

Gulf Coast State College

2023-2024

# PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT Program Handbook



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Equal Opportunity Education

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# INTRODUCTION

This Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program Handbook has been prepared to provide accurate information for faculty and students who are a part of the Gulf Coast State College Physical Therapist Assistant program. Students are held responsible for knowledge of all information contained in the Handbook. A statement to the effect that the student has received, read, and understands the contained information will be signed by the student and kept in the student's folder in the office of the Coordinator of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

The preparation and review of the information contained in this handbook was carried out with great care to ensure that all policies contained herein do not conflict with Gulf Coast State College policies. Should a question arise and an apparent conflict is uncovered, Gulf Coast policy may override program policy. That being said, this is a limited access program designed to prepare individuals for a career in healthcare, which requires daily attendance and a high level of professionalism. There are some policies that are more rigorous than what may be required of the typical student attending Gulf Coast State College. Students should become familiar with Gulf Coast State College policies as published in the [General Catalog](#) and in the [Gulf Coast State College Student Handbook](#) as well as the policies contained in this PTA Program Handbook.

## Division of Health Sciences Mission Statement:

The Division of Health Sciences strives to maintain high levels of academic and clinical standards while providing the allied health community with effective and highly motivated professionals who are committed to interprofessional collaboration and sensitivity to cultural diversity. This goal is to be achieved by meeting the diverse needs of students through academic advising, recruiting, counseling, and innovative teaching and learning strategies.

## NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY

Gulf Coast State College does not discriminate against any person in its programs, activities, policies or procedures on the basis of race, ethnicity, color, national origin, marital status, religion, age, gender, sex, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, disability, or veteran status. All questions or inquiries regarding compliance with laws relating to non-discrimination and all complaints regarding sexual misconduct or discrimination, may be directed to the Executive Director of Human Resources/ Title II/504/Title IX Coordinator and Employment Equity Officer, Gulf Coast State College, 5230 W. US Highway 98, Panama City, FL 32401; 850-872-3302.

## **What Is a Physical Therapist Assistant, and How Does a Physical Therapist Assistant Work With A Physical Therapist?**

Physical therapy is a health profession that contributes to meeting the health needs of society through programs of prevention, rehabilitation, public education, and research. A statement defining physical therapy was adopted in 1993 by the Board of Directors of the American Physical Therapy Association:

"Physical therapy is the assessment, evaluation, treatment and prevention of physical disability, movement dysfunction and pain resulting from injury, disease, disability, or other health related conditions. Physical therapy includes: (1) the performance and interpretation of tests and measurements to assess pathophysiological, pathomechanical, electrophysiological, ergonomic, and developmental deficits of bodily systems to decide diagnosis, treatment, prognosis and prevention; (2) the planning, administration, and modification of therapeutic interventions that focus on posture, locomotion, strength, endurance, cardiopulmonary function, balance, coordination, joint mobility, flexibility, pain, healing and repair, and functional abilities in daily living skills, including work; and (3) the provision of consultative, educational, research and other advisory services.

The therapeutic interventions may include, but are not limited to the use of therapeutic exercise with or without assistive devices, physical agents, electricity, manual procedures such as joint and soft tissue mobilization, neuromuscular reeducation, bronchopulmonary hygiene, and ambulation/gait training".

Physical therapists practice in a variety of health care settings, including hospitals, ambulatory health clinics, home health, independent practices, specialized clinics, schools and institutions of higher education, research centers, industries, wellness and fitness centers, health maintenance organizations, extended-care facilities, and nursing homes. The trend of moving physical therapy into a comprehensive health care model is consistent with the expanded scope of physical therapy practice and changes occurring in the health delivery system, such as health care cost-containment programs, technological advances, and increasing public awareness of, and responsibility for, health and prevention programs.

As physical therapy has matured as a health profession, it has become more autonomous in its practice and less dependent on physicians for prescriptive referral and direction. As health professionals, physical therapists and physical therapist assistants work with physicians and other health-care providers in a collegial relationship. Physical therapists are movement experts who examine, diagnose, and treat movement dysfunction. They determine the needs of individuals who seek their services through the careful assessment of each individual. Physical therapists implement programs of care designed to meet the goals of each patient and assist individuals to reach their highest possible functional level. As professionals, physical therapists develop, promote, and maintain standards for practice and education. Currently, two levels of physical therapy practitioners, the physical therapist (PT) and the physical therapist assistant PTA, perform the functions of the profession. The physical therapist earns a doctorate in physical therapy and may be a generalist or a specialist. The PT provides services to promote wellness and the prevention of disability. The physical therapist also provides

therapeutic services and related psychosocial support to individuals of all ages with musculoskeletal, neurological, sensorimotor, cardiopulmonary, vascular, and other physiological dysfunctions.

The PTA is an educated and licensed or certified clinician. They deliver physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of the PT. The PTA, in many states, must sit for a licensing examination after graduation prior to obtaining employment. Physical therapist assistants implement treatment for the patient designed by the physical therapist following examination and evaluation of the patient. The PTA will collect data and communicate any observed changes in the patient's condition that may require the physical therapist to modify the treatment program. PTs and PTAs work in a variety of clinical practice settings treating patients across the lifespan. Acute care is often delivered in the hospital; rehabilitation may take place in a separate rehabilitation setting or as part of home care. Physical therapy may also exist in private office practice settings, outpatient clinics, assisted living facilities, school settings, public health, the military, and more.

Many PTs continue their education to become specialists in a particular area of practice. Increasingly PTs participate in planned programs of continuing education or obtain advanced degrees to enhance professional skills and continue to meet public needs in a rapidly changing health-care arena. Physical therapist assistants may also continue their education by obtaining a baccalaureate degree in some allied field, and in some cases, PTAs will go on to become physical therapy students. It is important for the PTA student to understand that the technical courses offered in the physical therapist assistant program do not necessarily transfer for credit in a physical therapist education program. In some cases, the liberal arts component of the physical therapist assistant program may be accepted, but the student may be required to make up several prerequisites in order to be eligible for admission to a physical therapist education program.

# **JOB DESCRIPTION**

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT**

### **General Description**

The Assistant is a skilled clinician who performs physical therapy treatments and related duties as assigned by the physical therapist. This work is carried out under the direction of the physical therapist, who provides the assistant with supervision in accordance with state law.

The Physical Therapist Assistant has many diversified career opportunities, not only in the selection of different types of institutions, but also in working with different age groups and disabilities.

