

# **Union County College**

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

### **HANDBOOK**

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# Welcome!

Welcome to the Union County College Physical Therapist Assistant Program! This Handbook is designed to assist you in understanding the common practice of higher education and expectations of health professional students. Unlike most of your previous education, you will be asked to demonstrate not only academic competence, but also psychomotor (hands-on) and affective (behavioral) competence as well. It is your guide, as well as ours, in the conduct of our mutual enterprise. It is important that you read and be familiar with its content. You are responsible for the contents of this document, as well as all other Physical Therapist Assistant and Union County College publications. Changes in policies or procedures will be announced by posting, distribution in class, and/or mailing. Deviation from these and other published policies may be considered grounds for dismissal from the program

It is also important for you to know that physical therapy places physical, mental, and emotional demands on its practitioners. PTA students need to be able to demonstrate appropriate communication and behavior, as well as perform specific techniques during clinical experiences. Individuals need to give careful consideration to these demands prior to applying and enrolling in the Program.

“You forfeit your chance for life at its fullest when you withhold your best effort in learning. When you give only the minimum to learning, you receive only the minimum in return. Even with your parents’ best example and your teachers’ best efforts, in the end it is *your work* that determines how much you learn. When you work to your full capacity, you can attain the knowledge and skills that will enable you to create your future and control your destiny. If you do not, you will have your future thrust upon you by others. Take hold of your life, apply your gifts and talents, and work with dedication and self-discipline. Have high expectations for yourself and convert every challenge into opportunity.” -The National Commission On Excellence in Education

The administration and faculty wish you success as you pursue your physical therapist assistant education!

## **ACCREDITATION**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Union County College received accreditation on November 17, 2010 to December 31, 2019 from the:

Commission on Accreditation in  
Physical Therapy Education  
American Physical Therapy Association  
1111 North Fairfax Street  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314  
(703) 706-3245  
<http://www.apta.org/am/template.cfm>

Applicants may contact the Commission on Accreditation with inquiries regarding the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

### **PER CAPTE GUIDELINES:**

CAPTE has a mechanism to consider formal complaints about physical therapy education programs (PT or PTA) that allege a program is not in compliance with one or more of CAPTE's [Evaluative Criteria](#) (for complaints about events occurring before December 31, 2015) or the Standards and Required Elements (for complaints addressing events occurring January 1, 2016 and thereafter) or has violated any of CAPTE's expectations related to academic integrity. CAPTE will consider two types of complaints: those that involve situations subject to formal institution/program due process policies and procedures and those that involve situations not subject to formal due process procedures:

- If the complainant is involved with an institution/program grievance subject to formal due process and procedure, CAPTE requires that the process be completed prior to initiating CAPTE's formal complaint process, unless the complaint includes an allegation that the institution/program process has not been handled in a timely manner as defined in the institution/program policy, in which case CAPTE will consider the complaint prior to completion of the grievance process. Evidence of completion of the institutional process or of the untimely handling of such must be included in the complaint materials.
- If the complaint is related to situations that fall outside of formal due process policies and procedures, the complaint may be filed at any time.
- CAPTE will not consider complaints that fall outside its jurisdiction/authority as expressed in the Evaluative Criteria (or Standards and Elements, as appropriate) and the academic integrity statements. When appropriate, complainants will be referred to other organizations to pursue their concern(s).

CAPTE will not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for faculty members or students in matters of admission, retention, appointment, promotion, or dismissal. CAPTE will take action only when it believes practices or conditions indicate the program may not be in compliance with the Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation (or the Standards and Required Elements, as appropriate) or the statements listed above.

In order for CAPTE to consider a formal complaint, several conditions must be met:

- The complaint must be specifically linked to the relevant Evaluative Criteria (or Standards and Elements, as appropriate) (PT or PTA) or to the integrity statements.
- The complainant must have exhausted all remedies available through the institution, if appropriate.
- The complaint must be submitted in writing, using the format prescribed by CAPTE, and must be signed by the complainant.
- The event(s) being complained about must have occurred at least in part within three (3) years of the date the complaint is filed.

In reviewing and acting on a complaint, CAPTE cannot and does not function as an arbiter between the complaint and the institution. Should CAPTE find that a complaint has merit and that the program is out of compliance with the Evaluative Criteria (or the Standards and Elements, as appropriate) or the integrity statement(s), CAPTE can only require the program to come into compliance with the Evaluative Criteria (or the Standards and Elements, as appropriate). CAPTE cannot force a program into any specific resolution of the situation that resulted in the complaint.

**To obtain the materials necessary for submitting a complaint, contact the APTA Accreditation Department at 703/706-3245 or at [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org).**

Complaints will ordinarily be reviewed at the next meeting regularly scheduled CAPTE meeting. In order for the process to be completed in time for considered review by CAPTE, complaints must be received no later than ninety (90) days prior to a meeting. At its discretion, CAPTE may choose to consider complaints between its regularly scheduled meetings. Ordinarily, such consideration will occur only when delay in consideration of the complaint could have a serious adverse effect on either the complainant or the institution.

## **New Jersey Statutes and Regulations**

The PTA program generally uses the NJ Physical Therapy laws as a framework for teaching unless Federal laws guide practice otherwise. As students enrolled within the program, each will gain clinical skills that are extremely important to entry-level clinical practice as a physical therapist. These skills are taught and practiced within the context of a specific course with your academic faculty. It also expected that students will then apply these as a part of direct patient care under the supervision of your clinical instructor. Many of these skills are clearly governed by specific elements in physical therapist practice acts that restrict techniques to licensed professionals only.

We follow the Rules and Regulations of the New Jersey Board of Physical Therapy, since this is the home state to our program. Students are not licensed practitioners, but are considered student physical therapist assistant who may only practice under direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist assistant and/or physical therapist. Application of specific treatment techniques or interventions require supervised practice under the direct supervision of a licensed therapist. Examples of these interventions include the use of certain therapeutic electromechanical modalities and the application of therapeutic interventions. It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with the NJ regulations and consult with faculty to determine when supervision is needed.

If students go to internships in other states, they must obtain and practice by those laws, not NJ laws. It is the student's responsibility to be aware of all applicable laws that govern practice when participating in any academic and clinical education experience.

Please visit [www.state.nj.us/oag/ca/laws/ptlaw.pdf](http://www.state.nj.us/oag/ca/laws/ptlaw.pdf) for the most recent New Jersey statutes and regulations contains the latest legislation (L.2003, c.18, s.25).

For additional information, contact:

The N.J. Department of Law & Public Safety  
Division of Consumer Affairs  
State Board of Physical Therapy  
124 Halsey Street, P.O. Box 45014  
Newark, NJ 07101  
973-504-6455

## **Professional Licensure**

The Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) is responsible for the physical therapist assistant licensure examination called the NPTE. Specific information can be found at [www.fsbpt.org](http://www.fsbpt.org). All students graduating from an accredited physical therapist assistant program are eligible to sit for the licensure examination. The examination is administered four times over the course of a calendar year at specific computerized testing centers throughout the country.

Information regarding the State of New Jersey licensure process is available at [www.state.nj.us/oag/ca/medical/pt.htm](http://www.state.nj.us/oag/ca/medical/pt.htm). Information for licensure and examination review courses are included as part of the fourth year curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM PERSONNEL**

Carmela Hanna, PT, DPT	Full Time Instructor Program Director 908-412-3572 <a href="mailto:Carmela.hanna@ucc.edu">Carmela.hanna@ucc.edu</a>
Marie-Helene McAndrew PT, DPT	Full Time Instructor/ACCE 908-412-3541 <a href="mailto:Marie-helene.mcandre@UCC.edu">Marie-helene.mcandre@UCC.edu</a>
Kathleen Wittrock	Program Administrative Assistant 908-791-4917 <a href="mailto:Kathleen.wittrock@ucc.edu">Kathleen.wittrock@ucc.edu</a>
PTA Lab	908-412-4910

### **Faculty Offices: Annex building**

The faculty offices of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is located in the upper level of the Annex building room 202. The program secretary is located in the Health Science Building second floor.

### **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Classrooms and Laboratory**

PTA program classrooms and laboratories are located mainly in the Logo building on the Plainfield campus. Access to these buildings may be limited outside of normal University hours. The campus building hours are posted at [www.ucc.edu/Current Students/Help-Desk-Info.aspx](http://www.ucc.edu/Current%20Students/Help-Desk-Info.aspx). The program also holds educational sessions and laboratories at regional health care facilities and other educational settings. Students are required to attend all off-campus learning experiences, and therefore should make arrangements for travel accordingly.

Students enrolled in the PTA program have demonstrated a greater degree of success when they have attended scheduled classes and reduced their working hours to less than 15 hours per week. You are strongly encouraged to consider the personal and employment responsibilities and the demands of the program prior to applying and enrolling.

In addition to classroom instruction, students are expected to spend a significant amount of time completing required readings and online activities, and practicing in the PTA Skills & Simulation Lab. We encourage you to take advantage of our educational resources, such as the Academic Learning Center tutors and online programs, as this may help you to succeed in this program. Please keep in contact with your instructors to check on your progress and to request additional help as needed.

Union County College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability.

**PROGRAM WEBSITE:**

<http://www.ucc.edu/academics/programs/phytheass.aspx>

<http://www.ucc.edu/CurrentStudents/Physical-Therapy-Assistant/default.aspx>

Students who successfully complete and graduate from the PTA program will receive Associates in Applied Science degree. Only graduates of an accredited PTA program are eligible to sit for the national PTA licensure exam. More than 40 states require physical therapist assistants to be licensed, registered, or certified. The state of New Jersey requires PTAs to be licensed. Check with the state you plan to work in to find out specific requirements.

**POLICIES, PROCEDURES, COSTS AND COURSES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE:**

The faculty reserves the right to revise the enclosed information and regulations at any time as necessitated by changes in program and/or institutional policies and procedures and/or in compliance with accreditation standards set forth by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education, American Physical Therapy Association. Whenever changes occur, students will be duly notified.

Failure to read this or other college publications does not excuse students from rules and regulations that are in effect. For the most current information, log onto [www.ucc.edu](http://www.ucc.edu) and <http://www.ucc.edu/academics/programs/phytheass.aspx>

The Union County College *Student Handbook* is available online at [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook).



# **THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT**

The physical therapist assistant is an allied health professional in the practice of physical therapy who delivers physical therapy services under the supervision of the physical therapist.

Upon successful completion of the program students are awarded an Associates in Applied Science degree.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

The art and science of physical therapy focuses on the health needs of individuals throughout the continuum of life. Physical therapy provides services for high level wellness in addition to those services aimed toward those with illness or disability across the life span. Based on specialized knowledge and skills related to movement of the human body, physical therapist assistant education at Union County College will produce altruistic, culturally sensitive, quality oriented clinicians who strive for lifelong learning opportunities.

Learning is a process that can be measured and involves didactic as well as practical educational experiences. The physical Therapist Assistant student is an adult learner and to that end is ultimately responsible for their learning experiences throughout the program and their lives. Learning is affected by motivation, self- discipline and structured experiences. The role of the instructor is to guide the student through the necessary information evaluate performance and recommend additional studies/practice as indicated. Ultimately a well-rounded, mature and effective practitioner will emerge. (Revised Nov, 2013)

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Union County College exists to meet the health and wellness needs of the community for highly qualified, entry level Physical Therapist Assistants, who will work under the direction and supervision of physical therapists. Graduates of the program are compassionate, culturally and gender competent, lifelong learners who communicate appropriately with patients, caregivers, and other healthcare providers to provide safe, ethical, efficient and effective interventions with competent education methods to the population they serve.

The PTA curriculum is organized according to the Program Mission, Philosophy, Core Values and Goals. The curriculum provides a set of learning experiences and opportunities that enable students to achieve expected student outcomes.

## **PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program curriculum is therefore designed to prepare highly qualified entry level physical therapist assistants who:

1. Demonstrate the ability to deliver safe, appropriate and effective interventions to the population they serve under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist within the scope of PTA practice.

Objective: display active critical thinking and take a problem solving approach to all aspects of patient care by reviewing the medical record as necessary and the plan of care established by the physical therapist. Regularly assess the patient's response to interventions, responding accordingly, and providing appropriate documentation.

2. Demonstrate the ability to deliver appropriate communication, and educate populations they interact and serve.

Objective: practice competent verbal and non-verbal communication skills with patients, families, caregivers and other health care team members implementing standard documentation when appropriate.

3. Contribute to the continuous improvement of the profession by actively pursuing career development activities.

Objective: Make lifelong learning a personal and professional goal by educating others of the role of the PTA, by being aware of current issues and practice methods effecting the delivery of physical therapy services. Support and participate in organizations and efforts that promote physical therapy.

