



Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Curriculum Plan

Program Description:

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is an intensive 5 semester program designed to provide the student with the technical education required to sit for the Physical Therapist Assistant National Physical Therapy Examination. Physical Therapist Assistants work under direction and supervision of a physical therapist. Their duties include instructing patients in exercises and activities of daily living; administering therapeutic modalities, utilization of assistive equipment, and other patient care procedures; communicating with patients, families, caregivers, physicians, and other health care workers; and documenting the patients' status. Licensed physical therapist assistants find employment opportunities in such settings as hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies, rehabilitation centers, school systems, sports medicine facilities, and private practices.

Program Philosophy

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program subscribes to and supports the mission, philosophies, values, and goals of New River Community and Technical College, the American Physical Therapy Association, and the accreditation standards established by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at New River Community and Technical College is committed to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism. We believe that physical therapy is an essential component in the prevention of disability and restoration of function following injury or illness, and that the physical therapist assistant, practicing under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist, is a vital member of the health care team.

To meet the health care needs of the physical therapy community, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is dedicated to providing a variety of didactic and clinical learning experiences which support students in the attainment of knowledge and in the development of skills and attitudes necessary to practice safely and effectively as an entry-level physical therapist assistant.

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program believes that learning is a shared process in which both the student and instructor accept responsibility for the learning objectives. To that end, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program faculty are committed to providing the students with opportunities to learn the necessary information and skills and model the professional behaviors that lead to responsible citizens, effective practitioners, and lifelong learners. As adult learners, physical therapist assistant students are expected to actively participate in the learning process, effectively communicate their needs to appropriate individuals, and fully utilize the opportunities provided by the educational program.

Program Mission Statement:

The mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Department is to provide each student the necessary education to become a competent entry-level physical therapist assistant. This is achieved through professional education and training using sequential instruction, practical clinical experiences, and mentoring. Emphasized throughout the student experience are critical thinking, scientific inquiry, ethics, professional behaviors, and team skills, as well as examination of the preferred relationship between the PT and PTA. Also emphasized is development of professional behaviors that facilitate and enhance positive therapeutic relationships with patients including respect and sensitivity for ethnic, cultural and spiritual differences. Qualified clinical sites further support these ideas through clinical education and mentoring.

Program Primary Goals:

Based upon the mission and curriculum plan the primary goals for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are:

1. To develop clinicians who possess the necessary entry-level technical skills to work as a physical therapist assistant in a variety of settings.
2. To develop clinicians that can apply knowledge of basic sciences and PT theory to the application and appropriate modification of selected PT procedures.
3. To develop clinicians who effectively communicate with patients, supervisors, support personnel and other health care team members using suitable verbal, non-verbal, and written skills.
4. To develop clinicians with critical /creative thinking and analytical skills to make sound clinical judgments and proposals to enhance patient care.
5. To develop clinicians who possess the necessary professional behaviors to work as a physical therapist assistant in a variety of settings. These behaviors include:
 - Commitment to Learning (Use of Constructive Feedback)
 - Interpersonal Skills
 - Communication Skills
 - Critical Thinking (Problem-Solving)
 - Stress Management (Effective Use of Time and Resources)
 - Professionalism (Responsibility)
6. To prepare the student to pass the NPAT examination allowing for state licensure to work as a PTA.
7. To maintain a program accredited by CAPTE.

Program Supporting Goals:

In order to meet the program's mission, "to give each student the necessary education to become a competent entry-level physical therapist assistant," necessary resources and systems must be in place that facilitates the desired outcomes. Therefore the supporting goals for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program are:

1. To obtain the appropriate resources for the PTA Program to support, retention of qualified faculty and staff; operating and capital expenses (including but not limited to equipment, supplies, and technology for instructional purposes); program space; library and learning resources; student services; and technical support.
2. To maintain appropriate admissions processes, criteria, and program prerequisites to facilitate successful program completion.
3. To maintain qualified core faculty.
4. To maintain qualified adjunct and supporting faculty
5. To ensure qualified clinical education faculty are supervising students and provide development activities for clinical education faculty as resources allow.