Duties of the PTA performed under the direction and supervision of a PT include:

1. Assisting the physical therapist when performing tests, evaluations, and complex treatment procedures.
2. Assisting the therapist in consulting with family members, physicians and other health care professionals, as appropriate.
3. Assisting with the care of the physical therapy department and equipment.
4. Assisting the physical therapist with in-service programs and other meetings as assigned by the physical therapist.
5. Providing physical therapy treatments as directed by the physical therapist and ordered by the physician.
6. Use of therapeutic exercise, mechanical traction, therapeutic massage, compression, heat, cold, ultraviolet, water and electricity.
7. Measurement and adjustment of crutches, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs, and instruction in their use and care.
8. Instruction, motivation and assistance to patients and others in improving pulmonary function, learning and improving functional activities such as pre-ambulation, transfer, ambulation, and daily living activities, and the use and care of orthoses, prostheses, and supportive devices.
9. Performance, without interpretation, of selected measurement procedures such as range of joint motion, gross strength of muscle groups, length and girth of body parts, and vital signs.
10. Observing, recording and reporting to the therapist the conditions, reactions and responses of patients related to his/her assigned duties.



11. Modification of treatment procedures as indicated by patient response and within the limits specified in the plan of care, and reporting orally or in writing to the physical therapist.
12. Maintaining daily records of treatments. Documenting progress notes on patients as directed by the therapist.
13. Assisting with clerical and office duties as assigned.
14. Providing physical therapy services as directed by the licensed physical therapist.

The physical therapist assistant participates in routine administrative procedures required for physical therapy service.

# **ACCREDITATION STATUS**

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Gulf Coast State College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy CAPTE , 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, VA 22305; telephone (703) 706-3245, email: [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org); website: <https://www.capteonline.org>. If needing to contact the program/institution directly, please call (850) 913-3312, or email [mcumbaa@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:mcumbaa@gulfcoast.edu). The APTA Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education granted the Gulf Coast State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program full accreditation on May 6, 1998 with continued accreditation in October 29, 2003. The program was reaccredited in 2013 which extends through June 30, 2024.

Gulf Coast State College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award associate's and bachelor's degrees. GCSC has been accredited since 1962, and was recently reaffirmed in 2011. Contact the Commission on Colleges at 1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, Georgia 30033-4097 or call 404-679-4500 for questions regarding the accreditation status of the institution or if there is evidence that appears to support Gulf Coast State College's significant non-compliance with a requirement or standard.

Gulf Coast State College is also a member of the American Association of Community Colleges, the Association of Florida Colleges, the American Council on Education, and the Council for Advancement and Support of Education.

## **PHILOSOPHY AND MISSION**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program of Gulf Coast State College perceives its commitment to education in three dimensions:

A legal obligation to uphold the philosophies, policies and procedures of the College.

An ethical obligation to the community, the physical therapy profession and the consumers of physical therapy to assure the competency of entry-level physical therapist assistants.

A moral obligation to enrolled students to provide quality education that will enable them to improve the quality of the lives they touch and to receive satisfaction from their care giving.

**The PTA program's mission is to educate students to become competent in the physical therapy skills needed to perform evidence-based practice in a variety of settings, while meeting the needs of patients, families and healthcare providers in the community. Graduates will be working with clients with psychological, social, and physical needs and must be sensitive to the total individual.**

The Division of Health Sciences strives to maintain high levels of academic and clinical standards while providing the allied health community with effective and highly motivated professionals who are committed to interprofessional collaboration and sensitivity to cultural diversity. This goal is to be achieved by meeting the diverse needs of all students through academic advising, recruiting, counseling, and innovative teaching and learning strategies. The PTA program is a part of the HS division.

The program embraces the College's philosophy and SACS requirements for a minimum of 15 semester hours of curriculum in the general studies area. The College's mission is to graduate individuals who will interact successfully in both their career and social worlds; whose contribution to their career and to society will be professionally and personally fulfilling.

The program ensures that graduates have entry-level competencies in the field but also recognizes the value of and need to continue their education through reading, active participation in the profession, and attending continuing education courses/seminars. The program has been designed with approximately one quarter of the courses transferable to a baccalaureate program if graduates should choose to continue their education.

## **PTA Program Goals**

1. Admitted program students will earn an Associate in Science degree in Physical Therapist Assisting.
2. Graduates will be prepared to apply for and pass the PTA licensing examination [NPTE] in order to obtain gainful employment.
3. Graduates will be competent in the skills necessary to perform evidence-based treatments as a PTA under the direction and supervision of a PT in a variety of settings.
4. Graduates will be educated in humanities, social sciences and basic/clinical sciences, and use current evidence to solve problems in a clinical setting while working with patients, families, and other clinical staff for the improvement of the patient's condition.
5. Faculty will seek opportunities to be involved with professional associations, improve individual academic practice, and achieve tenure in order to improve academic excellence within the curriculum while fostering student success in the community.

# PTA Program Level Outcomes

The program outcomes listed below support the goals and mission of the program. The program's success is based on the performance of students, graduates, and faculty. There are eight main outcomes that are measured by the performance of both students and graduates. There is one outcome with multiple parts that is measured by the performance of program faculty.

Upon completion of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program, the student/graduate will:

1. Exhibit conduct that reflects a commitment to meet or exceed the expectations of the community and other members of the healthcare profession.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 & 4, 5 for students; #2 & 3 for graduates):
    1. 90% of students have satisfactory completion of performance criteria numbers 1 through 7, and 14 (achieves entry-level performance) on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI).
    2. 80% of program graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to question #6.a on the PTA Program Graduate Survey.
    3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions # 8A, 8B (#3,4), 8C, 8D, 8X on the Employer Survey.
    4. Each student completes 40 hours of community service, as per PHT 2931.
    5. 90% of admitted students demonstrate professional behaviors, receiving less than three unprofessional (written warnings) throughout the program.
2. Safely and effectively implement appropriate interventions identified in the plan of care as directed by the supervising physical therapist.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1, 2 for students; #2 & 3 for graduates):
    1. 90% of students that are successful on key practical examinations (PHT 2211L Final; PHT 2225L, and PHT 2226L) are successful with first attempt in clinical practice (PHT 2801, PHT 2810, and PHT 2820).
    2. 90% of students in two consecutive cohorts have satisfactory completion of performance numbers 1, 3, 5, 7-12, and 14 (achieves entry-level performance) in the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) during terminal clinical experiences.
    3. 80% of graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #6B (#1-7) on the Graduate Survey.
    4. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #8B (#1-7) on the Employer Survey.
3. Perform appropriate data collection skills essential for carrying out the plan of care in order to quantify the patient's response to treatment and modify treatments within the plan of care.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 for students; #2 & 3 for graduates):
    1. 90% of students have satisfactory completion (achieves entry-level performance) for performance criteria numbers 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument during the terminal clinical experiences.