4. Utilize human, fiscal and system resources appropriately to provide efficient, ethical physical therapy service.

Objective: Comply with facility procedures and payer regulations consistent with the healthcare system and the practice setting. Be mindful of waste and try to eliminate excessive and inappropriate use of resources. Delegate tasks when appropriate.

5. Demonstrate professionalism, accountability, integrity and cultural competence in all duties associated with being a physical therapist assistant.

Objective: Adhere to the Standards of Ethical Conduct for PTAs set forth by the American Physical Therapy Association. Be familiar with federal and state practice acts. Respect the rights and dignity of all individual, and identity, respect and act with consideration for differences, values, preferences and expressed needs of others.

## PTA PROGRAM CURRICULUM

The PTA program of Union County College is composed of a comprehensive curriculum consisting of a combination of didactic and clinical learning experiences for the physical therapist assistant that are reflective of contemporary physical therapy practice. It has a format of organized and sequential series of integrated student-oriented learning experiences for entry level practice. In addition to clinical courses, there is the inclusion of general education and basic science courses.

The curriculum for the physical therapist assistant is designed, using the ICF and the Patient Care Model. The curriculum provides a set of learning experiences and opportunities that enable students to achieve expected student outcomes using the ICF and the Patient Care Model, to prepare the physical therapist assistant to work under the supervision of the physical therapist. Once the patient is evaluated by the physical therapist, the physical therapist delegates to the physical therapist assistant aspects of the patient care appropriate to the assistant's training. Certain factors help to determine when it is appropriate to delegate clinical care to the assistant, and the curriculum content is designed and implemented so that expected performance of the physical therapist assistant remains within the appropriate treatment boundaries. Delegation is usually done based on the recommendations of the APTA and in accordance with the state law.

### Curriculum Sequence

#### Preclinical Phase

##### Prerequisite Course Work

<u>Eng 101</u>	<u>English Composition I</u>	<u>3 credits</u>
<u>Bio 105</u>	<u>Anatomy and Physiology 1</u>	<u>4 credits</u>
<u>Math 119</u>	<u>Algebra</u>	<u>4 credits</u>
<u>Psy 101</u>	<u>General Psychology</u>	<u>3 credits</u>
<u>Psy 212</u>	<u>Psychology of Adulthood and Aging</u>	<u>3 credits</u>

##### Clinical Phase Spring Semester

<u>PTA 115</u>	<u>Functional Anatomy</u>	<u>4 credits</u>
<u>PTA 130</u>	<u>PT Procedures I</u>	<u>7 credits</u>
<u>PTA 251</u>	<u>Independent Living</u>	<u>2 credits</u>

##### Clinical Phase Summer Session One

<u>PTA 140</u>	<u>PT Procedures II</u>	<u>3 credits</u>
<u>Eng 102</u>	<u>English Composition II</u>	<u>3 credits</u>

##### Summer Session Two

<u>Bio 106</u>	<u>Anatomy and Physiology II</u>	<u>4 credits</u>
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##### Clinical Phase Fall Semester

<u>PTA 217</u>	<u>PT Seminar I</u>	<u>7 credits</u>
<u>PTA 220</u>	<u>PT Procedures III</u>	<u>6 credits</u>
<u>PTA 221</u>	<u>PT Procedures IV</u>	<u>4 credits</u>

### **Clinical Phase Spring Semester**

<u>PTA 223</u>	<u>PT Seminar II</u>	<u>3 credits</u>
<u>PTA 224</u>	<u>Clinical Practice</u>	<u>9 credits</u>

### **Total 69 credits**

#### **PTA 115 – Functional Anatomy**

Study of neuro-musculo-skeletal structures with an emphasis on the function of normal human movement. Review of basic kinesiological principles and how they affect human posture and movement. Introduction to manual muscle testing and goniometry. Prerequisites: (All with a grade of “C” or better) BIO 105, ENG 101, MAT 119, PSY 101. Co-requisites: PTA 130, PTA 251. 3 lecture hours and 3 laboratory hours per week. 4 credit hours.

#### **PTA 130 – Physical Therapy Procedures I**

This course teaches the student to implement basic physical therapy treatment programs. Didactic and laboratory practice are included for heat, light, and hydrotherapy modalities, ambulation, massage, bed positioning, wheelchair maneuverability, and transfers. Lab practice for selected nursing procedures is also included. Prerequisites: (All with a grade of “C” or better) BIO 105, ENG 101, MAT 119, PSY 101. Co-requisites: PTA 115, PTA 251. 3 lecture and 9 laboratory hours. 7 credit hours.

#### **PTA 140 – Physical Therapy Procedures II**

A review of the pathological process, evaluation, and appropriate physical therapy procedures for selected orthopedic conditions commonly seen in physical therapy. A problem-solving approach will be utilized to provide the student the opportunity to identify patients’ needs and determine treatment modifications. Prerequisites: (All with a minimum of “C+”). 1 lecture hours and 6 laboratory hours per week. 3 credit hours.

#### **PTA 217 Clinical Seminar and Practice I**

This course is designed to integrate the students’ clinical and didactic experiences by developing problem solving and interpersonal skills. Topics studied will include the health delivery system, legal and ethical issues relating to Physical Therapy intervention, documentation skills, and an introduction to The Guide to Physical Therapy Practice. The course will also explore the elements of effective interaction between a PTA and other professionals as well as the PTA and the patient. Areas including verbal and non-verbal communication, personal and cultural bias and social versus therapeutic helping relationships will be discussed. The students will participate in two days of supervised PTA clinical experience per week. Students must provide their own transportation. Prerequisites: All previous professional coursework with a minimum grade of “C+”. Co-requisites: PTA 220, PTA 221, ENG 102 and BIO 106. 3 lecture hours and 4 clinical hours per week. 7 credit hours.

#### **PTA 220 Physical Therapy Procedures III**

A review of the pathophysiological process, medical treatment, and appropriate physical therapy procedures for selected neurological conditions commonly seen in physical therapy. Physical therapy treatments will include an introduction to evaluate and to advanced therapeutic exercise, as well as thorough coverage of ADL, basic therapeutic exercise and modalities as they relate to

each neurological condition. The components and principles of orthotics is included. The physics, physiology and procedures of electrotherapy will be covered. Prerequisites: All previous professional course work passed with a minimum grade of “C+”, ENG 102, BIO 106. Co-requisites: PTA 217, PTA 221. 4 lecture hours and 6 laboratory hours per week. 6 credit hours.

#### **PTA 221 – Physical Therapy Procedures IV**

A review of the pathophysiological process, medical treatment, and appropriate physical therapy procedures for selected medical and pediatric conditions commonly seen in physical therapy. Physical therapy treatments will include an introduction to evaluation and to advanced therapeutic exercise, as well as thorough coverage of ADL, basic therapeutic exercises and assistive devices as they relate to each pediatric and medical condition. Prerequisites: All previous professional course work passed with a minimum grade of “C+”, ENG 102, BIO 106. Co-requisites: PTA 217, PTA 220. 3 lecture hours and 3 laboratory hours per week. 4 credit hours.

#### **PTA 223 – Clinical Seminar**

Advanced therapeutic exercise, psychosocial aspects of disability and dying, continuation of total treatment programs for selected conditions, and entry level preparation. Prerequisites: ENG 102, PTA 217, PTA 220, PTA 221 all passed with a grade of “C+” or better. Co-requisite: PTA 224. 3 lecture hours per week. 3 credit hours.

#### **PTA 224 – Clinical Practice II**

Full time, supervised PTA clinical experience, own transportation required. Prerequisites: PTA 217, PTA 220, PTA 221 all passed with a grade of “C+” or better. Co-requisite: PTA 224. 3 lecture hours per week. 3 credit hours.

#### **PTA 251 – Independent Living for the Disabled**

An overview of selected barriers to illustrate the impact that a disability may have on a patient’s lifestyle. The course offers the student an opportunity for investigation into problem solving for a given disability and the implied functional limitations. Prerequisites: All passed with a grade of “C” or better: BIO 106, ENG 102, MAT 119, PSY 101. 2 lecture hours per week. 2 credit hours.

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM POLICY VS. UNION COUNTY COLLEGE POLICY**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program (PTA), as a department of Union County College, adheres to the majority of the College's documented policies and procedures. There are instances, however, when the PTA Program has established its own policies and procedures in order to meet the special needs of the curriculum and accreditation standards. Students must be knowledgeable about their rights and responsibilities within the PTA Program and the College. Every student is advised to become familiar with the **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Student Handbook & Clinical Handbook**, **Union County College Student Handbook**, the **Union County College Catalog** and other college publications.

### **Union County College Resources**

Union county College Website publicizes the current versions of the Union County College Catalogue ([www.ucc.edu/coursecatalogarchive.aspx](http://www.ucc.edu/coursecatalogarchive.aspx)) the college Student Handbook ([www.ucc.edu/Media/.../201415%20Student%20Handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/Media/.../201415%20Student%20Handbook).) on the web. Please visit these websites for full descriptions of academic information and regulations pertinent to all college students.

## **ADMISSIONS**

Applications to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are processed through the Physical Therapist Assistance Office of Union County College. Information about the Program and applications may be obtained by contacting the Recruitment offices at:

- Plainfield Campus (908) 412 - 3550
- Cranford Campus (908) 709 - 7518
- Elizabeth Campus (908) 965 - 6050

Specific information is available through the Program office at: (908) 412- 4917.

### **Admissions Criteria**

It is the applicant's responsibility to follow the policies of Union County College Admissions Office to complete his/her application. This information is also required for determination of advanced standing credit. For more information please refer to the provided link: [www.ucc.edu/admissions/](http://www.ucc.edu/admissions/).

### **Eligibility Criteria for the PTA Program**

- Successful completion of pre-requisite courses in ENG101, BIO105 (Anatomy and Physiology I), MAT 119 (Algebra), PSY 101, and PSY 212 (Developmental Psychology over the Life Span) with a grade of C or better, prior to the application deadline.
- Satisfactory completion of 25 volunteer hours from 2 different settings totaling 50 hours.

### **PTA Application Process**

Student who meet the eligibility criteria must complete PTA Program's Application for review by the PTA Admissions Committee. The completed application must include the following:

- PTA Program Application along with all **unofficial transcripts** from all schools attended, CLEP and AP scores (if applicable), personal essay and 2 sealed recommendation forms.
  - The completed application to be sent to:  
Kathleen Wittrock  
Division of Allied Sciences  
Plainfield Campus, Union County College  
232 East Second Street  
Plainfield, NJ 07060  
[Kathleen.wittrock@ucc.edu](mailto:Kathleen.wittrock@ucc.edu)
- All **official transcripts** from all schools attended to be sent to the Admission's Office on the Cranford Campus.

Incomplete applications will not be evaluated for admission into the PTA Program. All completed applications received by the deadline of October 31<sup>st</sup> will be reviewed. An admission score will be calculated for each application. Seating is limited to top admission candidates.

PTA program application can be obtained from the program webpage.  
<http://www.ucc.edu/academics/programs/phytheass.aspx>  
<http://www.ucc.edu/CurrentStudents/Physical-Therapy-Assistant/default.aspx>

### **College Placement Test**

Upon admission to the College, students are required to take the College Placement Test through the Academic Placement Testing Center at Union County College. Students may qualify for an exemption from this policy. Information about this process is available in the Union County College Student Handbook and the following link: [www.ucc.edu/admissions/testing.aspx](http://www.ucc.edu/admissions/testing.aspx).

Students wishing to enter the Physical Therapist Assistant Program must have completed all developmental course work in English and/or Math.

### **Advanced Standing – General Education Courses**

Students may be granted credit for the following courses if they are found to correspond with the subject matter of the courses offered at Union County College: BIO 105, BIO 106, ENG 101, ENG 102, PSY 212, MAT 119, PSY 101. A minimum grade of ‘C’ is required for all transfer course work. Transfer course grades are not included in the GPA. (Refer to the Union County College Student Handbook [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook). Transfer course grades are weighted in the admission process for the program.

Details of professional and academic standards, evaluation procedures and the appeals process are available in the Union County College Catalog and Student Handbook [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook).

### **Advanced Placement Testing – CLEP & AP**

Students may receive credit by taking the College Level Examination Program (CLEP) or Advanced Placement tests by achieving scores that are accepted by the College. Students may contact the Admissions Offices at (908) 709 – 7596 for further information on College courses that are comparable to the specific placement tests. CLEP and AP scores must be documented on the Admissions

### **Re-Admission Policy**

Students seeking re-admission to the Physical Therapist Assistant program must submit a letter requesting review of their status. Students should include information in the written request that identifies their plan for improved success in the Program. Requests for re-admission will be reviewed by the PTA faculty and if needed the Admission Committee. The following items are required:

- Submission of the formal written request for re-admission
- Submission of PTA Application Form
- Achievement of a grade ‘C’ or higher in each pre-requisite course
- Allowing at least one semester to pass since the dismissal. This allows the student the opportunity to attend to any personal, financial, or academic issues prior to attempting re-admission.

