

Lane Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Clinical Learning – Expectations and Policies

Mission

The mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant cooperative clinical education curriculum is for students to synthesize and apply safe and effective principles of physical therapy interventions under the supervision of a physical therapist.

Clinical education opportunities will include local and rural communities to increase opportunities for students to learn varied perspectives, skills, and behaviors from clinical faculty serving those communities.

Students benefit from using technology for sustaining professional relationships with faculty and classmates through self-evaluation, peer-evaluation, and reflection needed to support personal and professional development and job-readiness during clinical education.

Through professional mentorship, clinical faculty teaches applications of evidence-based practice in demonstrating commitment to lifelong learning, professionalism, trustworthiness and clinical excellence in physical therapy interventions in preparation for successful employment as a PTA.

Philosophy

Physical Therapist Assistant clinical education should integrate theory, supervised hands-on practice, reciprocal, constructive feedback, communication and patient education, professionalism and ethics in applying safe and effective physical therapy interventions.

Clinical excellence in Physical Therapist Assistant clinical education depends on progressive skills and competencies that are commensurate with the level of education and previous supervised clinical experience. Knowledge, skills and abilities progress from novice to entry-level over the course of the clinical education curriculum.

Clinical education should be evidence-based in the treatment interventions for movement impairment and dysfunction. Clinical education includes mentoring students in concepts which support and supplement adaptability of the mind and body for students and patients.

Clinical education should integrate emerging technology to include evidence-based treatment resource application, data collection and documentation, and improved health care information access in local and rural communities.

Students are mature, have varying individual needs, cultural backgrounds, and past experiences and will look for support and professional development opportunities in the clinical setting.

Clinical faculty will systematically integrate feedback from students, academic faculty, colleagues, Advisory Committees, and the general public an effort to ensure a sustainable, effective, relevant, accurate and respected Physical Therapist Assistant program.

Clinical faculty will mentor and counsel PTA students in job skills which are consistent with successful employment as a PTA.

Definition of Clinical/Cooperative Instructors and Facilities

Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education

The Academic Coordinator of Clinical Instruction (ACCE) is an academic program faculty member. The ACCE is responsible for planning, coordinating, facilitating, administering, and monitoring cooperative clinical education activities on behalf of the academic program and in coordination with academic and clinical faculty. The ACCE determines the student's grade in PTA 280 courses.

Clinical Facility

The Physical Therapist Assistant program enters into agreements with local and rural health care agencies that provide physical therapy services. The clinical facility is an off-campus, educational site where PTA students apply previously learned skills and abilities in a patient care setting under the supervision of the physical therapist. Students follow the policies and procedures of the clinical facility and of the PTA program during enrollment in PTA 280-level courses.

Clinical Faculty/Clinical Instructors

Clinical faculty members (CIs) are licensed PT or PTAs who provide supervised clinical instruction in a clinical facility. CIs are employed by the clinical facility. CIs have at least one year of licensed experience and are assessed by the CCCE and the ACCE for readiness to participate in Physical Therapist Assistant Education.

Center Coordinator of Clinical Education

The clinical facility designates a CCCE who coordinates student placements in the clinical facility. The CCCE facilitates student orientation to facility policies and procedures and provides resources and support for effective clinical teaching. The CCCE may participate in student evaluations and communicates questions or concerns with the ACCE and the CI. The CCCE works with clinical faculty to ensure clinical faculty demonstrate a high level of competence in their area of practice and are effective clinical teachers. CCCEs model effective communication for teaching and learning.

PTA 280

PTA course number associated with program clinical education rotations. Course numbers are sequenced (e.g., A, B, C) to reflect progression through the PTA program.

Clinical Experience Requirements

Each term in the second year of the PTA program, students will complete 216 hours in 6 weeks of clinical instruction in a PTA 280-level course. Students are required to show evidence of completion of a PTA 280-level course in the following practice settings:

1. In a long-term/extended care facility or rural hospital with long term care.
2. In a general hospital or rural hospital facility.
3. In a rehabilitation facility, home health care, sports medicine, outpatient, pediatric clinic, or combination setting.

Included in these clinical experiences, the student must have opportunity to focus primarily on the treatment of four (4) types of patient populations:

1. The patient in the acute phase of healing
2. The patient in the chronic phase of disease and disability
3. The patient with orthopedic diagnoses
4. The patient with general medical diagnoses

Expectations for Clinical Education Faculty

Qualifications

- Clinical instructors (CIs) are expected to have no less than one year of full-time clinical experience as a licensed PT or PTA prior to accepting a student.
- CIs are expected to know the program policies and program expectations for student learning.
- CIs are expected to understand the content and instructions for implementing the Clinical Performance Instrument for Physical Therapist Assistants for effective evaluation of student learning.
- CIs are expected to have an interest in teaching both technique and behavior that will prepare a PTA student for successful employment as a PTA.
- CIs are expected to have a minimum of satisfactory-level or facility-equivalent assessment of job performance as of the most recent employee performance review.
- CIs are expected to communicate with the ACCE and the CCCE if there are questions or concerns about the student learning experience and progress toward cooperative education course outcomes.