2. 80% of graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #6B (4) ,F,G,I,J,M,R, Q on the Graduate Survey.
3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #8B( 4) ,F,G,I,J,M,R on the Employer Survey.
4. Complete thorough, accurate, logical, concise, timely, and legible documentation to support the delivery of physical therapy services.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 for students; #2 & 3 for graduates):
    1. 90% of students have satisfactory completion (achieve entry-level performance) for performance criteria numbers 3 and 13 on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument during the terminal clinical experiences.
    2. 80% of graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #6j on the Graduate Survey.
    3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #8j on the Employer Survey.
5. Work effectively in a clinical setting under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 for students; #2 3, & 4 for graduates):
    1. 90% of students have satisfactory completion (achieve entry-level performance) for performance criteria numbers 2, 5, and 7 on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument during the terminal clinical experiences.
    2. 80% of graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #6a-v on the Graduate Survey.
    3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #8a-x on the Employer Survey.
    4. 90% of graduates obtain gainful employment (within 6 months of licensure, if seeking).
6. Communicate verbally and non-verbally with the patient, physical therapist, health care delivery personnel, and others in an effective, appropriate, and capable manner.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 for students; #2 & 3 for graduates):
    1. 90% of students have satisfactory completion (achieve entry-level performance) for performance criteria numbers 2 and 5 on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument during the terminal clinical experiences.
    2. 80% of graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #6 (a,b3,b6,c,d,i,q,u) on the Graduate Survey
    3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #8 (a,b3,b6,c,d,i,r,x) on the Employer Survey.
7. Possess the knowledge to think independently and critically, use fundamental theory, evidence-based research, and basic sciences to solve patient care scenarios during didactic & clinical practice.
  - i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 & 2 for students; #3, 4, & 5 for graduates):
    1. 80% of cohort achieves satisfactory completion of the PTA exit exam on first attempt and content/systems analysis meet (or fall within range of) the national average for each category.
    2. 90% of cohort achieve entry-level performance for performance criteria numbers 6 and 7 on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument during the terminal clinical experiences.
    3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions (#8a, b4,c,d,e,k,n,p,t,w) on the Employer Survey.
    4. Each cohort has at least a 90% NPTE pass rate for ultimate attempts and an 80% NPTE pass rate on the first attempt.
    5. 80% of graduates state they are "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" for questions (#6 b4, e, i, k, n, s) on the Graduate Survey

8. Educate patients, families, caregivers, and members of the health care team using relative instruction methods commensurate with the needs of the learner.

- i. Evidenced by benchmarks (#1 students; # 2 & 3 graduates):
  - 1. 90% of cohort exhibit satisfactory completion of skill number 5, 8, 9, 12 on the PTA Clinical Performance Instrument during the terminal clinical experiences.
  - 2. 80% of graduates respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #6 (a, c, d) on the Graduate Survey.
  - 3. 80% of employers respond with "Strongly Prepared" or "Adequately Prepared" to Questions #8 (a, c, d) on the Employer Survey.

PTA Program Outcomes also have a faculty component which is necessary for the program to meet program goals and mission. They are as follows:

9.(1) Core faculty will be involved in at least one professional association (e.g. APTA, FPTA, FCCE and/or AFC, etc.) and demonstrate service to the campus/community.

9.(2) Core and adjunct faculty will demonstrate academic excellence in the curriculum by meeting expectations (80% of faculty scoring “3” or higher) annually in the areas below. Any area that falls below a “3” will require a remedial plan in the subsequent year as applicable.

- a. Teaching performance –Provides evidenced-based instruction & enthusiastic about subject matter, and demonstrates flexibility with different learning styles.
- b. Course Management – Complies with approved course syllabi, consults course coordinator when needed, challenges students to engage in active learning & use critical thinking; provides course assessments that apply to course content.
- c. Accessible/Timeliness – Available to students before/after class, encourages students to seek assistance when needed; complies with office hours, responds to email, returns phone calls in a timely manner.
- d. Associated Administrative Duties/Behavior – Complies with GCSC and PTA Program policies, attends mandatory meetings, treats colleagues and staff with respect, submits documents on time.
- e. Professional Development Activities – Maintain and provides annual documentation of current training, licensure, and credentials. Participates in continuing education opportunities related to teaching and content areas. Performs self-evaluations with respect to teaching in the PTA program annually.
- f. Professionalism – demonstrates ethical and academic integrity/APTA’s value-based behaviors. Core faculty participate in service opportunities on campus/in the community.

9. (3) Clinical faculty will demonstrate clinical excellence by meeting the following expectations:

- a. 80% Clinical Instructors will score a “3” or higher as surveyed by the students using the PTA Student Assessment of the Clinical Instructor on item #22.
- b. Clinical Instructors will be evaluated by the DCE and meet the following criteria: #1 100%, #3 80%, #4. 80%, #6. 80% give feedback at least weekly, #8. 100% on the Midterm

Clinical Site Contact Form; 80% CIs respond favorably on the CI Survey.

- c. Professional Development Activities – The goal is to have at least 30% of program Clinical Instructors (CIs) credentialed by the APTA. Individual advising/development for CIs will occur for any issue identified by the DCE, or if there are reports from two consecutive students for any issue. If the same issue is identified for 5 CIs on #10 of the Mid-term Clinical Site Contact Form, then a group education activity may be offered by the DCE for CIs collectively.

## GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE

### PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM CURRICULUM

Freshman Year		
Fall Semester		Credit Hours
BSC 2085	Anatomy and Physiology I	3
BSC 2085L	Anatomy and Physiology I Lab	1
	College Level Math (MAC1105, MGF1106, MGF1107, STA2023 or higher)	3
HSC 1531	Medical Terminology	2
PHT 1000	Introduction to Physical Therapy	2
PHT 1102	Applied Anatomy for PTA's	2
PHT 1102L	Applied Anatomy Lab for the PTA	1
PHT 1200	Basic Skills in Patient Care	2
PHT 1200L	Basic Skills in Patient Care Lab	2
		Total =18 hrs

Spring Semester		Credit Hours
BSC 2086	Anatomy and Physiology II	3
BSC 2086L	Anatomy and Physiology II Lab	1
PHT 1124	Functional Human Motion	2
PHT 1124L	Functional Human Motion Lab	1
PHT 1220	Introduction to Therapeutic Exercise	3
PHT 1220L	Therapeutic Exercise Lab	2
PHT 1131	Assessment, Measurement, and Documentation	1
PHT 1131L	Assessment, Measurement, and Documentation Lab	2
	Civic Literacy Req (POS 2041 or AMH 2020)	3
		Total = 18 hrs

Summer Semester		Credit Hours
PSY 2012	General Psychology	3
ENC 1101	English Composition I	3
PHT 2224	Therapeutic Interventions I: Medical/ Surgical Disabilities	2
PHT 2224L	Therapeutic Interventions I Lab	1
	Humanities Elective (Level I, II, or III)	3
PHT 2211	Therapeutic Modalities	2
PHT 2211L	Therapeutic Modalities Lab	2
		Total = 16 hrs