Re-admission to the program is not guaranteed, and may require completion of additional actions, such as personal counseling or academic assignments. Specific issues relating to conduct may preclude the student’s ability to be re-admitted. This behavior includes, but is not limited to threatening behavior, weapons possession, theft, cheating, and substance abuse.



For students who meet the re-admission criteria and return to the Program, any subsequent failure in a course will result in a final dismissal from the Program and will be given no further consideration for re-admission.

It is the desire of the faculty that students who return to the Program be successful. Preparation for the written and performance examinations should assist students in refreshing a student's knowledge for a successful return to studies. Students are strongly encouraged to use available resources, such as the Skills Laboratory, Computer Laboratory, and Library, to assist in their preparation. It is strongly recommended that students take sufficient time to review materials and prepare for return to the program.

Students who attended the PTA program and have not been enrolled for one year or more will need to start the curriculum sequence from the beginning.

- Students must attend all courses and successfully pass all the components of the course with an average score of 75% or higher.

## **ENROLLEMENT**

Students who are planning to enroll in PTA Program need to have the following prior to the student's first clinical course, PTA 217:

- ✓ CPR certification for the Health Care Provider prior to course
- ✓ Evidence of current Malpractice Insurance (\$1 million/\$3 million minimum coverage)
- ✓ Student Health Documentation (per policy)
- ✓ Criminal record history background check
- ✓ Satisfactory completion of prior semesters course work and competency skills

### **Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR Certification)**

Students enrolled in PTA clinical courses are required to be CPR certified (Healthcare Provider). Students may contact the American Heart Association, or other area providers to meet this requirement. The certification card is to be presented on a date specified prior to registration for the first clinical course, PTA 217. It is the students' responsibility to maintain current certification and provide documentation upon request.

NOTE: CPR for the Healthcare Provider includes interventions for an adult, child, & infant for: CPR, use of the AED, foreign body airway obstruction removal, and use of a bag-valve-mask device. No other CPR classes, such as Community/Heartsaver level, or online offerings are applicable.

### **Criminal Background Check**

All students enrolled in the Physical Therapist Assistant program are required to have a criminal background check completed to continue in the program and participate in clinical practice experiences. Students must sign and submit a **Criminal Background Check Release Form** and **Disclosure Form** prior to PTA 217 Clinical Practice registration. Additionally, some clinical affiliates require their own criminal background checks. Past criminal history may have an impact upon enrollment in the Physical Therapist Assistant program, and the ability to obtain licensure and employment as a PTA. The Physical Therapist Assistant program will attempt to work with students who have a criminal history, but clinical agencies have the right to establish individual policies and exclude students from client care areas. The specific procedure for appeals of criminal background findings will be provided to students, as necessary.

### **Review of Reports**

The Coordinator of the Physical Therapist Assistant program will receive and review the criminal background checks. Reasonable effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of these records, with a limited number of individuals authorized to review the results.

### **Evidence of a Criminal History**

Examples of criminal behavior (convictions, guilty pleas, or judicial findings of guilt) that may result in an inability to continue in the program include, but are not limited to: assault, battery, homicide, manslaughter, kidnapping, sexual assault, arson, domestic violence, theft, drug abuse and/or distribution, and fraud. Failure to disclose all previous convictions, other than minor traffic violations, will be considered falsification of records and will be grounds for dismissal from the program. The existence of a criminal history does not automatically disqualify a student from enrollment in the program. Consideration may be given to the date, nature, and number of

convictions; the relationship the conviction has to the role and responsibilities of physical therapy; and efforts toward rehabilitation. If adverse evidence is obtained, the coordinator will:

- Determine the relationship of the offense(s) to the role of the student PTA.
- Obtain feedback from the affiliating agencies as to whether the student is able to participate in clinical experiences.
- Provide a copy of the results obtained for the student.
- Assist the student in preparing an appeal, if indicated.
- Inform the student in writing of the decision regarding ongoing enrollment in the program.

Students who believe that their criminal information is inaccurate will need to have this resolved prior to clinical placement.

It is the continued responsibility of the students to immediately report convictions of any crimes or offenses that occur after the completion of the criminal background check. Results of these reports will be reviewed by the Coordinator of the program, with continued enrollment based upon the nature of the offense.

### **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Policy On Alcohol and Other Drugs**

The possession, use or distribution of alcohol and other drugs of abuse is prohibited on school property and any clinical affiliation site at all times.

When an individual is identified as being under the influence of alcohol and/or other drugs either on the college campus or at a clinical affiliation site, the primary objective is to protect both the individual and the persons who might come into contact with the individual, from physical harm. The secondary objective is the protection of property and to provide professional assistance to the individual.

When an individual under the influence is identified, the identifier is to call security. The identifier should attempt to retain contact with the person until security arrives and assumes responsibility for the individual under the influence.

Students will have drug testing as part of his or her physical exam prior to beginning clinical affiliations. Students must consent to the clinical affiliation site receiving copies of this testing. Students must understand that the clinical site has a right to refuse to take a student if the test results are positive.

### **Malpractice Insurance**

All students who are enrolled in a clinical PTA course are required to carry malpractice insurance (minimum coverage of one million dollars any one claim, three million dollars any one annual period of insurance). The insurance policy documentation must demonstrate coverage for the entire clinical course. Without proof of coverage, students will not be permitted to register for the subsequent class or clinical practice.

## **Student Health Requirements**

Students enrolling in their first clinical course in the PTA Program, and those students who are resuming their studies after an absence of a year or more, are to complete and satisfy health requirements through their personal health care provider.

The requirements include:

1. Health overview
2. Physical examination (within 6 months)
3. Laboratory studies: Urinalysis, complete blood count, blood chemistry panel, urine drug screening with confirmation
4. Proof of immune status – blood titers are required for all of the following:
  - a. Measles/Mumps/Rubella
  - b. Varicella-zoster titer
  - c. Hepatitis B

\* Students who are not immune to measles, mumps, rubella, varicella, or hepatitis B will need to obtain the appropriate vaccination. A follow up titer is required following vaccinations. Students who are not immune to the infectious diseases noted may be prohibited by the clinical agencies from participating in experiences in areas where disease transmission poses a high risk to patients, staff, visitors, and /or students.

5. Flu Vaccination (as available)

6. Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine or declination

7. Two-Step or Three Step Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis\* as per clinic request

\*All current students are to have an annual Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis. A two-step Mantoux test is not required if proof of a negative Mantoux within 12 months is provided. Students who test positive to the Mantoux skin test or have received BCG will obtain a chest X-ray or pulmonary clearance.

**Students should make copies of ALL health records** submitted for their personal files and future use. Health records are not released after submission to the Program. The health forms and reference sample are available on the PTA website.

NOTE – The State of New Jersey requires that all full-time students born after December 31, 1957 are immunized against Measles, Mumps, Rubella, and Hepatitis B, or prove that they meet one of the exemption requirements or provide doctors' verification. The PTA program has more requirements than the College for student health information and immunization in order to meet the standards of our clinical affiliates. Registration for clinical PTA courses is dependent upon the completion of the health requirements.

Effective with the fall semester 2013, basic hospitalization coverage will not be available through the college. Please refer to Student Services for additional information on this change.

## **REGISTRATION**

Students are expected to register for Fall, Spring, and Summer classes during the designated times established by the Physical Therapist Assistant Program and Union County College. Students will be informed of advance registration dates. Student Accounts obligations need to be met to avoid cancellation of registration.

Students who need to register for college courses (English, Biology, and Psychology) may do so directly with a College Counselor. Students will register for PTA courses with a representative from the Program for the first semester in the clinical phase. After the first semester students may register independently.

Students who have questions regarding their academic status and curriculum requirements are advised to discuss their concerns with the Director, Union County College Counselor, or faculty member prior to registration.

## **STUDENT ACCOUNTS**

### **Tuition and Fees**

Tuition and fees are published in the College Student Handbook and Catalog, but are subject to change. All tuition, fees, and other related course costs are to be paid at the Office of Student Accounts in accordance with the payment schedule and established policies. Information about Student Accounts may be found at <http://www.ucc.edu/admissions/payingforcollege/>. Students are responsible for applying for Financial Aid in advance of registration and payment deadlines. Please refer to the Union County College Student Handbook and Catalog for more detailed information.

### **Refunds**

Students may receive refunds of tuition and fees if they meet the established criteria. Students should refer to the Student Accounts guidelines that are published in the Union County College Student Handbook. Students receiving financial aid need to follow specific guidelines. Assistance provided through financial aid may not be refundable to the student. The Director of the Program will address any requests for refunds that fall outside of the specified guidelines. If indicated, these special requests will be forwarded to the appropriate offices for review.

### **Financial Aid**

Information about available financial aid programs and scholarships is available in the Union County College Student Handbook, Catalog, and through the Financial Aid Offices:

Cranford Campus (908) 709 - 7137

Plainfield Campus (908) 412 - 3571

Elizabeth Campus (908) 965 - 6063

Students are encouraged to investigate available resources that may assist them to meet the financial obligations associated with the academic program. Specific scholarship funds are available for PTA students

## **Graduation**

Transcripts, grades, and letters of recommendation will not be released and registration for subsequent semesters will not be permitted until all financial obligations to the College have been cleared. To qualify for graduation, students need to have completed all of the required course work in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program with a GPA of 2.5 or better. All financial obligations must be met in order for the Degree to be issued.

## **STUDENT RESOURCES**

### **Academic Learning Centers**

The Academic Learning Centers are located on all three campuses of the College and are available to aid students in a variety of subjects, including but not limited to English, math, and sciences. Students are encouraged to use this free and valuable resource to assist them to succeed in the program. Hours are posted in each location and on the web site at <http://www.ucc.edu/about/ALC> . Please refer to the Union County College Student Handbook [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook) for further information about the ALC.

### **Bookstore**

Physical Therapy Assistant textbooks, as well as other academic supplies, are available for purchase in the Bookstore on the Plainfield Campus.

### **Computer Resources**

Students have access to the internet, Microsoft application products, and printers in the Computer labs, libraries, and academic learning centers on the Plainfield, Cranford, and Elizabeth campuses of the College. In addition, specific software is available for students to use to reinforce classroom and clinical information. It is the responsibility of each student to be familiar with the rules and regulations for use of computers and software throughout the College.

Students need to activate their UCC network e-mail account for electronic communication. It is also required to obtain and use a CWID number throughout the PTA program. E-mail and CWID numbers can be obtained at: [www.ucc.edu](http://www.ucc.edu).

### **Course Audits**

Students may, with permission from the coordinator, may audit a PTA course. There will be no examinations/quizzes or clinical experiences during a course audit and students will not receive a grade. Please refer to the following link for more information: [www.ucc.edu/Media/Website%20Resources/.../AUDITREQUEST.pdf](http://www.ucc.edu/Media/Website%20Resources/.../AUDITREQUEST.pdf)

### **Library**

The College Libraries ([www.ucc.edu/about/library/defa.H.aspx](http://www.ucc.edu/about/library/defa.H.aspx).) have notable resources, including extensive holdings of print and ebooks, journals, back-files of more than 125,000 serial titles, electronic access to full text articles, a broad selection of indexing and abstracting services in both digital and print formats, music CDs, and audiovisual aids. Students have access and are strongly encouraged to use the libraries on all three of the College campuses. With over 125,000 volumes and 500 journal and newspaper subscriptions, students are able to take advantage of a tremendous reference resource. Physical Therapy videos are part of the library holdings on the

Plainfield Campus. Access is also available to the online catalog, networked CD-ROM databases, and the Internet. Reference librarians are available on all campuses to aid. Information on resources, study guides and instruction, interactive forms, and links to subject areas are provided on the Library's Website.

Technology available in the College includes the Web-based delivery of key academic databases of indexes, abstracts, and digital full-text resources for study and research. The College Academic Learning Resource Center provides users with state-of-the-art computer workstations, and the College Libraries feature wireless connectivity throughout the facility.

### **Skills Simulation Laboratory**

The Skills Laboratory is located in PTA Lab on the Lower Level Floor in the Logo Building on the Plainfield Campus. Supervised practice of techniques and tutorial services are available, as well as sign-off on the completion of mandated skills. The hours of operation are posted on the door. Sign in sheets are located in the lab.

### **Student Activities**

Students are encouraged to participate in the wide diversity of activities sponsored by the Student Government Association at Union County College. These activities involve entertainment shows, lectures, films, and musical programs, and trips. Upcoming activities are posted around the campuses prior to scheduled dates. Further information is available from the Office of the Director of Student Activities that is located in the Campus Center Building on the Cranford campus.