Clinical competence in the area of practice

- The ACCE will collaborate with the CCCE to identify a CI who meets the above bulleted criteria while considering the course learning outcomes for the prospective student.

Expectations for effective teaching and student assessment

- CIs are expected to have experience in providing staff in-services and training prior to accepting a PTA student.
- CIs are expected to reference and comply with facility policies regarding patient and workplace safety, as evidenced in performance evaluations or other evaluation by supervisor/CCCE.
- CIs are expected to seek mentoring and support from the ACCE and the CCCE regarding teaching and assessment skills.

- CIs are expected to seek and integrate student self-assessment with demonstrated abilities in assessing student clinical performance.
- CIs are expected to provide supervision throughout the experience in alignment with course objectives and student abilities.
- CIs will provide immediate, constructive feedback to the student in order to facilitate safe and effective practice patterns.
- CIs will provide learning opportunities which allow the student to progress from routine/standard practice to creative alternatives in alignment with course objective and student ability.

Clinical Faculty – Rights and Privileges

The clinical faculty is not employed by the college, and therefore is not eligible for faculty agreements according to the college Main Agreement and Memoranda of Agreements. Clinical faculty is defined as independent contractors of the college (<http://www.lanecc.edu/cops/indcond.htm>) and is classified as Adjunct Faculty or Instructional Specialists for the program.

Clinical Site Selection

The ACCE is responsible for the selection of clinical education sites for full-time clinical experiences. The ACCE is responsible for maintaining at least 125% active clinical placement sites for PTA students. A current listing of available clinical sites, which includes development or remediation plans, will be maintained by the ACCE on the Inventory of Clinical Sites form. The Inventory of Clinical Sites form will be updated quarterly, maintained by the ACCE, and provided to students, faculty, and the Program Advisory Committee on request. The Inventory of Clinical Sites will demonstrate enough variety for students to select a balance of experience between inpatient, outpatient, rehab, or pediatric affiliations. Policies for establishing appropriate clinical education sites for PTA students follow.

Policy for ACCE Selection of Clinical Education Sites for Full-Time Clinical Experiences

Clinical education sites for full-time clinical experiences are selected based on the experiences the site can provide a student PTA, willingness of the site to work with students, the site's past experiences in clinical education, availability of a PT for on-site supervision, qualifications of the CCCE and CI, and location. The minimum qualifications for a CI are at least one year of clinical practice and willingness to work with a student. Some degree of CI training is preferred. It is also preferred by the program that the CI possess high levels of motivation, strong interpersonal skills, a solid knowledge base about physical therapy, and the ability to help student learn to apply knowledge to the treatment of patients. The ACCE will provide opportunities for training. The ACCE will also annually send a certificate of appreciation to CIs who have worked with students.

Procedures for ACCE Selection of Clinical Education Sites for Full-Time Clinical Experiences

The ACCE interviews the CCCE of the facility to determine if the facility could be a possible clinical education site for the school. The ACCE uses a screening form for the interview and reviews the Clinical Site Information Form (CSIF). If possible, the ACCE visits the facility before sending a student. If this is not done, the ACCE makes every effort to visit the facility when the student is there. Due to financial and time constraints, it may not be possible for the ACCE to visit clinical sites that are more than a day's drive or require airfare to get there. The ACCE will consult other ACCE's to learn more about unfamiliar clinical facilities in other states.

Required Documents for Clinical Site Selection

Clinical Education Agreements

Clinical Education Agreements are complete when signed by the college Vice President of Student and Academic Affairs and by the clinical facility. Clinical Education Agreements delineate the roles and responsibilities of the student, facility and faculty throughout student assignment during clinical instruction.

Policy on Suspending Clinical Site Placement in a Clinical Facility

The ACCE may choose to suspend student placements at a clinical facility if the ACCE determines the clinical facility needs further development in order to meet student and program learning outcomes.

Procedures for Suspending Clinical Site Placement in a Clinical Facility

The ACCE will red flag facilities that receive two or more Student Evaluation of Clinical Education (SECE) rating of 'D' or lower from a PTA student. The ACCE will contact the CCCE of the facility to discuss the ACCE assessment of SECE data and will develop an action plan, including methods of assessment with the CCCE. If the facility ratings continue to be poor and/or the action plan has not been implemented or assessed based on prior agreements, the agreement will be terminated. The CSIF will be removed from program binders available for student perusal and the Inventory of Clinical Sites will be updated to reflect the facilities agreement status. The Administrative Assistant for Health Professions will be provided notice of agreement termination and will maintain a copy in the divisional office.