<b>Sophomore Year</b>		
<b>Fall Semester</b>		<b>Credit Hours</b>
PHT 2801	PTA Clinical Practice I	2
PHT 2225	Therapeutic Interventions II: Orthopedic Disabilities	3
PHT 2225L	Therapeutic Interventions II Lab	2
PHT 2226	Therapeutic Interventions III: Neurologic Disabilities	3
PHT 2226L	Therapeutic Interventions III Lab	2
		<b>Total = 12 hrs</b>

<b>Spring Semester</b>		<b>Credit Hours</b>
PHT 2931	Seminar	2
PHT 2810	PTA Clinical Practice II	4
PHT 2820	PTA Clinical Practice III	4
		<b>Total 10 hrs</b>
		<b>Program total = 74 hrs</b>

### **Important to note:**

- All courses must be completed with a “C” or higher.
- Any course with PHT must be completed in the sequence listed and is only offered in the semester listed.
- Any course that does not begin with “PHT” must be completed by the end of the summer semester, prior to clinical placement. There is a new Civic Literacy requirement that requires students to pass a competency exam (in addition to completion of the course) in order to receive an A.S. degree in the state of Florida.
- The fifth semester (Spring II) only has 10 credits, although there are 14 weeks of clinical work (40 hours/week) required. This may impact full-time status for financial aid purposes.

# GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE ACADEMIC POLICIES

## I. Attendance/Tardiness/Absences

A. It is the strong desire of the faculty and staff of Gulf Coast State College that all students successfully complete every course in which they are registered. Regular attendance and responsibility for class work are two of the most significant factors for success in college. Students are urged to begin each course determined to be present, punctual, and prepared for every class meeting, and are urged to seek additional help from instructors when needed.

All students are expected to attend every class or clinical (and be present on-time) unless an illness or an emergency occurs. If absence or tardiness is unavoidable due to these circumstances, the student is required to notify the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at (850) 913-3312, and if applicable, the clinical agency assigned prior to the tardiness or absence.

An excused absence or tardy will be awarded in appropriate circumstances. The course instructor will determine if the absence is excused or unexcused. Attendance records are extremely important as the college is audited by the Veterans Administration and obligated to report attendance under a number of other programs. See [GCSC's financial aid website](#) for further information.

Students who are absent from class in excess of the equivalent of one-eighth of a term (4-6 classes in a regular three-hour course in a regular semester) without permission of the instructor shall be withdrawn from the course:

- The student will receive a "W" if prior to the published deadline
- or-
- The student will receive an "F" if after the published deadline.

Excessive tardiness will result in the accumulation of unexcused absences. After three episodes of tardiness in the same course, one absence will be accumulated. From this point forward, for every 2 episodes of tardiness that occur, one absence will be added to the total number of absences. A tardy/unexcused absence is documented as a professionalism infraction in the student's file. For every three infractions accrued in the program (in any course), an additional 5 hours of community service will be required for the portfolio in PHT 2931. This will be tracked by the student on their portfolio and reviewed during advising meetings each year.

The effect of absences upon grades is determined by the instructor. It is important that the student is aware of each instructor's absence policy. The policy can be found in the syllabus for each PTA course.

- B. The student is responsible for all work missed during absences. It is expected that the student will contact the instructor of the course to make arrangements for class work missed. Make-up work for extended illness or emergency absence is required. Make-up work for announced tests, reports, projects, etc., for valid absences will be permitted or an alternate opportunity provided. Make-up work or quizzes for unannounced activities are at the discretion of the instructor. Missed work may be assigned a grade of zero. Work missed must be completed in order to progress in the program. This ensures the student is competent in the required coursework. (Refer to the syllabus concerning completion of missed work).
- C. Clinical attendance is expected as assigned. The student has the responsibility to be in the PT agency at the specified time. If the student cannot be present or will be late it is mandatory that they call the clinical supervisor and the PTA program at Gulf Coast State College. Any time missed during a clinical rotation even if it is just one hour must be approved by the DCE. The student must fill out the Request for Absence from Clinic (Appendix R5). If a student has been injured during the program or elects to have a surgery, clearance a physical form with technical standards must be updated four weeks prior to beginning date of the scheduled clinical experience. If injury should occur during this timeframe, the DCE must be notified immediately, and clearance to resume the clinical must be obtained. This may delay the scheduled clinical experience and/or graduation.

## **II. Academic Standards**

### **A. Grading Policy**

Letter grades are assigned for all credit courses, with the exception of clinical courses (PHT2801, PHT2810 & PHT2820) which will receive a Pass/Fail. Number equivalents are as follows: A (90-100); B (80-89); C (70-79); D (60-69); and F (0-59). In addition, the following letter grades are used where appropriate: W (Withdrawal), I (Incomplete), and N (Audit). A grade of "I" may be assigned a student failing to complete the class work on schedule. The incomplete grade will be changed to "F" if not removed within 30 calendar days from the end of the term in which the grade was earned.

Failure in Physical Therapist Assistant courses necessitating extension of the program beyond the normal two years may increase the time away from clinical skills significantly. At the discretion of the instructors, it may be required that the student attend these courses on an audit basis to refresh the skills prior to clinical experiences, or to pass a comprehensive skills practical exams.

The final letter grade is determined by the total number of points that the student earns on quizzes, tests, competency exams, papers, reports etc. as assigned in the individual course. Some courses require a minimum pass rate for each quiz/test given; please refer to the syllabus for specific requirements within each course.

## B. Examinations

Instructors are free to develop their own examinations but are encouraged to use a variety of methods to assess student progress. The number and type of examinations may vary from course to course and will be specified in the course syllabus.

A final examination is required in each course and is given according to the published college schedule. Lecture courses have written/computerized examinations, laboratory courses have practical examinations which may include written examinations, and clinical courses have their own type of skills assessment requirements which are documented using computerized software. If courses in the PTA program are completed prior to the end of the academic term, the final examinations will be scheduled by the instructor of the course at the appropriate time. Except under emergency circumstances, students may not be excused from these examinations. If a student is unable to appear, it is his responsibility to inform the instructor prior to the scheduled examination and to request an "I". An "I" (incomplete) grade means the student has not completed course requirements due to circumstances, which judged by the instructor, were beyond the student's control. The student must personally request an incomplete grade. It is not granted automatically. Each instructor will work with the student to schedule make-up exams pending approval.

Incomplete grades must be removed no later than 30 calendar days after the term in which the incomplete was granted or the grade will be changed to an "F". Students may not continue in the sequenced progression of PHT courses until the grade of "I" is removed from their record.

## C. Individual Lab Exam Grade Determination:

1. **All standards will be assigned a total possible score.** The points earned will be computed into a numerical grade by dividing the points earned by the total possible points. An exam may include both written and practical components.
2. **Each lab practical has critical safety elements and required critical skill components of the skill set that must be passed with a level "3" in order to pass the practical.** A critical safety element is a portion of the skill which is intended to prevent or mitigate injury. A critical skill component is an essential part of the skill that must be completed for the skill to be effective. These elements are listed under the "3" category in bold for each lab rubric. In general, when applicable, red denotes a critical safety element and blue denotes a critical skill component.
3. A student must earn a C (70) or higher and meet all critical safety elements/critical skill components with a level "3" in order to pass the exam.