### **Student Assistance & Counseling**

Individuals who are experiencing personal problems should contact student services (908) 709 - 7525 for referral to the Student Assistance Counselor. Academic counseling is available on all of the College campuses. These services include assisting students with curriculum planning/advisement, career exploration, determination of academic status, and transfer information. [www.ucc.edu/administration/student-services](http://www.ucc.edu/administration/student-services). Exit interviews may be planned with students who withdraw from or fail PTA courses.

### **Services for Students with Disabilities**

Union County College provides equal access to academic programs, activities, and awards for students without discrimination on the basis of disabling conditions. Union County College believes in a total educational experience and, as such, seeks to mainstream students with disabilities into its regular programs and activities. Programs and methods of teaching, evaluation and service delivery are adapted to meet the individualized needs of each student. Students are encouraged to participate in the diverse activities of the College community.

In compliance with the NJ Law Against Discrimination (NJLAD) Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, including the recent Amendments, accommodations are provided to address the special needs of students with documented disabilities. Please refer to the following link for further information:

[www.ucc.edu/admissions/ACT/disabilityservices](http://www.ucc.edu/admissions/ACT/disabilityservices). Students with physical or learning disabilities are advised to contact the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities for assistance in achieving educational goals. Students are referred to the Union County College Student Handbook [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook) for further information on Counseling Services. Union County College is handicap accessible and able to offer students a range of accommodations. These

services may include adapted classroom activities, testing accommodations, referral to community resources, and parking permits.

Students can obtain more specific detailed information by reviewing the College's Disability Services Brochure, website, or by meeting with the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities.

The office is located at:  
Cranford Campus  
1033 Springfield Avenue  
Nomahegan Building, Room N2-6  
(908) 709-7164  
TTY: 709-4362  
Email: Disability [SUC@UCC.edu](mailto:SUC@UCC.edu)

#### Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 Policy Statement

Union County College does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities. The College provides reasonable accommodation(s), as required by law, to otherwise qualified applicants, employees, and students with disabilities in all work settings, education programs, activities, services and practices, including application procedures, admissions, course selection, the awarding of degrees, discipline and dismissal. Educational, employment, or promotion opportunities will not be denied to an employee or student because of the need to make reasonable accommodation(s) or modification(s) for the physical and mental impairment(s) of any such individual.

For information on the NJ Law Against Discrimination:  
<http://www.state.nj.us/lps/dcr/law.html>

Refer to the Union County College Student Handbook, [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook), for further information on student rights at the College.

#### **Website for PTA Program**

Students enrolled in the PTA program have access to program and course materials through the Owl's Nest, which is accessed at the following site: <http://owlsnest.ucc.edu>  
Information for individual courses is available to enrolled students through Canvas.  
On the course pages are the current syllabi, calendars, and tools used during each semester.



## **STUDENT RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**

Under guidance from the faculty members and their clinical colleagues, students in the PTA professional education program assume responsibility for their own ongoing learning as well as personal and professional growth. Students are responsible for their own curriculum plan. This means that they have a working knowledge of all course requirements and deadlines for their completion. Students are expected to maintain their own personal record of courses completed, including course grades and the accuracy of these records. The student with advanced standing is responsible for obtaining a written statement from Union County College indicating courses and credits that have been accepted for transfer.

To facilitate the sharing of information, student representatives from each class are chosen and can meet with faculty as needed. During these meetings, students may express the thoughts of their peers and offer possible suggestions for program improvement. Additional meetings with student groups may be scheduled during the year as necessary. Student representatives will be determined each semester by nomination and an election of the majority in each class.

Students are also encouraged to participate in the evaluation of the program by completing course/clinical and faculty evaluations at the end of each course. This input assists the faculty in the review and revision of course implementation.

### **Concerns**

Students have the right to express their concerns regarding academic and non-academic issues. These issues may include, but are not limited to course activities, discrimination, disruptive classroom behavior, harassment, or intimidation.

1. Students are to convey their expressed concerns directly to the appropriate faculty member.
2. If students do not perceive resolution of the issue, then they should contact the Coordinator.
3. Students are to submit a signed written statement addressed to the Coordinator outlining the concern(s).
4. The Coordinator will respond in writing within 10 working days to the student/class.
5. There is no further appeal process within the Program. Students should review the College Grievance procedure for further information (refer to the Student Handbook).
6. In the event that concerns are not perceived to have been resolved through this process, then students may address complaints about the Program.

Student concerns are not related to individual course grades. Students seeking follow-up on clinical failures are to follow the Appeals Process noted in this Handbook. Course grades are not open to appeal within the Program.

### **Conduct**

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behavior during all classroom and clinical experiences. Students in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are reminded that they are also subject to disciplinary action for the type of conduct outlined in the Union County College Student Handbook, [www.ucc.edu/go/handbook](http://www.ucc.edu/go/handbook).

Students demonstrating behavior that is inappropriate, unethical, unprofessional, and/or unsafe will be required to leave the classroom or clinical area, and they may be subject to receive failing

grades, disciplinary action up to and including program dismissal with no program readmission. Students who are removed from a clinical site are not to return the clinical site unless instructed by the program coordinator. It is not possible to identify every eventuality or scenario, but the students' behavior will be compared to the standards of the professional in the field and the professions Code of Conduct.

Conduct that is subject to disciplinary action and/or law enforcement response includes, but is not limited to:

- ✓ Lack of academic integrity: academic honesty and integrity is expected at all times. Evidence of cheating, plagiarism, or falsification of documentation is cause for loss of grades and/or dismissal.
- ✓ The possession, use, and distribution of alcohol or drugs of abuse are prohibited.
- ✓ Breach of confidentiality
- ✓ The possession, use, or threat to use weapons or items that could be considered as weapons
- ✓ Sexual abuse, harassment, or misconduct
- ✓ Verbal or physical abuse or threats
- ✓ Inappropriate use of language
- ✓ Vandalism or theft of College, agency, or the property of others
- ✓ Demonstration of other communication or behavior that is inconsistent with safe, professional practice

The College maintains a smoke-free environment on all campuses. In addition, smoking is not permitted at any of the clinical sites.

Forms of disciplinary action which may be taken through the Physical Therapist Assistant Program may include any or all of the following:

1. Dismissal from the program based on recommendation by the faculty members or through direct observation by the Coordinator or other College administrator.
2. Prevention of registration for a subsequent PTA course without evidence of personal counseling and/or re-evaluation.
3. Referral for personal counseling, with evidence of compliance provided in accordance with the recommendation.

In addition to the above, the College or public authority may take appropriate disciplinary action against the student.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Recommendations on Student Employment**

Enrollment in the PTA program is a full-time responsibility, and employment during the academic year is not recommended. The rationale is that the program requires at least two (2) hours of study for each hour of classroom attendance.

For students who do choose to be employed while enrolled in the program, academic activities and requirements must always take precedence over employment activities. Missing classes or leaving early for employment is not acceptable. Students should be aware that the PTA program does require occasional evening and/or Saturday classes. Employment must not interfere with clinical education experiences.

Working or volunteering at a healthcare center or clinic is applauded, but will prevent the student from being assigned a clinical rotation at the same facility. Any students with current or recent employment or experience as a volunteer in a specific healthcare center or clinic need to notify the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education of such. This to assist in their allocation processes of clinical experiences.

### **Change of Name/Address**

Students who have had a change in name or address need to complete a form in the Student Services area on one of the College campuses. Failure to notify the College of a change of name and/or address may result in a delay or interruption of official communication.

### **Class Cancellation**

In the event of inclement weather, the College may be closed. Students should be alert for television, radio, and/or UCC web site announcements concerning emergency closure. A listing of radio stations is noted in the Union County College Student Handbook. In the event of a College closure, PTA classes are cancelled. Students may provide their phone numbers so that they may be notified by the faculty member if a class is cancelled. Any make-up time for classes will be arranged by the instructor.

### **Written Communication**

Students requesting written documentation, such as personal references or verification of course schedules, will submit a written request to the appropriate Program representative. This request should include:

- Name
- CWID #
- Reason for the request
- Contact information of the person/place where the documentation is to be sent

Efforts will be made to expedite requests for correspondence, but a minimum of three (3) to five (5) working days may be needed to fulfill the request.

### **Electronic Communication**

It is the policy of the Program to use the UCC e-mail addresses for distribution of course-related information. All students are expected to have their UCC accounts active for receipt of notices from the coordinator and/or faculty members. Course materials and evaluation surveys may also be sent this way.

Union County College expects all members of its community to use electronic communications in a responsible manner. The College may restrict the use of its computers and network systems for electronic communications. Specifically, the College reserves the right to limit access to its networks through College-owned or other computers, and to remove or limit access to material posted on College-owned computers, pursuant to the procedures and standards set forth in the “Union County College Responsible Use Policy.” Students who log on to Union County College network systems agree to be bound by the terms of this policy, which is available at: <http://www.ucc.edu/admissions/DistanceEducation/NetworkPolicy.aspx>

### **Cell Phones and Electronic Communication**

All cellular telephones and other electronic devices, other than approved calculators and laptops, are to be turned off during all classroom experiences. Students may be asked by the instructor to leave if their cell phones ring during the class. Students should also not be carrying phones during clinical experiences. The use of cellular telephones is prohibited in most of the clinical agencies. In an emergency during class or clinical times, the Director or Faculty member may be contacted and the student will be advised of the situation. Telephone numbers for clinical sites are provided to students during the rotations for emergency calls.

Cell phones are to be completely turned OFF during quizzes and examinations. Ringing and vibrating are disturbing during quiet testing periods and it is not appropriate to respond to a call. Cell phones may not be used as calculators, even if the use of a calculator is allowed during a quiz or exam.

The use of a cell phone during a clinical experience disrupts the continuity of patient care, and is prohibited in patient care areas. In addition, there are no FAX or personal telephone privileges for students on clinical sites. Unauthorized use of a clinical sites FAX or telephone for personal reasons constitutes unprofessional behavior. Professional behavior is expected of students at all times and the disregard of one’s peers and patients is unacceptable.

In addition, students are not permitted to record audio or video information (i.e., PowerPoints & DVD programs) from classes or clinical experiences without the permission of the instructor and/or program director. Written consents are required to take photos and videos of fellow students, faculty members, and patients. This policy is extended to the use of cell phones and all other electronic equipment that is capable of recording audio and visual information.

With the tremendous proliferation of electronic communication social networking, there is a tendency to post private information or images. There are advantages and disadvantages to this practice, as well as legal implications. In regard to this issue, the administrator and faculty of the PTA Program believe that professional conscience rather than social interest is critical. Students are not to share images of patients, families, fellow students, faculty members, administrators, or academic or clinical documentation on any *Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, YouTube*, e-mail, or other electronic or print format without the express written consent of the individual, patient, clinical agency, and/or Union County College. Personal privacy, dignity and respect are the key factors

for this policy, which has come into existence in response to poor or uninformed judgment on the part of others. Students who have been found to violate this policy will be subject to dismissal from the PTA Program.

### **Public Safety/Emergency Plans**

Students are encouraged to review the safety guidelines that are in the Union County College Student Handbook. Security assistance is provided on all of the campuses. Student injuries should be reported to security personnel.

In the event of an emergency, such as a fire, students should follow the procedures that are outlined in the Union County College Student Handbook. Campus crime statistics are available upon request through the Public Safety Office.

Effective July 1, 2008, Union County College introduced **UCCALERT**, communication system that will allow the College to send time-sensitive notifications by phone (including TTY/TTD), e-mail, and/or text message. UCC Alert is a voluntary OPT-IN SERVICE, which means that, while the College highly recommends you provide your contact information, it is not mandatory that you participate. In order to participate you must use your College Wide Identification Number (CWID) which is assigned to all students, faculty and staff. Anyone wishing to Opt-in to the Union County College Emergency Notification system to receive alert messages must sign up at the following hyper link: <http://ucc.edu/regroup>

### **Safety On and Off Campus**

Union County College is an open campus and all students should be aware of their surroundings. Students are encouraged to travel in pairs or groups and if unsure of a situation with regards to safety, seek security supervision.

### **Food Services**

A food service is operated on all three campuses of the College. A variety of foods are available, along with selections from vending machines. Hours of operation are posted and may be adjusted during semester breaks and Summer session.

### **ID Cards**

Students receive College photo identification cards from Student Services. ID cards must be validated and should be carried at all times. The ID card serves as the student activity and College library card.

In addition, students in the PTA program are required to purchase clinical ID badges for their clinical experiences.

### **Parking**

Students intending to park in designated College lots need to register their car(s) and obtain a parking tag through the Public Safety Office. The tag is to be properly displayed at all times. Students violating parking regulations will be issued a summons and become subject to a fine. Further details are available in the Union County College Student Handbook.