Program Minimum Clinical Skills List:

At completion of the program the student will:

1. Perform in a safe manner that minimizes the risk to patient, self, and others.
2. Demonstrate expected clinical behaviors in a professional manner in all situations.
3. Perform in a manner consistent with established legal standards, standards of the profession, and ethical guidelines.
4. Adapt delivery of physical therapy services with consideration for patients' differences, values, preferences, and needs.
5. Communicate in ways that are congruent with situational needs.
6. Participate in self-assessment and develops plans to improve knowledge, skills, and behaviors.
7. Demonstrate clinical problem solving.
8. Perform selected therapeutic exercises* in a competent manner.
9. Apply selected manual therapy*, airway clearance*, and integumentary repair and protection techniques in a competent manner.
10. Apply selected physical agents* and mechanical modalities in a competent manner.
11. Apply selected electrotherapeutic modalities in a competent manner.
12. Perform functional training* in self-care and home management and application and adjustment of devices and equipment in a competent manner.

13. Produce quality documentation* in a timely manner to support the delivery of physical therapy services.
14. Participate in the efficient delivery of physical therapy services.

Physical Therapist Assistant Clinical Performance
Instrument
American Physical Therapy Association 2009

Program Model

The PTA program is a 1+1, full-time, day program that can be completed in 5 semesters (78 weeks). During the first two semesters of study, students may complete general education and pre-requisite courses at their own pace and in any order as long as they comply with the pre-requisite and co-requisite requirements of the college catalog. The PTA program is selective enrollment and students who have not been accepted into the program are prohibited from taking any course with a PTHA prefix. Physical Therapist Assistant (PTHA) courses sequential and must be complete as outlined in the curriculum.

General Education Philosophy.

The purpose of general education at New River is to ensure that every student graduating with an associate degree, regardless of major or career objective, receives an exposure to the liberal arts, develops basic skills competency, and acquires a body of knowledge fundamental to that of an educated person.

General Education Competencies and Outcomes.

Students graduating from New River with an associate degree will demonstrate the following competencies:

Critical Thinking/Problem Solving.

This area of learning is defined as a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration and analysis of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating an opinion or conclusion.

- Apply critical thinking skills to a variety of subjects
- Identify and implement strategies to solve problems
- Demonstrate the ability to separate fact from opinion
- Access information to answer questions, form opinions, or solve problems
- Evaluate one's own and others assumptions, beliefs, and opinions
- Synthesize and analyze in-depth information from a variety of sources
- State logical conclusions based on information obtained or provided

Communication

This area of learning incorporates the skill of exchanging information and meaning between or among individuals through a common system of symbols, signs and behaviors. This includes the communication process of conversing, speaking, listening, corresponding, and writing.

- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of context, audience, and purpose
- Use appropriate, relevant, and compelling content to illustrate mastery of the subject
- Demonstrate detailed attention to and successful execution of a wide range of conventions particular to a specific discipline including organization, content, presentation, formatting, and stylistic choices
- Locate and use a variety of supporting materials (explanations, examples, illustrations, statistics, quotations) responsibly by making appropriate references to support the presentation or establish the presenter's credibility/authority on the topic
- Use language choices that are imaginative, memorable, and compelling, and enhance the effectiveness of the communication
- Use appropriate delivery techniques to deliver the compelling message, ensuring that the communicator appears polished and confident
- Practice attentive and active listening, maintain solid eye contact, often paraphrasing the message of the speaker to ensure understanding, and accurately restate the opinions of others even when he or she disagrees.

Information Literacy

This area of learning is defined as the ability to know when there is a need for information, to be able to identify, locate, evaluate, and effectively and responsibly use and share that information for the problem at hand.

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Access and use information ethically and legally

Scientific or Mathematical Reasoning

This area of learning is defined as the ability to analyze and evaluate information and to use that information to formulate valid arguments supported by mathematical and scientific evidence to form solutions to real-world problems.

- Provide accurate explanations of information presented in scientific or mathematical forms and make appropriate inferences based on that information
- Convert relevant information into an insightful scientific or mathematical model in a way that contributes to a further or deeper understanding
- Use appropriate units (including Scientific International-Metric) to estimate, perform, and report measurements, attending to reasonableness, accuracy, and precision
- Complete calculations successfully to solve problems and present the calculations clearly and concisely
- Use an appropriate analysis of data as the basis for deep and thoughtful judgments, drawing insightful, carefully qualified conclusions from the work
- Describe assumptions and provide compelling rationale for why each assumption is appropriate
- Use information in connection with the argument or purpose of the work and present it in an effective format

Cultural and Social Awareness

This area of learning is defined as the ability to see oneself as a member of the world community, knowing that one's future is shared with others. Cultural and social awareness goes beyond mere exposure to cultural differences but requires the capacity to meaningfully engage with others, place social justice in historical and political context, and put culture at the core of transformative learning.