If the student does not pass the practical with a 70% or higher, the student will have to repeat the entire practical exam. The instructor will determine the date of the additional attempt at the exam. **The repeated attempt must be higher than a 70 and meet all critical safety elements/critical skill components.** If repeating the entire practical, the scores will be averaged and the highest grade possible will be a 70%.

If a student does not pass a critical safety element or critical skill component, the student will need to repeat that portion of the practical to show competency. If repeating only a portion of the practical for competency, an overall grade deduction will occur. On the second attempt, the highest grade possible would be an 85% (could be lower). On the third attempt, the highest grade possible would be a 75%.

There is a maximum of three attempts permitted for any one exam or exam component in laboratory courses. The student will be placed on probation after two attempts (refer to policy (F) concerning probationary status). ***Failure of one exam after three attempts could also result in failure of the course, if safety or competency is a concern for core faculty.***

There is also a limit for repeated attempts collectively within multiple courses in the same semester. This includes both partial and complete repeats. If a student requires repeated attempts on four different practical examinations in any courses within one semester, they will be placed on probation. If a student requires five or more repeated attempts collectively within one semester, this may result in dismissal from the program.

4. **A student functioning as the patient may lose points on their examination for cueing their classmates, assisting inappropriately, or failing to participate in a realistic patient scenario during a practical examination. The student could also be dismissed from the program if they are involved in a cheating incident.**
5. **Evaluation Criteria for Laboratory Practical Exam:**

The student will demonstrate laboratory competency in the application of selected treatment skills and functions in simulated clinical situations.

**Given (A-C or C & D)**

- A. A diagnosis which appropriately includes application of the selected treatment.  
(Ex: Dx: L Hip Osteoarthritis s/p Total Hip Arthroplasty. Tx: The student must select the appropriate exercises based on the POC)
- B. A physical therapy plan of care that includes an explicit statement of goals of treatment, precautions, frequency and duration of treatment, and pre-selected method and instrumentation.
- C. An array of equipment commonly used in physical therapy.
- D. Name of an intervention or specific skill (e.g. Body Mechanics, w/c mobility)

➤ **In accordance with acceptable practice standards the students demonstration of the treatment or skill will be:**

- A. Consistent with treatment goals.
- B. Appropriate to the body part being treated.
- C. Comfortable and safe for the "patient".
- D. Comfortable and safe for the PTA.
- E. Clearly, concisely and correctly explained to the "patient" using terminology that they understand and that reduces anxiety.
- F. In compliance with patient precautions and established infection control procedures.
- G. Safely and efficiently administered to the correct area.
- H. Of proper dosage/intensity.
- I. Achieving optimal neurophysiological response.
- J. Responsive to changes in the "patient's" physical and mental status and tolerance of treatment.
- K. Adequately documented with clarity, brevity and legibility.

➤ **The performance evaluation criteria shall be:**

3 - Performs all functions and tasks with mastery. Demonstrates efficiency and skill in the preparation, adjustment and use of all materials and equipment. Operates in a confident and professional manner. Is well organized in communication and actions. Demonstrates awareness of personal and patient safety at all times.

2 - One verbal cue is needed from the instructor to perform required functions competently and maintain safety in a clinically acceptable manner.

1 - Needs multiple prompts from instructor. Disorganized and/or inefficient. Uses minimum care in safety. Needs improvement.

0 - Performs required tasks or functions in an unacceptable manner. Lacks knowledge of procedures and/or equipment. Inattentive to safety or infection control issues. Actions and/or appearance unprofessional.

**6. Overview of general components of the required skills:** Preparation of treatment area. Gathering, preparation and adjustment of necessary supplies and equipment.

- Recognize supply/equipment and treatment area needs including patient safety and privacy
- Recognize need for adjustment of equipment
- Apply safety rules for preparation/adjustment of equipment and treatment area including infection control/wearing personal protective equipment (PPE).

**Preparing the patient for treatment**

- Introduce yourself as a student PTA and identify the patient
- Explain the general procedure
- Assist the patient as necessary into an appropriate treatment area
- Position patient for comfort, security and access
- Drape patient appropriately and use curtains for privacy if necessary

**Administration of treatment/demonstration of skill**

- Explanation of procedure with thoroughness and at an appropriate level for patient understanding
- Demonstration of appropriate guarding/safety techniques
- Proper body mechanics
- Instructions/teaching of skills to patient and/or family
- Implementation/modification of treatment/technique as indicated by patient's response/supervising PT within the POC as directed by the supervising PT.

**Infection Control**

- Proper disposal of contaminated linen/supplies
- Disinfection of treatment area and equipment (including handwashing)
- Proper storage of equipment/supplies

**Documentation**

- Consistent with established policies and procedures following ethical and legal guidelines
- Includes all necessary information
- Meets accepted standards of clarity, brevity, timely and legibility

D. Progress Standards (See also the GCSC [General Catalog](#))

The student must pass all courses required by the program (PHT courses and general studies courses) with a minimum grade of "C". In addition, each competency exam must be passed with a minimum grade of "C". A grade of "C" is interpreted as "the student meets the minimum standards for competency". See General Format for Laboratory Competency Evaluation pages 16-20.

To continue in the PTA program students must successfully complete all prerequisites as detailed in the course descriptions. Students are encouraged to seek input from core faculty whom also serve as program advisors. There are two required advising sessions in the program to ensure students are meeting program requirements for successful completion. One session is required in the second semester (first spring term), the other session is required in the fourth semester (second fall term). Please refer to the Professional Activity Portfolio (appendix) for details on the requirements for those advising sessions. All general education courses and HSC 1531, must be completed by the end of the third term (summer session) prior to progressing to clinical experiences.

E. Academic Warning

Students will be given an indication of their academic standing mid- semester through the posting of mid-term grades and/or with a verbal warning from the instructor.

The clinical component of a health-related program is recognized as academic in nature. Therefore, decisions regarding a student's progress within a clinical component are within the professional assessment and judgment of the appropriate faculty member. Any student who does not exhibit the knowledge, behavior skills or ethics deemed necessary for the health, safety or welfare of patients may be suspended or dismissed from the program.

F. Probation (See also the GCSC General Catalog)

1. A student who does not achieve the predetermined clinical competencies, in the judgment of the faculty member assigned to the academic/clinical setting, will be placed on probation status.
2. When a student is placed on probation, the student will be counseled by the appropriate faculty member and will receive written notice of the program clinical deficiencies. Please refer to PTA Program Counseling Record provided as an Appendix.
3. The written report will provide steps for individualized remedial activity toward achieving predetermined competencies, which the student is expected to fulfill within an established time period.
  - a) If the student achieves the predetermined competencies, the student will be removed from probation status.
  - b) If the student does not achieve the predetermined competencies, the faculty member will discuss the student's progress with the program coordinator, who may refer the student to a faculty review committee.