### **Student Files**

For student files within the Physical Therapist Assistant program:

1. Files will be kept in a secured cabinet during the time the student is enrolled in the program and for one (1) calendar year following graduation, withdrawal, or dismissal from the program.
2. After this one-year period, the student's file will be archived and stored in a designated area by the College.
3. The Physical Therapist Assistant program file on each student will be held for a period of 5 years following graduation or termination from the College, and then destroyed.
4. Official academic transcripts are available through the Registrar's office (fee required).

The general contents of each student's file includes, but may not be limited to:

- A clinical evaluation from each clinical course, including any warning or failure notices and pertinent instructor notations on student progress.
- Selected written course assignments, as examples of progress.
- Correspondence sent to and/or requested by the student.
- Documentation of grade changes, late withdrawals, and/or curriculum change forms.
- Health forms and results.
- Criminal background report.
- Copy of current CPR card and malpractice insurance policy.
- The curriculum check sheet signed off by a faculty member upon program completion.

### **Transcripts**

Please refer to the following link:

[www.ucc.edu/Media/Website%20Resources/.../Transcripts.pdf](http://www.ucc.edu/Media/Website%20Resources/.../Transcripts.pdf).

### **Transportation**

Students are responsible for arranging their own transportation to the College and to assigned field trips and clinical sites. Bus and rail schedules are available through the College's NJ Transit.

# Standards for Essential Functions

## Essential Functions Guidelines

In addition to meeting academic standards required for **admission into, retention, and graduation** from the PTA program, students must also acquire and maintain certain *Essential Functions* necessary to the practice of physical therapy. These essential functions consist of minimum physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for both the successful completion of the program and the ability to practice safely once students graduate.

The essential functions outlined below have been formulated based on the mission, philosophy, and goals of the program and the College; the guidelines of the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association; the Generic Abilities as outlined by May, et. al. (1995); the Clinical Performance Instrument of the American Physical Therapy Association (1999); the Guide to Physical Therapist Practice (APTA, 1997); and the Normative Model of Physical Therapist Assistant Education (APTA, 1997).

The PTA program adheres to high standards in all areas to select and graduate students who have the ability to become highly competent paraprofessionals. The PTA program at Union County College prepares students to enter the profession as generalists. Therefore, students must meet the academic, clinical, educational, and essential functions requirements that will allow them to practice safely and ethically.

Union County PTA program is committed to the education of all qualified individuals, including persons with disabilities who, with or without reasonable accommodation, are capable of performing the essential functions of the educational program in which they are enrolled and the profession that they pursue. It is the policy of Union County to comply with the American with Disabilities Act, Section 504 of the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1973, and state and local requirements regarding students and applicants with disabilities. Under these laws, no otherwise qualified and competent individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in services, programs, and activities solely on the basis of the disability.

### **Essential Functions: Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Physical therapy is a widely varying field of practice, encompassing a set of skills that tend to differ from one job to another. This diversity of practice lends itself to the employment of individuals with many different traits and abilities.

Physical therapist assistants work with persons with many different kinds of abilities and disabilities, and have a deep commitment to serving the needs of persons of all ages, whether the dysfunctions are of body and mind, are acquired, or developmental in character. Every effort will be made to meet the needs of physical therapist assistant students with disabilities, within the parameters of the academic educational program and clinic availability.

This said, the PTA program curriculum at Union County College educates and trains students as entry level practitioners, in keeping with the requirements of the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), the accrediting agency for the profession's educational

programs. Thus, students are prepared for employment in all general areas of practice, and are prepared with the skills needed to succeed in clinical training and practice and for the licensure exam that is required prior to practicing as a graduate of an accredited program, of which Union County College Physical Therapist Assistant Program is one.

### **Essential Functions/Technical Standards for Student Enrollment**

In accord with the federal regulations established by the Americans with Disabilities Act, the following standards are described to assist each candidate in evaluating his/her prospect for academic and clinical success. General standards for the School of Health and Medical Sciences are followed by standards that apply to the professional discipline to which you have applied (see additional standards below). When a student's ability to perform is compromised, the student must demonstrate alternative means and/or abilities to perform the essential functions described. At all times the student must meet performance expectations and behaviors in accordance with course syllabi and policies and procedures of the program.

**It is important that each student reads each standard carefully. By signing the appropriate Certification Statement below, the student certifies that s/he has read and understands these standards, and to the best of his/her knowledge meets each standard.**

### **ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

In keeping with the goals of the Physical Therapist Assistant program, the highest priority is placed on developing graduates who are competent, caring physical therapist assistants who possess the skills of lifelong learning needed to incorporate new knowledge and methods into their practices and to adapt to a changing healthcare environment. Certain essential functions are requisite for admission, progression, and graduation from the PTA Program.

An individual must be able to independently, with or without reasonable accommodation, meet the following essential functions. Individuals unable to resolve deficiencies in these essential functions, with or without reasonable accommodation, are counseled to pursue alternate careers.

The student is expected to possess functional use of the senses of vision, touch, and hearing so that data received by the senses may be integrated, analyzed, and synthesized in a consistent and accurate manner. A student must also possess the ability to perceive pain, pressure, temperature, position, vibration, position equilibrium, and movement that are important to the student's ability to gather significant information needed to manage patients effectively.

#### Observation Skills:

Students must be able to acquire a defined level of required information as presented through educational experiences in both basic arts and sciences and clinical sciences. To achieve the required competencies in the classroom setting, students must perceive, assimilate, and integrate information from a variety of sources. These sources include oral presentation, printed material, visual media, and live demonstrations. Consequently, students must demonstrate adequate functional use of visual, tactile, auditory and other sensory and perceptual modalities to enable such observations and information acquisition necessary for academic and clinical performance.



### Communication Skills:

Effective communication is critical for students to build relationships with faculty, advisors, fellow graduate students, coworkers, patients/clients and their families in the student's various roles of learner, colleague, consultant, educator and leader. Students must be able to gather, comprehend, utilize and disseminate information effectively, efficiently and according to professional standards. Students are required to communicate in the English language both verbally and in writing, at a level consistent with competent professional practice. Students are expected to use grammar and vocabulary proficiently. They must be able to elicit information, gather information, and describe findings verbally and in writing (e.g., in a physical examination record and treatment plan). Communication should be comprehensible by faculty, peers, patients/clients, professionals, and laypersons.

Students must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients/clients and colleagues, including individuals from different cultural and social backgrounds; this includes, but is not limited to, the ability to establish rapport with patients/clients and communicate effectively their clinical reasoning and decision making. They should also be able to observe, recognize and interpret non-verbal communication, including body language, demonstrated by others. Students should be able to recognize non-verbal communication and body language of themselves, recognize the effect it has on others and adjust it as needed to meet professional standards and facilitate effective relationships with others.

### Motor Skills:

Students must possess the motor functions needed to manipulate instruments or tools and to handle patients/clients. These functions will vary depending on needs of each individual according to the patient/client management process (see additional standards below). The motor capacities usually include the physical strength and coordination to safely handle and move patients/clients, perform clinical procedures, and to manage and direct patients/clients in various practice settings.

### Intellectual/Conceptual Abilities:

Students must demonstrate critical thinking skills so that they can problem-solve creatively, master abstract ideas, and synthesize information presented in academic, laboratory and fieldwork settings. Students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, process, integrate, synthesize, apply and retain facts, concepts, and data related to the art and science of health care. In some areas, this requires comprehension of three-dimensional relationships and understanding of the spatial relationships of structures. Students must develop and exhibit a sense of medical ethics, and also recognize and apply pertinent legal and ethical standards.

### Behavioral and Social Skills:

Students must demonstrate emotional stability and acceptable communication skills as noted above, and be capable of developing mature and effective interpersonal relationships with other students, faculty and health care workers. Students must be able to tolerate physically and emotionally stressful workloads and to function effectively under pressure. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and function in the face of the uncertainties inherent in the classroom and clinical setting.

Students must exhibit the ability and commitment to work with individuals in an intense setting to meet the needs of people of diverse cultures, age groups, socioeconomic groups and challenges without bias. These individuals may be severely injured; they may be limited by cognitive, emotional and functional deficits; and their behavior may create at times an adverse environment. The ability to interact with these individuals with impairments and dysfunctions without being judgmental or prejudiced is critical in establishing one's professionalism and therapeutic relationship. Compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are critical to complete the DPT program.

In compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and applicable federal and state laws, Union County College ensures people with disabilities will have an equal opportunity to participate in its programs and activities. If requesting auxiliary aids, accommodations, and services to participate in Union County programs, members and guests of the Union County community who have a disability need to register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). All requests for reasonable and appropriate auxiliary aids, academic adjustments, and services will be considered on a case-by-case basis and in a timely fashion. Essential Functions for Physical Therapist Assistant Students. Prior to beginning the program, the student is responsible for providing written documentation of any disability along with evidence of the need or accommodation.

#### Professional Responsibility:

Students must exhibit the ability to meet the challenges of any clinical situation that requires a readiness for immediate and appropriate response without interference of personal or medical problems. This requires training for emergencies (e.g., CPR/AED, infection control, first aid) and the on-going maintenance of clinical competencies.

It is each student's responsibility to attend and be able to travel to and from classes and clinical assignments on time, and possess the organizational skills and stamina for performing required tasks and assignments within allotted time frames. This involves frequent oral, written, and practical examinations or demonstrations which may be performed individually or in groups. The student must have the ability to perform problem-solving tasks in a timely manner.

Students will exhibit adherence to policies of the college, their program, and clinical sites. This includes matters ranging from professional dress and behavior, to attending to their program's academic schedule, which may differ from the College's academic calendar and be subject to change at any time.

Students must demonstrate knowledge of and commitment to the APTA's Code of Ethics and behavior that reflects a sense of right and wrong in the therapeutic environment.

Students will take initiative to direct their own learning, embarking on a lifelong commitment to learning. They need to work cooperatively and collaboratively with other students on assigned projects, and participate willingly in a supervisory process involving evaluation of abilities and reasoning skills. Students will commit to participate in a reflective analysis of one's own behaviors, practice, clinical skills and communication.

In addition to the general standards above, students in the PTA program must meet the following requirements. These requirements apply to both the academic and clinical environments alike.

The student must be able to meet the generic abilities that would allow them to learn and perform the activities and functions as outlined in the following job analysis of a physical therapist assistant: “work as part of a team to provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of the physical therapist. PTAs implement selected components of patient/client interventions (treatment), obtain data related to the interventions provided, and make modifications in selected interventions either to progress the patient/client as directed by the physical therapist or to ensure patient/client safety and comfort. PTAs assist the physical therapist in the treatment of individuals of all ages, from newborns to the very oldest, who have medical problems or other health-related conditions that limit their abilities to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTAs provide care for people in a variety of settings, including hospitals, private practices, outpatient clinics, home health agencies, schools, sports and fitness facilities, work settings, and nursing homes.” <http://www.apta.org/PTACareers/RoleofaPTA/>

<b>Categories</b>	<b><u>Definition</u></b>	<b><u>Examples, including but not limited to:</u></b>
Critical Thinking	Ability for sufficient clinical thinking & judgment	Identify cause-effect relationships. Implement plans of care developed by the physical therapist. Respond to emergencies. Apply standard precautions. Recognize red flags and issues related to safety. Apply teaching and learning theories in health care. Design appropriate clinical questions (PICO). Analyze and interpret information, data and literature.
Problem-Solving	The ability to recognize and define problems, analyzes data, develop and implement solutions, and assess outcomes	
Reflection	Ability to self-assess behaviors and actions	Assess effectiveness of one’s own performance, communication and reactions before, during and after all interactions & interventions. Establish action plans for self-based on reflection
Interpersonal Skills	Sufficient ability to interact with individuals/groups from a variety of backgrounds	Establish rapport with peers, classmates, faculty, patient/clients, interprofessional colleagues. Recognize psychosocial impact of dysfunction/disability. Integrate the needs of patients/clients and family into plan of care.
Communication	Ability to communicate in verbal and written form; cognizant of non-verbal communication	Perform active listening, explain procedures. Initiate health teaching. Display positive therapeutic presence. Document and interpret physical therapist actions and patient/client responses. Disseminate and convey information.
Mobility	Physical ability sufficient to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces	Move around in classrooms, patients’ rooms and treatment spaces. Administer CPR/AED procedures. Transfer patients/clients and respond to emergencies

Motor Skills	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective physical therapy practice	Able to lift, carry, pull, push, reach, stand, walk, kneel, bend, climb, and balance Position and guard patients/clients and assist with functional activities. Perform full-body movement, CPR/AED and debridement. Calibrate and operate equipment and use physical agents.
Hearing	Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health information and patient/client needs.	Hear and monitor alarms, emergency signals, cries for help, patient/client's needs and respond to a timer.
Visual	Visual ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs	Observe patients'/clients' health status and response to care. Monitor vital signs, read stopwatch and other equipment. Assess environment for safety.
Tactile	Tactile ability for physical assessment	Perform palpation, physical examination and intervention. Gauge force during assessment and manual therapy. Ability to distinguish abnormal tissue from normal tissue.
Coping Skills	Ability to perform in stressful environments or during impending deadlines	Maintain professionalism under time and situational constraints. Recognize the need for assistance with complex and changeable patient care situations and respond appropriately.
Behavioral & Social Skills	Emotional stability and acceptable communication skills	Tolerate emotionally and physical stressful workloads. Function under pressure.
Professional Responsibilities	Ability to engage in professional responsibilities	Practice safely, ethically, and legally. Demonstrate responsibility and accountability for one's actions, learning, professional growth and development.