- Demonstrate an understanding of one's own culture and the complexity of elements important to members of other cultures in relation to the history, values, politics, communication styles, economy, or beliefs and practices of that culture
- Demonstrate evidence of adjustment in one's own attitude and belief because of working within and learning from diversity of communities and cultures
- Document evidence of experience in civic engagement activities and describe the learning as it relates to a reinforced and clarified sense of civic identity and continued commitment to public action
- Apply ethical perspectives to a question, and accurately consider full implications of the application
- Participate in teamwork activities helping the team move forward in relation to the team goals
- Identify physical and psychological facets of personal wellness, including successful techniques for stress management

Course Descriptions

Biology 231 Human Anatomy and Physiology I (3-0-3). An in-depth study including biochemistry, cells, tissues, and organs of the integumentary, skeletal, muscular, nervous, and endocrine systems. The structure and functions of these systems and their role in the maintenance of homeostasis are addressed. PR: Eligibility for enrollment in English 101, high school Biology, Biology 101 or consent of instructor.
CR: BIOL 233.

Biology 232 Human Anatomy and Physiology II (3-0-3). A continuation of Biology 231. Studies include cells, tissues, and organs of the cardiovascular, lymphatic, immune, respiratory, digestive,

urinary, and reproductive systems and human development. PR: BIOL 231, BIOL 233. CR: BIOL 234.

Biology 233 Human Anatomy and Physiology I Laboratory(0-2-1). Laboratory sessions are designed to reinforce lecture in BIOL 231. Sessions consist of observing, reporting, and interpreting biological phenomena.

Biology 234 Human Anatomy and Physiology II Laboratory(0-2-1). Laboratory sessions are designed to reinforce lecture in BIOL 232. Sessions consist of observing, reporting, and interpreting biological phenomena.

Biology 205 Kinesiology (3-0-3). This course presents a working knowledge of biomechanical principles for use in the evaluation and treatment of musculoskeletal dysfunction. It will address the biomechanics of musculoskeletal tissues and structures, the biomechanics of the most commonly injured human joints, and applied biomechanics. Special emphasis will be placed on musculoskeletal anatomy and physiology as each student will be responsible for learning origins, insertions, and actions of the prime movers of the primary articulation. PR: BIOL 231 and BIOL 233 or consent of instructor. CR: BIOL 206.

Biology 206 Kinesiology Lab (0-2-1). Laboratory sessions designed to reinforce lecture in BIOL 205. PR: BIOL 231 and BIOL 233 or consent of instructor. CR: BIOL 205.

Business 130 Word Processing and Internet (3-0-3). This course is designed to prepare students to effectively use a major word processing package. Topics include: formatting, editing, file management, tables, columns, and graphics. Students learn to access and research the internet by using a major software browser. This course meets the computer skill requirement under the General Studies requirements.

OR

Computer Science 101 Microsoft Office Applications (3-0-3). This introductory course provides basic computer literacy utilizing word processing, spreadsheets, databases, and presentation software.

Medical Assisting 105 Medical Terminology (3-0-3). This course is designed as an introduction to medical terminology using a body of systems approach. Students will develop a basic understanding of medical language by analyzing prefixes, suffixes, root words and combining forms as they relate to the different body systems and the basic cellular structure.

101 General Mathematics (3-0-3). Natural numbers, integers, rational numbers, real numbers, equations, and inequalities; ratio, proportion and variation; graphs; interest; introduction to elementary statistics. PR: ACT Mathematics main score of 19 or grade of "S" in MATH 099 or COMPASS Algebra Math score of 36 or higher.

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Courses

PTHA 220 Patient Care Skills (2-0-2). Introduces specific patient issues including patient management and functional mobility, basic vital signs, patient dignity, positioning, and comfort, transfers, assistive devices, gait training, universal precautions and aseptic techniques. PR: PTA program admission. CR: 220L.

PTHA 220L Patient Care Skills Lab (0-2-1). Laboratory skills course introducing patient management and functional mobility, basic vital signs, patient dignity, positioning, and comfort, transfers, assistive devices, gait training, universal precautions and aseptic techniques. PR: PTA program admission. CR: 200.