G. Suspension (See also the GCSC [General Catalog](#)). Suspension results in a student's withdrawal from the program, and further participation in academic or clinical settings is suspended until remedial activity is achieved.

1. If a student or faculty member indicates the student is unable to move forward in the program, suspension may be considered. The request will be referred to the faculty committee.
2. During any meeting of the faculty committee where suspension of a student is to be considered, the student will be given notice of the meeting no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting. The student will be permitted to attend that portion of the meeting during which the student's suspension is presented and will be permitted to respond verbally and in writing to any of the reasons given for suspension by the faculty member who referred the matter.
3. The committee, after considering the faculty member's recommendation and the student's response, shall, by a majority vote, make a recommendation to the program coordinator to do one of the following:
4. recommend the student continue with current cohort
  - a. recommend the student continue with current cohort
  - b. place the student on suspension
  - c. extend probation status if relevant, and complete an additional written report describing new expectations.
  - d. recommend dismissal (see part H.)
5. A student who is suspended shall be informed of any program deficiencies, which must be corrected in order to resume the program at a future date. The committee will review supporting documentation and determine if the student has corrected deficiencies/met competency requirements needed to resume the program.

#### H. Dismissal – Removal from the program

1. A student who has been on probation, suspension, violates the PTA Professional Behavior Policy (General Policies, I) , fails a drug screening, fails to report any incident that may alter background check results, or does not meet predetermined academic/clinical competencies will be evaluated by the faculty committee and may be dismissed from the program. Students who are dismissed from the program are ineligible for program readmission until the next cohort begins in the fall semester.
2. At any meeting of the faculty committee at which dismissal of a student is to be considered, the student will be given notice of the meeting no less than 24 hours prior to the meeting. The student will be permitted to attend that portion of the meeting during which the student 's dismissal is presented and will be permitted to respond verbally and in writing to any of the reasons given for dismissal by the faculty member who referred the matter.
3. The committee, after considering the faculty member s recommendation and the student 's response, shall by a majority vote, make a recommendation to the program coordinator to do one of the following:
  - a) return the student to "normal" status if indicated;
  - b) place the student on probation status, as set forth above; or
  - c) place the student on suspension status, as set forth above; or
  - d) dismiss the student.

Upon receiving the committee's recommendation, the program coordinator will take appropriate action.

4. Readmission - Re-entering the program at a specified time. Readmission is not guaranteed.

1. Students who receive a "D", "F", or "W" in any PHT course or whose overall GPA falls below 2.0 may apply for readmission when the course is offered again if space is available.
2. A student who has been academically dismissed may be readmitted **one time only**. Students who fail to obtain a "C" or better for the same course for the second time will be dismissed from the program. A student who has been dismissed for a violation of the PTA professionalism policy or a GCSC Code of Conduct may not be granted readmission.
3. Students who fail to obtain a minimum grade of "C" for two different PHT courses will be dismissed from the program and will be ineligible for readmission.
4. Readmission must occur within one year and is possible only if essential elements of the curriculum are unchanged.
5. Conditions of readmission, including validation of competencies in PHT courses, will be determined by the admissions committee.
6. Applicants must complete readmission application forms and/or file a letter with the coordinator of the PTA program indicating their desire to be readmitted.
7. A readmission interview by the PTA coordinator or other PTA faculty member may be required.

J. Removal from a Clinical Experience

Notwithstanding the above, if at any time, the faculty believe that a student's level of performance, attitude, knowledge, or any other action or lack of action are such that real or potential detriment exists for patient care, the student will be removed from a clinical site.

Violation of policies regarding confidentiality of information or professional behavior may result in dismissal from the program.

If, in the judgment of the PTA faculty or the Vice President of Academic Affairs, a student's attitude or conduct on or off campus reflects unfavorably upon the college, the student may be requested to withdraw and possibly dismissed from the physical therapist assistant program.

K. Appeal of Dismissal

Any student who is suspended or dismissed from a program may appeal the decision through the Academic Grievance Procedures established by Gulf Coast State College (see [General Catalog](#)).

L. Withdrawals ("W" grades) (See [General Catalog](#))

**DO NOT WITHDRAW FROM ANY REQUIRED COURSES without speaking to the program coordinator or assistant coordinator!!**

Any student withdrawing from a scheduled course should first speak to their program advisor. Although the course in question may be offered in a subsequent semester, the class schedule for physical therapist assistants usually prohibits them from taking it. Also, withdrawal from a course may disrupt the sequencing of progression due to the prerequisite requirements for most PHT courses. Withdrawal from a course may essentially withdraw a student from the Physical Therapist Assistant program, as they may not take PHT courses out of sequence.

**\*\*All general education courses and technical courses outlined in the curriculum through the summer term must be completed before a student will be permitted to attend clinical training in fall II and spring II terms.**

Students, either passing or failing, who voluntarily withdraw from the program, have no guarantee of reinstatement to the program. Readmission will be dependent on space available. Students requesting consideration of readmission must make written request to the Program Coordinator on the readmission application or by letter. Including a letter of intent with a re-application may be required to demonstrate success.

Students may withdraw from a course by completing a Withdrawal Form and submitting it to the Office of Enrollment Services, prior to the scheduled withdrawal deadline published in the college catalog. Student withdrawals initiated prior to the withdrawal deadline date will be recorded as a "W".

Administrative withdrawals are processed by instructors for excess absences. A student who is withdrawn by an instructor at any time before the published withdrawal deadline will receive a grade of "W". After the published withdrawal deadline, the student will receive the letter grade earned. The withdrawal deadline for an off-term or condensed term is one week after midterm.

All students receiving any kind of financial aid should contact the Financial Aid office to ensure that withdrawals will not adversely affect their aid.

M. Degree Requirements

To be awarded the Associate in Arts Degree, the Associate in Science Degree, or a Certificate, a student must complete one of the published curricula, earn a grade point average of 2.00 (C) on all work attempted at Gulf Coast State College (transfer students must have an overall 2.00 GPA), complete a graduation evaluation with the program advisor, and make application for graduation by the published date during the semester of graduation. A minimum of 15 semester hours must be completed at Gulf Coast State College in order to receive a degree or a certificate.

Course requirements for Associate in Science Degrees will vary from program to program as to the content, number of hours required for graduation, and the number of required physical education courses. Associate in Science Degree candidates should follow the published curriculum of their elected programs.