-Revised and adopted July 2016

# **CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

## **STUDENTS NOT REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS:**

I certify that I have read and understand the Standards of Essential Functions, Generic abilities, Core Values and Ethical Code of Conduct documents for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Union County College. I believe to the best of my knowledge that I meet each of these essential functions and generic abilities. I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can exhibit behavior consistent with the Core Values and Ethic Code of Conduct without accommodation. I understand that if I am unable to meet these technical standards and abilities I will not be admitted to the program.

If I am admitted to the program, I understand that I will be evaluated on these essential functions and generic abilities, and my behavior in every course taken in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

I agree to remediate any behavior that is inconsistent with the essential functions and generic abilities, as well as inconsistent with the Core Values and Ethical Code of Conduct established. If I do not remediate the functions and or abilities, and or behaviors, I understand that I will be dismissed from the PTA program at Union County College.

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Print Student Name

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Student Signature

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Date

# CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

## STUDENTS REQUESTING ACCOMMODATIONS:

I certify that I have read and understand the Standards of Essential Functions, Generic abilities, Core Values and Ethical Code of Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Union County College. I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can meet each of these Essential functions, generic abilities with certain accommodations. I believe to the best of my knowledge that I can exhibit behavior consistent with the Core Values and Ethical Code of Conduct with certain accommodations. I will contact the College Disability Support Services to determine what accommodations may be available. I understand that if I am unable to meet these essential functions and generic abilities I will not be admitted to the program.

If I am admitted to the program, I understand that I will be evaluated on these essential functions and generic abilities, and my behavior in every course taken in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

I agree to remediate any behavior that is inconsistent with the essential functions and generic abilities, as well as inconsistent with the Core Values and Ethical Code of Conduct established. If I do not remediate the functions and or abilities, and or behaviors, I understand that I will be dismissed from the PTA program at Union County College.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Student Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I acknowledge that the above student has contacted the Disability Support Services.

\_\_\_\_\_  
DSS Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

### REFERENCES;

- Ranel A, Wittry AS, Boucher B, Sanders B. (2001) *A survey of Essential Functions and Reasonable Accommodations in Physical Therapist Education Programs*. Journal of Physical Therapy Education, 15(1).
- Scott, S., Wells, S. Hanebrink, S. (1999) *Educating College Students with Disabilities: What Academic & Fieldwork Educators Need to Know*. Bethesda, Md: AOTA, Inc.
- Gleeson, P.B., & Utsey, C. (2000). *Manual for the PT and PTA ACCE*. Texas Consortium for Physical Therapy Clinical Education

## **PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR**

All students accepted into the Union County Physical Therapist Assistant Program will be evaluated on professional behaviors both in the classroom, laboratory and in the clinical settings.

The following documents will be used when defining professional behaviors:

1. The American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Code of Ethics.
2. The APTA Guide of Professional Conduct.
3. The Generic Abilities Assessment of ten professional behaviors developed by the Physical Therapy Program at the University of Wisconsin.

The following actions will be taken if a student demonstrates behaviors inconsistent with the criteria established in these documents:

1. When behavior is perceived as being inappropriate, the student will be given feedback regarding the inappropriate behavior(s) and be provided with relevant expectations for remediation. This feedback can be provided by Faculty and/or clinical educators. The student will be expected to remediate the behavior as advised.
2. In the academic setting, if a change to more appropriate behavior(s) does not occur, the student will be subject to consequences as determined by the faculty ranging from remediation to the forfeiture of the opportunity to continue in the program.
3. In the clinical setting, if a change to more appropriate behavior(s) does not occur, a formal learning contract between Union County College and the student will be developed. This learning contract will be developed by the student with the guidance from the appropriate faculty member(s).
4. Automatic Dismissal from the PTA program will result for the following instances:
  - a. conduct that constitutes harassment or abuse of or discrimination against peers, faculty, patients and others
  - b. failure to provide a safe and secure environment for patients and peers
  - c. participation in academic coursework while under the influence of an illegal substance that impairs ability to do so safely
  - d. participation in academic coursework while under the influence of an illegal substance and/or alcohol
  - e. breach of confidentiality
  - f. failure to comply with learning objectives set forth in a formal learning contract between Union County College and the student
  - g. violation of the student regulations of Union County College or PTA program

## **APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant**

### **Preamble**

The Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant (Standards of Ethical Conduct) 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 provide a foundation for conduct to which all physical therapist assistants shall adhere. Fundamental to the Standards of Ethical Conduct 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.

### **Standards**

**Standard #1:** Physical therapist assistants shall respect the inherent dignity, and rights, of all individuals.

1A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in a respectful manner toward each person regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, religion, ethnicity, social or economic status, sexual orientation, health condition, or disability.

1B. Physical therapist assistants shall recognize their personal biases and shall not discriminate against others in the provision of physical therapy services.

**Standard #2:** Physical therapist assistants shall be trustworthy and compassionate in addressing the rights and needs of patients/clients.

2A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in the best interests of patients/clients over the interests of the physical therapist assistant.

2B. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapy interventions with compassionate and caring behaviors that incorporate the individual and cultural differences of patients/clients.

2C. Physical therapist assistants shall provide patients/clients with information regarding the interventions they provide.

2D. Physical therapist assistants shall protect confidential patient/client information and, in collaboration with the physical therapist, may disclose confidential information to appropriate authorities only when allowed or as required by law.

**Standard #3:** Physical therapist assistants shall make sound decisions in collaboration with the physical therapist and within the boundaries established by laws and regulations.

3A. Physical therapist assistants shall make objective decisions in the patient's/client's best interest in all practice settings.

3B. Physical therapist assistants shall be guided by information about best practice regarding physical therapy interventions.

3C. Physical therapist assistants shall make decisions based upon their level of competence and consistent with patient/client values.

3D. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in conflicts of interest that interfere with making sound decisions.



3E. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist and shall communicate with the physical therapist when patient/client status requires modifications to the established plan of care.

**Standard #4:** Physical therapist assistants shall demonstrate integrity in their relationships with patients/clients, families, colleagues, students, other health care providers, employers, payers, and the public.

4A. Physical therapist assistants shall provide truthful, accurate, and relevant information and shall not make misleading representations.

4B. Physical therapist assistants shall not exploit persons over whom they have supervisory, evaluative or other authority (eg, patients/clients, students, supervisees, research participants, or employees).

4C. Physical therapist assistants shall discourage misconduct by health care professionals and report illegal or unethical acts to the relevant authority, when appropriate.

4D. Physical therapist assistants shall report suspected cases of abuse involving children or vulnerable adults to the supervising physical therapist and the appropriate authority, subject to law.

4E. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in any sexual relationship with any of their patients/clients, supervisees, or students.

4F. Physical therapist assistants shall not harass anyone verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually.

**Standard #5:** Physical therapist assistants shall fulfill their legal and ethical obligations.

5A. Physical therapist assistants shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

5B. Physical therapist assistants shall support the supervisory role of the physical therapist to ensure quality care and promote patient/client safety.

5C. Physical therapist assistants involved in research shall abide by accepted standards governing protection of research participants.

5D. Physical therapist assistants shall encourage colleagues with physical, psychological, or substance-related impairments that may adversely impact their professional responsibilities to seek assistance or counsel.

5E. Physical therapist assistants who have knowledge that a colleague is unable to perform their professional responsibilities with reasonable skill and safety shall report this information to the appropriate authority.

**Standard #6:** Physical therapist assistants shall enhance their competence through the lifelong acquisition and refinement of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

6A. Physical therapist assistants shall achieve and maintain clinical competence.

6B. Physical therapist assistants shall engage in lifelong learning consistent with changes in their roles and responsibilities and advances in the practice of physical therapy.

6C. Physical therapist assistants shall support practice environments that support career development and lifelong learning.

**Standard #7:** Physical therapist assistants shall support organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients/clients and society.

7A. Physical therapist assistants shall promote work environments that support ethical and accountable decision-making.

7B. Physical therapist assistants shall not accept gifts or other considerations that influence or give an appearance of influencing their decisions.

7C. Physical therapist assistants shall fully disclose any financial interest they have in products or services that they recommend to patients/clients.

7D. Physical therapist assistants shall ensure that documentation for their interventions accurately reflects the nature and extent of the services provided.

7E. Physical therapist assistants shall refrain from employment arrangements, or other arrangements, that prevent physical therapist assistants from fulfilling ethical obligations to patients/clients.

**Standard #8:** Physical therapist assistants shall participate in efforts to meet the health needs of people locally, nationally, or globally.

8A. Physical therapist assistants shall support organizations that meet the health needs of people who are economically disadvantaged, uninsured, and underinsured.

8B. Physical therapist assistants shall advocate for people with impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and disabilities in order to promote their participation in community and society.

8C. Physical therapist assistants shall be responsible stewards of health care resources by collaborating with physical therapists in order to avoid overutilization or underutilization of physical therapy services.

8D. Physical therapist assistants shall educate members of the public about the benefits of physical therapy.

## **STUDENT ETHICAL PRACTICE AGREEMENT**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Union County College is committed to educating competent and responsible health care practitioners. To reach this end, students are required to take part in didactic and practical learning experiences at the College and in facilities in the community, to provide services to clients in all stages of health and illness, and to interact with other professionals, students and the general public. In furthering this commitment, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program has established this student ethical practice agreement as a guide to appropriate conduct.

I agree to:

1. Observe all health and safety procedures when working with other students or patients/clients, and equipment whether in class, clinic, hospitals or schools. I shall not endanger the safety, general health and welfare of the patients/clients, other students, faculty or staff.
2. Observe all policies and procedures established by the College, the PTA program and the facilities to which I am assigned.
3. Respect the patients'/clients' rights and the confidentiality of patient information regardless of the source. I shall not repeat information outside of the classroom clinic, hospital or facility. I shall make written reports only for class and for assigned facility's purpose, and in such reports only the patient's or staff member's initials shall be used.
4. Work in cooperation and respect other team members. I shall not interfere with or obstruct the rendering of services provided by others.
5. Protect the property and property rights of patients/clients, the College and the clinical site.
6. Represent my competence accurately and function within its parameters. I shall not attempt procedures in which I have not demonstrated competence under supervision.
7. Treat the patient/client, other students, faculty and staff with consideration and respect.
8. Respect the values and cultural differences of patients/clients and exhibit no discrimination of race, religion, sex or age.
9. Never make use of my relationship with patients/clients for personal gain or accept gifts of substantial value.
10. Make appropriate use of supervision by modifying my behavior in response to feedback.
11. Handle my personal and/or professional problems so they do not interfere with the performance of my duties.
12. Never attend a class or clinical assignment under the influence of any substance, legal or illegal, which impairs my ability to function and exhibit good judgment.
13. Present myself through my words, actions, and dress in a professional manner.

## Core Values

The faculty members of the PTA Program embrace the professional core values set forth by the American Physical Therapy Association and strive continually to model these values. Graduates of the Program are expected to demonstrate a commitment to these core values.

- **Accountability** - Accountability is active acceptance of the responsibility for the diverse roles, obligations, and actions of the physical therapist assistant including self-regulation and other behaviors that positively influence patient/client outcomes, the profession and the health needs of society.
  
- **Altruism** - Altruism is the primary regard for or devotion to the interest of patients/clients, thus assuming the fiduciary responsibility of placing the needs of the patient/client ahead of the physical therapist assistant's self-interest.
  
- **Compassion / Caring** - Compassion is the desire to identify with or sense something of another's experience; a precursor of caring. Caring is the concern, empathy, and consideration for the needs and values of others.
  
- **Excellence** - Excellence is physical therapy practice that consistently uses current knowledge and theory while understanding personal limits, integrates judgment and the patient/client perspective, embraces advancement, challenges mediocrity, and works toward development of new knowledge.
  
- **Integrity** - Integrity is steadfast adherence to high ethical principles or professional standards; truthfulness, fairness, doing what you say you will do, and "speaking forth" about why you do what you do.
  
- **Professional Duty** - Professional duty is the commitment to meeting one's obligations to provide effective physical therapy services to patients/clients, to serve the profession, and to positively influence the health of society.
  