PTHA 222 Observations and Measurements (2-2-2). Structure and function of the musculoskeletal system with an introduction of the evaluative techniques of palpation, goniometry, manual muscle testing and posture. PR: PTA program admission. CR: 222L

PTHA 222L Observations and Measurements Lab (0-2-1). Laboratory skills course introducing evaluative techniques of palpation, goniometry, manual muscle testing and posture. PR: PTA program Admission. CR: 222.

PTHA 226 Therapeutic Modalities (2-0-2). Covers various physical agents used in physical therapy to facilitate healing, pain control, and patient comfort, with emphasis on applied anatomy and function. Includes presentation of a wide variety of clinical scenarios and pathologies to facilitate students' ability to appropriately select and competently apply each modality. PR: PTA program admission. CR: 226L.

PTHA 226L Therapeutic Modalities Lab (0-2-1). Laboratory skills course introducing thermal, electrical, and other therapeutic modalities that are commonly used in physical therapy practice. PR: PTA program admission. CR: 226.

PTHA 230 Pathologic Conditions (3-0-3). Integrated introduction to the study of normal anatomy, physiology, and the principles of disease through lecture, discussion, and problem-solving exercises. Topics include the stages of healing and specific systems' pathological conditions, including etiology, signs and symptoms, and relationship to physical therapy interventions. Medical terminology pertaining to pathology is included throughout. PR: PTA program admission.

PTHA 232 Clinical Education I (0-3-3). Introductory-level clinical affiliation that provides a three-week hands-on introduction to the everyday work of the physical therapy setting. Students are expected to perform interventions introduced in prerequisite courses. Pass/fail only; a grade of pass is required for continued program enrollment. PR: Successful completion of program didactic and laboratory coursework during the fall semester.

PTHA 234 Neurology & Pediatrics (3-0-3). Review of nervous system anatomy is followed by presentation of neurological and pediatric conditions and appropriate physical therapy interventions, including manual techniques, strengthening exercises, balance and coordination training, gait training, and condition-specific techniques. PR: 232. CR: 234L.

PTHA 234L Neurology & Pediatrics Lab (0-2-1). Application of therapeutic interventions for neurologic and pediatric conditions including manual techniques, strengthening exercises, balance and coordination training, gait training, as well as common diagnostic procedures. PR: 232. CR: 234.

PTHA 236 Orthopedics (3-0-3). Review of the musculoskeletal system is followed by presentation of orthopedic conditions and appropriate physical therapy interventions including range of motion, stretching, strengthening, therapeutic modalities, as well as common diagnostic procedures and surgical interventions. PR: 232. CR: 236L

PTHA 236L Orthopedics Lab (0-2-1). Application of therapeutic interventions for orthopedic conditions including range of motion, stretching, strengthening, therapeutic modalities as well as special test performed by the physical therapist. PR: 232. CR: 236.

PTHA 238 Rehabilitation (3-0-3). Introduces various facets of rehabilitation practices in physical therapy. Topics include cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, wound care, balance and proprioception, aquatics, prosthetics and orthotics, home management and community reintegration, and patient and family education. PR: 232. CR: 238L.

PTHA 238L Rehabilitation Lab (0-2-1). Application of therapeutic interventions for cardiopulmonary rehabilitation, wound care, balance and proprioception, aquatics, prosthetics and orthotics, home management and community reintegration, and patient and family education. PR: 232. CR: 238.

PTHA 240 PTA Seminar (2-0-2). Provides an opportunity to expand critical thinking skills and further develop the ability to read, analyze, and interpret professional literature. Taught through discussion, debate, literature reviews, and critical thinking exercises. PR: 232.

PTHA 250 Clinical Education II (0-5-5). Six-week affiliation in which students are expected to competently perform all techniques and interventions previously introduced. Students are required to demonstrate a continuing ability to perform components of interventions safely and competently as

well as show progression toward entry-level performance. Pass/fail only; pass required for continued program enrollment. PR: Successful completion of program didactic and laboratory coursework during the spring semester.

PTHA 251 Capstone Seminar (2-0-2). Licensure application through the state board in which the student wishes to practice, registration with the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) and preparation for the National Physical Therapy Assistant Examination (NPTAE) through participation in a Scorebuilders licensure preparatory course. Additional fees apply. PR: 250.

PTHA 252 Clinical Education III (0-5-5). Six-week affiliation that represents the final clinical experience before reaching entry-level status. Allows students to refine skills related to intervention, communication, documentation, and duties expected of a competent physical therapist assistant. Performance at entry level by the conclusion of affiliation is required. Pass/fail only. PR: 250, 252.