Physical Therapist Assistants must pass all 74 credit hours of courses required in the PTA curriculum with a grade of "C" or better and a "P" for all clinical courses (PHT2801, PHT2810, PHT2820). Students must also pass a Civics Literacy examination following completion of a Civics Literacy course.

## Comprehensive Examination

In order to evaluate the minimal level of competence needed to practice, a final comprehensive examination is given at the end of the second year. Students must pass this examination with a 70% or at/above the national average, in order to pass the final course PHT 2931 and graduate from the program.

Should the student fail the comprehensive examination, it may be repeated twice, at intervals no less than 48 hours apart. Repeated attempts must be passed at or above the national average. Re-takes will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor and it is the student's responsibility to be in attendance.

Should the student not pass the examination after three attempts, he/she must complete a commercially offered refresher course or complete remedial work as determined by the PTA faculty. Remedial work will be followed by re-testing and must be completed within six months of the original expected graduation date. Students not completing these requirements within the stated time frame may not graduate from the program.

***PTA students must successfully complete all academic coursework, including all clinical coursework, which includes passing the exit exam in order to be eligible to graduate and take the National Physical Therapy Assistant Examination.***

***There is a six time life limit for taking the NPTE per the FSBPT, and a five time life limit for taking the NPTE in the state of Florida. After three failed attempts, Florida requires remediation training before any additional attempts are permitted. Initial licensing requirements in the state of Florida also require passage of the Florida Laws and Rules Examination.***

**In Florida, students must apply to the state for licensure, which carries a cost of \$180.00. Students must also apply to the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy, in order to take the NPTE, which carries a cost of \$485.00. The Florida Laws exam also carries a cost of \$65.00.**

**In essence, students will need to be prepared to pay a minimum of \$730.00, in order to be licensed in the state of Florida.**

## **NC-SARA PTA Program Disclosure Statement**

Gulf Coast State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education. This disclosure is strictly limited to GCSC's determination of whether the PTA program, if successfully completed, would be sufficient to meet the educational licensure requirements in a State, as defined as 34 C.F.R. § 600.2. GCSC cannot provide verification of an individual's ability to meet licensure requirements unrelated to its educational programming.

This disclosure does not provide any guarantee that any particular state licensure entity will approve or deny your application. Furthermore, this disclosure does not account for changes in state law or regulation that may affect your application for licensure and occur after this disclosure has been made. Enrolled students and prospective students are strongly encouraged to contact their state's licensure entity to review all licensure or certification requirements imposed by their state(s) of choice.

In accordance with 34 C.F.R. § 668.43, GCSC has determined the PTA program meets the educational licensure requirements for all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the US protectorates, as defined in 34 C.F.R. § 600.2.

It is strongly encouraged that students, applicants, and prospective students determine any additional requirements for licensure in the State in which they seek to be licensed. Information regarding state licensure can be found at: <https://www.fsbpt.org/Free-Resources/Licensing-Authorities-Contact-Information>

This is also a helpful site for information from FSBPT about licensure requirements in each state:

<https://www.fsbpt.net/lrg/Home/LicensureByExamRequirement>

If you need assistance or have any questions, please contact Melinda Cumbaa at [mcumbaa@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:mcumbaa@gulfcoast.edu) or (850) 913-3312.

# Instructor's Responsibilities to the Students

1. Be on time for classes and hold classes for the required scheduled period of time. No classes will be canceled without the permission of the Coordinator. The Coordinator's classes may be canceled with permission of the Chair of Health Sciences.
2. Be prepared with significant lecture and/or discussion material and well-organized laboratory procedures.
3. Remain in the classroom or laboratory during scheduled classes, except in the case of an obvious emergency.
4. Prepare a syllabus for each class, listing office hours, assignments, lecture and lab topics, text and related resource materials and requirements of the course.
5. Be fair and impartial in the treatment of students.
6. Be available during scheduled office hours.
7. Be familiar with, and adhere to, college policies and procedures.
8. Be familiar with, and adhere to, CAPTE accreditation guidelines.
9. Adhere to the Core Values for the PT/PTA and Ethical Conduct as described by APTA.
10. Be familiar with, and adhere to, all Physical Therapist Assistant Program policies and procedures.
11. Meet with all advisees as requested or as necessary throughout the semester.
12. Keep informed of college happenings through attendance at required meetings and participation on college committees.
13. Keep informed of changes within the profession of Physical Therapy and keep the curriculum updated to incorporate these changes.

# Responsibilities of the Student to the Instructor

1. Adhere to all policies of Gulf Coast State College and the Physical Therapist Assistant program as published in the respective program handbooks.
2. Be committed to attendance of all classes and laboratory sessions except in the case of a dire emergency or illness. If you get hurt or are injured, notify your instructor immediately. Be on time.
3. Put in the hours of study it takes to come to class prepared. Be attentive in class and participate in the learning process.
4. Seek help from the instructor immediately when encountering difficulty with course material. Most skills will build on previously acquired skills. If you don't learn them as you go along you can become hopelessly lost. Your instructors want every one of you to succeed, so please ask for help if you need it!
5. Take your career decision seriously. This doesn't mean a little laughter along the way is inappropriate, but your commitment to evidence-based learning will reflect in your patient care. You will have responsibility for other people's welfare when you graduate. Think - who would you want caring for you? Someone who knows 75% or someone who knows 90%? **Health care careers are serious business!**



# CLINICAL POLICIES

## I. Attendance/Tardiness/Absences

- A. Clinical attendance is expected as assigned. The student has the responsibility to be at the clinical site at the specified time. If the student cannot be present or will be late it is mandatory that they (1) call the clinical supervisor at the agency and (2) call the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Gulf Coast State College by 8:30 a.m. DCE or a designated individual .
- B. Since placements are provided by the agency at time and expense to themselves they provide the training and take supervisory responsibility without compensation from the college) we attempt to disrupt their schedule as little as possible. Therefore, you are expected to be present for the days you are assigned, taking lunch and coffee breaks as assigned by the clinic. The working hours for a clinical experience will be the working hours of the agency to which the student is assigned and may vary from one clinical site to another.
- C. Holidays and vacations are at the discretion of the clinical agency. Should the college have a scheduled holiday or vacation period, which the clinical agency does not observe, the student is required to report to the facility as usual. Remember, you are a guest of the agency and they are providing you with clinical training for no fee. The agency schedule takes priority over the college schedule.
- D. In the event of an emergency situation, where the college is required to close/cancel classes, the student will not be required to report to the clinical facility. It is the student's responsibility to notify the clinical instructor of the excused required absence from the clinical experience.
- E. All missed clinical hours in excess of one day per clinical course must be made up, regardless of the reason for the absence. It will be the student's responsibility to fill out the leave request and schedule make-up hours with the clinical center. The leave request and make-up schedule must be approved by the DCE prior to being completed. For liability reasons, no unapproved make-up time will be permitted.