- **Social Responsibility** - Social responsibility is the promotion of a mutual trust between the profession and the larger public that necessitates responding to societal needs for health and wellness

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Theory**

Students will receive a copy of a syllabus for each PTA course. The course syllabus will include the course and learning outcomes, course content, reading assignments, and evaluation methods. Students are encouraged to read the course information carefully and contact the instructor (s) to clarify any questions. The letter grade received for every course is determined by achievement on course examinations and other specified requirements. The student must succeed in both the clinical and theoretical components of the course in order to pass.

Students are responsible for keeping track of their academic standing in courses. If students have questions regarding their grades, they are encouraged to meet with the faculty member(s) to determine their status. Students are expected to use available resources, such as the Computer Laboratory, PTA Skills Laboratory, and Academic Learning Center, in order to promote success in PTA courses.

Audiotaping of lectures, and meeting is permitted only with the approval of the faculty member. Approval for taping is to be obtained from the instructor in advance of each class or meeting. Students are expected to arrive on time in order to avoid disrupting the class. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the course faculty members of lateness or absence from class through email or contacting the program secretary. Students not following this procedure will be subject to disciplinary action.

### **Expectations for Lab Sessions**

All Student/learners are expected to bring two (2) towels, shorts, tank tops and a set of twin sheets to be used during all lab sessions. Student/learners are expected to come to lab sessions prepared to perform the lab activities assigned for that day.

Student/learners are expected to be appropriately attired to participate fully in the lab activities scheduled for that day. Comfortable clothing that allows for ease of movement, full and unrestricted movement, and dignity of the individual (e.g. clothing that does not compromise an individual's modesty nor expose unnecessary parts of the body), is strongly recommended. This includes but is not limited to: sweat pants, gym shorts, tank tops, halter tops, sports bras, sneakers, and rubber soled closed toe shoes.

Student/learners are expected to participate as both the clinician and as the patient with their lab partner for each lab scheduled session. If a student is unable to wear lab attire due to religious or cultural beliefs, he/she must submit a written request to be exempt from the policy to the program coordinator and the instructor of the course.

Any student desiring additional practice with laboratory equipment is requested to make arrangements with the course instructor. Additional open lab hours are available each week. A schedule is announced at the beginning of each semester. Students are not to use PTA classroom and equipment without an instructor being present unless given prior permission.

All faculty and students are encouraged to follow universal precautions at all times. Gloves and masks are available in the lab at all times for individual's use

Lab partners will be randomly assigned throughout the semester to assure that all student/learners have had the opportunity to work with each of their classmates. It is an expectation that all student/learners will work with their classmates, assisting those who might need extra help.

The focus of all health-related professions is the patient. As health care providers and educators, we are striving to assure that the safety of our patient is not compromised in any way by the actions of our students. All PTA program laboratory courses involve direct interaction between the students and the PTA faculty. All PTA program student/learners experience both administering care and receiving care, classmates are both "patients" and "clinicians".

PTA laboratory courses also involve individualized competency testing for specified skills that have been identified as entry level skills students should possess. Competency testing presents a method of assuring the clinical community that the PTA student/learner is competent and safe to perform procedures and techniques with patients. Competency testing will be conducted throughout the course and program by the instructor (s). Competency skills will be listed in the course syllabus. **Student may retake a competency test up to three times until both the tester and the student feel that the student is competent to perform the procedure.** Skills must be deemed competent prior to starting the clinical practice portion of the program.

**What is the difference between a practical exam and a competency test?**

**During a competency test:**

- **the tester interacts freely with the student/learner being tested.**
- **the student/learner may ask for clarification from the tester.**
- **Student/learners sign up for competency tests when they feel that they are ready to take them but must be completed within the course time.**
- **Student/learners know exactly what test they will be demonstrating competence with.**

**During a practical exam:**

- **the tester does not interact with the student/learner, they take notes**
- **the tester provides no additional information to the student/learner being tested.**
- **the documentation for the test is due at the completion of the test.**
- **Student/learners are assigned a specific testing time.**
- **Student/learners select a patient case study at the time of the test. They do not know the exact case in advance but do know the subject content they will be tested on.**

## **ATTENDANCE**

All classes must be attended as scheduled

### **Lateness**

1. If a student is going to be late for class, it is his/her responsibility to inform the instructor via phone call to office phone or message left with department secretary.
2. Lateness is considered unprofessional conduct. Repeated lateness may jeopardize the successful completion of the class. A student may be refused admission to the class by the instructor due to lateness and will not be permitted to participate in a graded activity if more than 15 minutes late and if instructor is not notified of lateness.
3. If a student is late, without prior notification to teacher, on more than one occasion, the final grade will be lowered one letter grade.
4. Due to the necessity for scheduling adequate laboratory and class experiences, classes may be scheduled on evenings and/or Saturdays. Consequently, flexibility is required in the student's schedule.

### **Absences**

The student is expected to assume responsibility for obtaining course material and assignments.

1. Absences are to be reported by leaving a message for the instructor on his/her office phone, email, or with the department secretary. Make up work is to be arranged with the instructor within one week after returning to school. Make up arrangements are the responsibility of the student and at the discretion of the instructor.
2. Attendance for all courses is mandatory. Each unexcused absence will lower the final grade one letter grade.
3. There will be no makeup quizzes or exams for unexcused absences. The student will receive a zero grade for that quiz or exam.
4. Excused absences consist of illness or death in the family.
5. Repeated absences for illness will require a physician's note verifying the illness. Proof of attendance at a funeral is required if this is the reason for the excused absence.

## **ACADEMIC STANDING**

Good academic standing in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is defined as satisfactory academic progress, sound practice skills, behavior that leads to professional competence and positive interpersonal and professional relations, and appropriate professional/ethical conduct and attitudes. Students are evaluated regularly in these four areas.

Students are expected to demonstrate behavior consistent with the Union County College Code of Academic conduct, the most current Professional Code of Ethics for Physical Therapy and the state and federal laws governing the conduct of the physical therapist assistant. The Physical Therapist Assistant Program reserves the right to define professional competence and behavior and to establish standards of excellence to evaluate students in regard to them.

Agreement to abide by the policies and procedures of the College and the program is implicitly confirmed when students register each term. At the orientation to the program the Program Handbook is reviewed. Students are provided a set time to read and ask questions about the handbook. After the review time students sign an agreement stating that they have read, reviewed and understood the contents. Students are expected to adhere to the various administrative and academic deadline listed in the academic calendar and in individual course syllabi. Failure to do so may jeopardize their academic standing in the PTA program and may constitute grounds for probation or removal from the program. Changes in the handbook will be provided to students and a time will be allowed for review and clarification.

A student's academic standing may be jeopardized by one or more of the following:

1. indication of poor academic performance
2. insufficient progress in the development of clinical/practice skills
3. failure to comply with school or program rules or procedures
4. unprofessional conduct, unethical conduct, or illegal conduct
5. evidence of behavior that may hinder professional competence and interpersonal or professional relations

Faculty will evaluate academic performance, clinical skills, and professional development and behaviors demonstrated in the educational environment and in clinical performance according to standards set forth in the College Catalog, the Physical Therapist Assistant Handbook, and the Professional Code of Ethics for Physical Therapy.

Students will be given regular reports on their progress in the program. A student who is not performing adequately according to the standards will receive notification through written feedback and/or individual advisement. After receiving such warning, failure to improve performance before the next scheduled evaluation may result in academic probation.

Students placed on academic probation will receive formal written notification outlining the conditions for probation to be lifted. Failure to meet the requirements of probation in a timely manner may result in removal from the program.



In the case of flagrant and intentional violations of the Professional Code of Ethics, a student may be removed without previous warning at any time in his or her academic career.

In general, program decisions regarding academic standing are final. A decision may be appealed only if the student can show that:

1. there was an error in the procedure used by the faculty
2. there is new evidence sufficient to alter the decision
3. or the sanction imposed was not appropriate to the severity of the violation of professional or academic standards

### **ACADEMIC INTERGRITY**

The program recognizes the following activities as violation of ethical conduct on graded activities and will result in a zero for the activity and may include disciplinary action including dismissal from the program. These activities include but are not limited to:

1. Sharing information after a practical exam with students not yet tested. Students must leave the testing area after a practical exam.
2. Plagiarism in any form is not acceptable. Students will be required to produce sources cited on all papers.
3. Students will make every effort to protect the privacy of papers while taking written exams. This includes maximum spacing between test takers and covering papers.
4. Students may not submit the same paper or academic assignment (includes in-service) for more than one class without permission from the instructor who originally assigned the paper and who is currently assigning the paper.

### **Grading**

As the grade of “C” or “D” is not an acceptable level of professional performance, the following grading system will be used for all professional courses:

- 100-90=A
- 89-85 =B+
- 80-84 =B
- 79-75 =C+
- 74.5 or below F

Students will have the opportunity to request academic forgiveness if they meet the criteria outlined in the college handbook. Students who seek academic forgiveness will meet with a college counselor who will explain the procedures and ramifications as well as review the student’s record to determine eligibility.

### **Incomplete Grades**

An “Incomplete” grade may be issued by the instructor if it is warranted by the circumstances, such as an illness. Students must request the “incomplete” from the course instructor, in writing, and then make arrangements for completion of the course requirements. Incomplete grades that are not removed within the first six weeks of the next regular semester will convert to “F” grades.

### **Mailing of Final Grades**

Final course grades will be posted by the faculty for access on the student eservices link.

## **Withdrawals**

Students need to be aware of the specific withdrawal dates in the Physical Therapist Assistant courses. These dates may differ, because of course scheduling, from the general College withdrawal dates. Students who withdraw from the PTA courses may return to repeat the course at a later date when the course is offered again, and if there is sufficient space for enrollment in the class. Refer to readmission policy. No more than one (1) withdrawal is allowed for any course. Consideration may be given, on an individual basis, in the event of a personal emergency or hardship.

## **Course Standing**

In order to pass a professional course, the student must obtain an average of 75% or higher on all written testing assessments, assignments, practicals as well as clinical assessments, if applicable, in order to continue in the PTA Program according to the syllabus rubric. Student who fail a course will be dismissed from the program.

A student must pass each practical examination to successfully complete a professional course. In the event of a practical examination failure, student is permitted to retake the practical examination 1 time at the discretion the instructor. If a student must retake a practical examination, it may be taken in the presence of two faculty members. The retake practical and all subsequent practicals may be videotaped for that course for quality assurance. Highest possible score on the retake practical exam is 75%. There are no retakes for written assessments, quizzes and examinations.

All students must pass competency skills for a given course in order to continue in the PTA Program.

No student will be allowed to enter any clinical affiliation/experience or continue in any affiliation/experience unless:

- A 75% or higher average is maintained in each course in the program.
- All lab work is successfully completed according to class schedule in the course or co requisite courses.
- All competency skills have been checked off

## **Assignments**

All clinical and classroom assignments must be handed in on time.

Grades will be lowered by 5 points per day for all late assignments. No assignment will be accepted after five days (including the weekend).

All written assignments, unless otherwise specified, are to be typed, double spaced, and presented in a neat and organized manner on the date specified by the course faculty. Students are referred to APA guidelines for style. It is expected that students seek out and use appropriate resources for completion of assignments.

Assignments cannot be placed in a mailbox or on a teacher's desk and considered on time. Any arrangement for late delivery must be arranged with the instructor no later than on the due date.

Only one late assignment will be permitted per semester (this includes non-graded assignments). All subsequent late papers will receive a grade of F.

Papers that consistently have poor grammar and spelling will have the grade lowered. If a student consistently hands in assignments with extremely poor grammar and/or spelling they will be instructed to seek assistance from the Learning Center for remedial help. Proper grammar and correct spelling is critical since students will be writing in hospital charts which are legal documents.

### **EXAMINATION POLICY**

Written requirements must be completed and submitted in order to take the final exam in the course.

Students are expected to take exams on the dates that are scheduled in the course. A student who arrives late may be given the exam or will be rescheduled to take the exam within 48 hours of the original test date and time. Students are to notify the course faculty members of late arrival to an exam. Students who have reported a late arrival to an exam may be given the option to take the exam during the remaining time scheduled or at another time convenient for the course faculty members.

There are no re-takes for written examinations or quizzes. In an emergency situation necessitating an absence, students must notify the course faculty member(s) at least ½ hour prior to the exam time. Excuses for absences from an exam will be reviewed on an individual basis. If the student does not notify the instructor of an absence from an exam, a zero grade will be received. For students with valid excuses, missed exams will be rescheduled to be given at the convenience of the course faculty member. The make-up exam can vary from the original test. An extension of the 48 hours for the make-up exam will be allowed if the student is absent due to serious illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (parent, spouse, sibling, etc.), and/or natural or man-made disasters. In the event of an absence from an exam, the student is required to present documentation that verifies the emergency circumstance. This documentation is required immediately upon the return of the student to school in order to qualify to take a make-up exam. Students are only permitted to miss one scheduled course exam because of an emergency. Repeated lateness or absence from exams will result in grades of '0'.

