

SCCE privileges include:

1. Recognition as CT State-NV PTA program clinical education faculty
2. Attend PTA program college events such as lectures and workshops as appropriate, pinning ceremony, etc.
3. CT State-NV library resources: CIs/SCCEs can request a literature search. Please contact DCE at 203-596-2156 for more information.
4. CT State-NV's Center for Teaching (CFT): Webinars offered by CFT which will be appropriate for CIs/SCCEs, will be emailed by DCE to clinical faculty; for clinical faculty actively taking students.
5. PhysioU: an online evidence-based guide for students and clinicians. Clinical faculty now can receive a discount for this product. This is a product that the PTA Program has been utilizing since the COVID-19 pandemic and continues to utilize throughout the curriculum. This resource can assist students, clinicians, and educators. Please contact the DCE to discuss this opportunity.
6. Communication Skills Module: Via New England Physical Therapist Assistant Consortium: Online module developed to enhance the quality of communication between CIs and students. CIs can contact the DCE and request an access code (code valid for 2 weeks). Upon completion, a certificate of completion reflecting 3 contact hours will be awarded.

Clinical Instructor (CI):

Clinical Instructors are considered clinical education faculty of the CT State-NV PTA Program. Clinical instructors are responsible for the direction and supervision of the physical therapist assistant student.

CI Requirements

Criteria for the clinical instructors in the CT State-NV PTA Program:

1. A graduate of an accredited PT or PTA program
2. Licensed, or otherwise regulated, in the state in which they practice
3. Have a minimum of one year of clinical experience in the clinical area in which they will be supervising a student
4. Adhere to legal and ethical standards
5. Agree to take on the responsibilities of a CI upon their own will and interest in assisting students in their education
6. Familiarize themselves with CT State-NV PTA program, curriculum, clinical experience expectations for each clinical experience, and additional information provided
7. Ability to demonstrate good oral and written communication skills
8. Ability to provide supportive, professional relationship with students, SCCE, and DCE
9. Ability to plan learning activities to meet each individual student needs according to the experience expectations, including assisting in development of weekly goals towards the experience expectations
10. Ability to provide detailed objective formative and summative evaluations of student performance in a timely fashion, including time to review findings of evaluations with student and ACCE, as well as thorough documentation of such in the grading assessment tool provided
11. Ability to assess when there is a concern with student transition or progression in the clinic and is proactive in communicating this to the SCCE and/or DCE; with documentation of such
12. Serve as a positive role model for lifelong learning, ethical and legal practice, maintaining competence in contemporary practice, and professional behaviors
13. Complete self-assessment of their role as a clinical instructor, attempt to identify areas of strength and areas needing improvement, seek further education in strengthening their role as a clinical instructor, as part of the clinical education faculty of the CT State-NV PTA Program

CI Responsibilities

Clinical instructors have the responsibility to:

1. Provide orientation for the student to the clinical site, including but not limited to layout of facility and equipment, facility staff, policies and procedures of facility relevant for student knowledge
2. Educate the student in regard to policies and procedures specific to student clinical education at your facility
3. Discuss with the student the dynamics of how you, as the CI, will provide supervision of the student's interactions/treatment of patients, feedback on the student's performance, and your expectations on how the student's performance will be progressed throughout the experience.
4. Instruct the student on documentation and billing procedures at the facility
5. Supervise treatment activities provided by the student to ensure patient treatments are efficient and effective, while maintaining patient safety at all times
6. Provide further education to students in your area of expertise to encourage further development of their knowledge base, and by doing so, will promote lifelong learning
7. Coordinate learning activities/experiences for the student that will incorporate meeting individual student goals, objectives of the experience (see syllabi) and expectations for successful completion of the experience
8. Become familiar with the evaluation tool(s) used by the school for the evaluation of the students which may include completing an online training module for the APTA PTA CPI Assessment Tool
9. Set time within schedule for student assessment, including two-week phone call and/or email (3 week for part-time clinical experience) communication from DCE, midterm assessment with DCE involvement either by phone or onsite (will be scheduled in advance), midterm and final assessment of student which should be reviewed with student and signed by both yourself and the student.
10. Maintain written records and performance evaluations on the student and upon completion, send reports to the DCE
11. Maintain confidentiality regarding CT State-NV PTA students, including having files regarding students in a secure and confidential location
12. Assist in assuring student is in a safe environment conducive to learning
13. Provide feedback to the DCE regarding the effectiveness of the clinical education program (survey provided), by assisting in the evaluation of the clinical education program.
14. Serve as role model for students.

CI Compensation

Clinical education faculty, SCCEs and CIs, are voluntary roles and receive no compensation in the form of salary or benefits from CT State-NV.

CI Rights

Clinical Instructors have the right to:

1. Be kept informed of any substantive NV PTA program changes
2. Request a conference with DCE and/or program director as you feel appropriate
3. Concerns related to clinical education or didactic/laboratory courses within the curriculum can be voiced to the DCE and/or the program director
4. Be aware of the ability to file a complaint involving the PTA program (see complaint process form under PTA Program Resources tab on PTA homepage on website;
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CI Privileges

Clinical instructor privileges include:

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4. CT State-NV's Center for Teaching (CFT): Webinars offered by CFT which will be appropriate for CIs/SCCEs, will be emailed by DCE to clinical faculty; for clinical faculty actively taking students.
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Clinical Instructor Orientation

All clinical instructors will be oriented to the CT State-NV's PTA Program. Every time a clinician serves as a CI for one of our students, the DCE will orient/re-orient the clinician to the specific clinical experience.

Prior to this orientation, clinical education documentation/information will be mailed and/or emailed to the SCCE and/or the CI. Prior access to vital documents will allow the clinical education faculty time to review, prior to orientation with the DCE.

Orientation/re-orientation may include, but is not limited to the following:

1. CT State-NV's PTA Program mission and goals
2. CT State-NV's PTA curriculum
3. Overview of CT State-NV's clinical education program
4. Learning outcomes and expectations for the specific clinical education experience
5. Utilization of the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) or current assessment tool.
6. Grading for clinical education experiences
7. Role of the DCE/SCCE/CI in clinical education
8. Clinical Education Policies
9. Clarification of questions regarding the role of the PTA
10. Clarification of questions regarding the CT State Practice Act
11. Clarification of APTA Documents
12. Professional Development of the CI as needed

CT State-Naugatuck Valley PTA Program & College Resources

The ***Student Manual of Academic and Clinical Procedures for the PTA Program*** (this manual) can be found at:
CT State Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program Page
Please scroll down to Naugatuck Valley Physical Therapist Assistant Program, under "Resources" to see the manual.
CT State-NV PTA Program; 2025-2026 Cohort

Student Handbook CT State Community College; 2024-2025 Academic Year

Educator Resources

APTA: For Educators: Many resources; scroll down to see additional links of interest

APTA: Clinical Educator Development: Credentialed Clinical Instructor Program (CCIP) Level 1 and 2