If a student becomes ill during the course of an exam, the illness should be reported to the faculty member as soon as possible. Students should inform the faculty member prior to an exam if they believe they will not be able to sit for the entire exam period. A student with an illness or injury before or during an exam is to provide medical documentation to the course faculty member(s) and the coordinator of the program. Students are referred to the Examination Policy in the Physical Therapist Assistant Student Handbook for notification of absences from scheduled exams.

When taking an exam, students will:

- a. Place all belongings including: phones, backpacks, books or papers to the front or side of the room as directed by the faculty.

- b. Use only approved calculators, if allowed by course policy. Cell phones may not be used as calculators.
- c. Refrain from talking to other students and keep their eyes focused on their exam paper.
- d. Leave a desk empty near the door for students entering late.
- e. Enter and leave the room quietly if late or done early.
- e. Leave space between each desk and other students, whenever possible.
- f. Turn off all cell phones and beepers.
- g. Record answers only on the Scantron form or fill-in answer sheets provided. No marks or notations made on the actual exam paper will be counted in the grade unless a question is open on desk and a written statement is required.

If a student is behaving in a manner that is consistent with cheating\*, the following actions will result:

- a. A faculty member will identify the observations with the student.
- b. A grade of zero for the exam or quiz will be received immediately.
- c. The coordinator of the program will be informed of and will review the incident. Students may be dismissed from the program for this behavior.

\* Behaviors indicative of cheating may include, but are not limited to: looking at another student student's exam, carrying information into the test area (writing on papers, cards, or body parts, etc.), accessing electronic resources (cell phones, PDAs, etc.), sharing verbal or written information with classmates, and/or changing or copying exam answers during a review.

### **Exam Review**

Exam reviews may be scheduled in the course calendar, but may be given outside of class time. Exam grades will be given to students at the time of the review. Students are not to write on their exam answer sheets or copy down any of the test questions. Tape recording or taking notes during an exam review are not permitted. All personal belongings are to be left either under the chair or in front of the room, as per the direction of the instructor.

Final exams are not reviewed in the class. Students may, in consultation with the instructor, schedule an individual review of the final exam within one (1) week of that examination date. Sharing of information from exams with other students is prohibited and may lead to disciplinary action. Course faculty members may hold reviews of course content prior to exams. Dates and times will be determined with the class.

### **Grade Change**

Students requesting a change in a course grade must present their initial appeal to the course instructor who awarded the grade. It is the instructor's decision to follow through with a grade change. If a change is to be made, the instructor will follow the college policy for the grade appeal process.

### **National Licensure Examination**

Students will receive information on application for state licensure and the National Licensure Examination for Physical Therapist Assistant during PTA 224. It is the responsibility of each student to complete and submit the appropriate forms and fees.

## **Warnings/Failures**

Warnings/failures for unsatisfactory performance or behavior may be issued at any time within a semester. Warnings are given to alert the student of unsatisfactory progress within a semester. Students who receive a warning must follow the recommendations outlined in the warning. Such recommendations may include attending the Skills Laboratory to improve clinical techniques.

The procedure for warnings and failures is as follows:

- a. A copy of the warning or failure is provided at the time when the student is informed of the specific problem or deficiency. The student and faculty member will sign the form, indicating that it has been reviewed. A witness may be obtained by the faculty member if the student refuses to sign the form.
- b. Faculty members have three (3) working days to complete and provide any additional documentation related to the warning or failure. The student will be provided with the additional material for his/her review. The student shall be asked to sign a form evidencing the student's receipt of the additional information.
- c. The student shall have five (5) working days from the date of the student's receipt of notice by which to request a review by the program coordinator. Students may respond to the warnings at this point and address their position
- d. A warning failure may be given to the student at any time during the course if he/she is demonstrating unsafe or inappropriate behavior.
- e. The student is responsible for reviewing the information contained in the warning notice and for taking action to improve his/her performance in order to meet the objectives of the course.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

All information that is obtained during client interactions is considered to be of a confidential nature. Important information regarding clients may be shared with agency staff members, instructors, and peers in an appropriate manner and setting. Students are not to disclose information to other individuals who are not directly involved in the client's care. Tape recording of conversations or photographing clients is prohibited without the express written consent of the client. Students are not to photocopy or remove any client records.

When completing written assignments following clinical experiences, **DO NOT** use the client's name on any documentation. Only the client's initials or room number may be used. Every effort should be made to maintain the client's confidentiality. Students demonstrate respect for clients by protecting their identity.

## **SAFETY ON/OFF CAMPUS**

Please refer to college handbook and booklets for policies on Public Safety

Union County College is an open campus and all students should be aware of their surroundings. Students are encouraged to travel in pairs or groups and if unsure of a situation with regards to safety, seek security supervision.

Students will not leave valuables in the classroom unattended.

Students are individually responsible for transportation to and from campus and to intercampus and off campus activities. Students are responsible for their own transportation and motor vehicle and insurance coverage.

Students when required to attend off campus educational experiences to complement class room learning will be required to sign a consent form designating that they are aware of the risk and responsibilities involved to ensure student safety. Off campus educational experiences are observational only and use of any type of equipment at the facility is prohibited to ensure the safety of students, patients, faculty and facility staff.

### **HEALTH REQUIREMENTS**

Any student with a medical problem that could potentially endanger the other students in the classroom or patients in the clinical situation is required to set up an appointment with the Program Coordinator to discuss necessary safety precautions. Any change in health status that may affect full participation in course work must be reported to the Program Coordinator. Change in health status that bar full participation in course work will result in the student receiving an incomplete if more than 90% of course work is completed and it is considered reasonable to move forward. If a student has less than 90% of course work students are required to withdraw. Written medical clearance must be received from physician to be allowed to participate in course work.

Please be aware that the Program Coordinator has access to student physical forms. The purpose of this access is to ensure paperwork is in place for clinical placement. The physician is solely responsible for determining if the form is complete and meets the medical clearance criteria. Therefore, a student should not assume that a faculty member is aware of medical problems. The forms are maintained in a student file which is in a locked file cabinet in a locked room.

Completed health forms are required prior to the start of all clinical affiliations. It is the student's responsibility to make **THREE** copies in order to be prepared if the clinical affiliation requests a copy. Failure to submit all necessary health information prior to the start of the clinical rotation will result in dismissal from the clinical rotation and failure of that clinical course (PTA 217 or PTA 224). Health forms will be due on or about Feb 15 and Nov 15 and the exact due date will be announced each year at orientation.

In all clinical courses, it is the student's responsibility to obtain information from the Clinical Supervisor (CI) about any specific additional health, immunization, drug testing, finger printing, criminal background check requirements of the specific facility to which they have been assigned and to comply with these requirements **PRIOR** to beginning the clinical experience. Students are instructed to contact their CI at least one month **PRIOR** to beginning the affiliation.

### **ILLNESS OR INJURY**

In the event of a medical emergency while on campus, notify the campus security immediately. When Union County College faculty feels, it is necessary, the student must seek and receive medical clearance and/or psychological counseling, during and/or prior to the student's assignment to the class or clinic.

In the event of a minor illness or injury, the faculty will provide assistance in the form of basic first aid or referral. Medications will not be administered. If indicated, students will be referred to their personal health care providers for follow-up. Per the UCC Public Safety Policy (noted below), the Public Safety Office on the Plainfield Campus will be notified.

Illness or injuries, due to accidents which are incurred on campus or during a College-connected activity, are to be reported immediately to the Public Safety Office on the campus being attended. If it is not possible to make an immediate report, one should be made before 48 hours have elapsed. All students are covered under the College's student accident insurance plan. (UCC Student Handbook)

In the event of a major emergency, faculty members will contact the Public Safety Office in order that the community emergency ('911') system can be activated. Faculty members will provide immediate assistance as able and appropriate while awaiting the response of the Public Safety Office and EMS. A defibrillator unit is available at the Public Safety desk.

Students who become ill in a clinical area should report to the clinical instructor as soon as possible. If available, students may be seen in the emergency department in the agency, or referred to their personal health care provider. The Program follows the specific policies of the clinical affiliates regarding procedures and documentation. Students are responsible for all costs incurred for treatment, although there may be rare circumstances where the agency will assume these expenses. Where there is no on-site emergency department, such as in a long-term care facility, emergency care will be provided, as appropriate, by the clinical instructor and, possibly, staff members. The community emergency ('911') system will be activated. The student will, again, be responsible for the cost of emergency and follow-up treatment.

Assistance will be requested by faculty members in order that the class may resume as soon as possible or appropriate. Students who are not able to leave the campus or clinical site independently may require transportation from significant others or follow-up at a medical facility. **Following a major illness or injury, health clearance must be obtained from the personal health care provider before students are able return to the classroom or clinical experience. The health clearance needs to indicate that it is safe for students to participate in all course activities. The health clearance is submitted to the course faculty member(s) and the Coordinator of the program.** A written report of any student illness or injury will be completed and submitted to the Coordinator of the program.

### **Change in Health Status**

**Students, who have a significant change in their health status during the semester due to injury, illness, pregnancy, childbirth, or other circumstance, are to submit the health clearance form that is completed and signed by their personal health care provider. The clearance form is submitted to the course faculty member(s) and the coordinator of the program prior to returning to the classroom or clinical area.**

**Students who wish to share health considerations or who have any questions about their health status should arrange to speak confidentially with the course faculty member or Coordinator of the program.**

Students are responsible for all health costs incurred while participating in the Physical Therapist Assistant program. Students are **required** to obtain personal medical insurance coverage. If a clinical agency requires proof of medical coverage and the student does not have documented proof, the student will not be able to participate in clinical experiences at that agency.

Health clearance forms are available from the PTA course faculty and Coordinator of the program. Students' ability to participate safely in classroom and clinical activities is essential for continuation of or return to the PTA Program.

### **Infection Control Policy**

While participating in clinical experiences, students need to be aware of Standard Precautions and Transmission specific precautions (droplet, airborne, contact). All equipment, linens, utensils, dressings, etc. that come in contact with a client's body fluids are considered contaminated and need to be handled accordingly. The following are some basic guidelines to follow:

1. Wash hands before and after client care.
2. Use barrier protection (eyewear, masks, gloves, gowns) when indicated.
3. Dispose of equipment and other materials appropriately (such as in sharps containers or designated hampers).
4. Report the presence of open lesions or infections to the instructor.

Emergency alarm buttons, for immediate alert of Public Safety personnel, are located throughout the campus in restrooms, hallways, stairways, and offices.

### **Health Care Insurance**

All students must show proof of Health Care Insurance prior to registration. Student is responsible for access and the cost of health care/emergency services in off-campus educational experiences.



UNION COUNTY COLLEGE

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

PRIVACY WAIVER FORM

Students have privacy rights under the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). This is known as the Buckley Amendment. This act protects your rights as a student with regards to your educational records and states that these records are for internal college use and are available to faculty, administration, professional staff and accreditation agencies on a need to know basis. Students must give permission for the college to release any educational information to anyone else.

If you would like to give permission to the Union County College PTA Program to release your education records, permission must be given to the program coordinator in writing. Information will not be given to anyone, including parents and spouses without this written authorization. If you Union County College PTA Program needs to release this information to any prospective clinical sit, authorization from the student will be requested.

I hereby grant permission to the Union County College PTA Program officials to extend access to my educationally related records to:

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Student Name (Print)

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Student Signature

Date

UNION COUNTY COLLEGE

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

PHOTOGRAPHY AND VIDEOTAPE CONSENT

Periodically during the course of the PTA Program at Union County College faculty members utilize photography or videotaping of Union County College students, faculty and staff involved in classroom demonstrations. Students may also be videotaped during practical examinations if there is a question regarding student performance on the exam. Students enrolled in the Union County College PTA Program consent to being filmed and understand that the film and images remain the property of the PTA Program. In the case of student's being filmed during examinations, the images will be kept confidential and be used only for the purposes of increasing student's learning or in the case that an outside advisor or expert is needed to assess student performance on a particular practical examination.

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Please Print

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Student Signature

Date

UNION COUNTY COLLEGE

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

I am in receipt of the *Physical Therapist Assistant Program and Clinical Education Handbook*. I understand that I will be held accountable for all program policies and procedures. I further understand that I will be informed when policies and procedures are updated or changed. I acknowledge that I have read, understand and agree with this information and will abide by the rules and regulations governing the PTA Program at Union County College. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the information presented.

I understand that clinical affiliates require:

- Current CPR certification for the Healthcare Provider
- Complete up-to-date health records
- Criminal background check
- Drug testing

I understand that it is my responsibility to complete the requirements identified above. I acknowledge understanding of the above with my signature.

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Student Name (Print)

Student CWID or Social Security #

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Student Signature

Date