## II. Qualifications for Clinical Placement

### Academic Standing

In order to qualify for placement in a health care facility, the student must:

1. Be at least 18 years of age.
2. Maintain an overall cumulative grade point average of 2.0.
3. Have passed all required courses (including both PHT courses and general

studies courses) with a “C” or better and must have a sophomore standing in the college.

4. Provide current, valid cards/certifications in CPR (BLS) and First Aid from the American Heart Association, American Red Cross, National Safety Council. Students are required to get these cards on their own; they are not part of the curriculum. Copies of the cards/certificates must be submitted with the compliance packet documentation, prior to the second semester of the program.
5. Provide documentation of a negative TB test annually. If positive, must provide evidence of a clear chest x-ray and follow-up report. The Mantoux Test (two-step TB skin test) may not meet some clinical facility requirements. The QuantiFERON-TB Gold or T-SPOT may be required prior to clinical assignment.
6. Have a current negative drug test result within the window specific to the clinical site. All students are required to complete a second drug test prior to clinical placement. In addition, some facilities may request additional drug testing specific to their needs, (i.e. within a six-month window, or one from their facility). It may be necessary for the student to pay for and complete drug tests prior to each of the three clinicals in order to satisfy clinical site requirements.
7. Submit proof of attendance at the HIV/AIDS, Hospital Orientation, Domestic Violence, HIPAA, Infection Control, Human Trafficking, TB with Mask Fit and Prevention of Medical Errors training programs. A copy of each certificate must be submitted online as part of the student’s secure document records account. Students are required to get this training on their own. It is not part of the curriculum.
8. Submit all immunizations required by the college and by the clinical facility to which assigned. (Some facilities have requirements beyond those of the program.)
9. Pay all required insurance fees (through student fees or possibly at clinical sites as required). Students are required to purchase liability insurance (against malpractice) and accident insurance (which covers injuries the student may receive while in the clinic). Both of these insurances are purchased through the college with lab fees that are automatically attached to clinical courses each semester. These insurances are required in addition to any personal insurance the student may already have.
10. Have a clear physical examination & signed technical standards form on file.
11. Complete APTA’s Values-Based Behaviors Self-Assessment Tool prior to the first and second clinical experiences.

## Health Requirements

Students must provide an immunization record.

Students are required to report their vaccination status for clinical placement purposes. This includes whether they have received the COVID-19 vaccination or not. Some clinical facilities require students to either be vaccinated or go through the process of obtaining a waiver (approved for either medical exemption or religious purposes). The clinical facility has the choice to accept or refuse a waiver, which may impact clinical placement. We will make every attempt to find

an alternate placement, but it could possibly delay graduation. Please refer to Appendix A, Addendum I, IA, IB, IC for details about the COVID-19 vaccine.

It is strongly recommended that all students receive Hepatitis B vaccine (HBV) due to possible exposure in clinical agencies. Students must sign a statement declaring they have either received the vaccine or that they have refused to receive it.

The cost of this vaccine is the responsibility of the student and should be arranged with the student's personal physician or with the Public Health Department.

Students currently employed in a hospital or other health care agency may be provided with the vaccine free of charge. Check with your employer.

Prior to clinical placement in the sophomore year, the student may need to repeat a tuberculosis test. Certain clinical agencies may have other specific health requirements, which relate to students affiliating with them. These must be adhered to as a condition for affiliation. Check with the DCE regarding specific requirements for the clinical facility requested/assigned.

It is highly recommended that each student admitted and enrolled in a health-related program carry individual health insurance. The liability insurance the college covers the student for injuries sustained during classroom/laboratory instruction, or during direct patient care activities. Some clinical facilities require proof of student health insurance, in addition to the college liability insurance. If a student chooses not to carry an individual health insurance policy, this may limit clinical education placement.

## **Drug Screening and Background Checks**

For clinical placement, all students are required to have a drug screening and background check prior to clinical placement. A positive drug screen will result in immediate dismissal from the program. More frequent testing (drug screening or background checks) may be required for the clinical site.

All students will be required to complete a second drug test prior to clinical placement. In addition, some facilities may request additional drug testing specific to their needs (i.e. within a six-month window, or one from their facility). It may be necessary for the student to pay for and complete drug tests/and or background checks prior to each of the three clinical experiences in order to satisfy clinical site requirements.

# PTA Technical Standards:

A physical therapist assistant is a health care professional whose primary responsibility is to work under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist and perform duties in a clinical setting. In addition to the duties of the profession, the physical therapist assistant must always be aware of the patient's condition and needs and be able to interact appropriately. PTA students must meet the technical standards as outlined below:

TECHNICAL STANDARD	DEFINITION	EXAMPLES OF NECESSARY ACTIVITIES (Not All Inclusive)
<b>Cognitive Qualifications</b>	Sufficient Reading, Language and Math Skills; Ability to collect and integrate information to make a decision for patient care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Able to comprehend and interpret written material</li> <li>• Follow and deliver written and oral direction</li> <li>• Able to comprehend &amp; apply new knowledge within scope of work</li> </ul>
<b>Critical Thinking</b>	Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment; synthesize information from written material and apply knowledge to clinical situations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations</li> <li>• Read and comprehend relevant information in textbooks, medical records and professional literature</li> <li>• Make rapid decisions under pressure</li> <li>• Handle multiple priorities in stressful situations</li> <li>• Assist with problem solving</li> </ul>
<b>Interpersonal</b>	Interpersonal abilities sufficient to interact with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, educational, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish rapport with individuals</li> <li>• Cope effectively with stress</li> <li>• Can exchange ideas in a group (work effectively as part of a team)</li> <li>• Cope with confrontation</li> <li>• Demonstrate a high degree of patience</li> <li>• Graciously admit mistakes and accept constructive criticism</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	Communication abilities sufficient for interaction with others in verbal and non-verbal form (speech, reading, and writing)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explain treatment procedures</li> <li>• Give effective instructions to patients and families</li> <li>• Demonstrate active listening skills. Recognize, interpret and respond to non-verbal behavior of self and others</li> <li>• Keep accurate, ethical logs and records of treatment and charges with correct spelling and grammar</li> </ul>
<b>Mobility</b>	Physical abilities sufficient to move from room to room, to maneuver in small spaces and to perform procedures necessary for emergency intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintain positions including sitting, standing, squatting, kneeling, reaching (above shoulder level), walking, stair climbing, and movement of trunk and neck in all directions for an extended amount of time. (up to 4 hours)</li> <li>• Able to push, pull, and/or lift a minimum of 50-70 lbs., and push/ pull, or move such weight a minimum of 50 feet.</li> <li>• Safely and effectively transfer a 200-300lb patient with assistance</li> <li>• Able to lift up to 10 lbs. above head</li> <li>• Able to endure and successfully complete a 40 hour work week during clinical education courses, while wearing appropriate PPE (may entail: gloves, masks or gowns).</li> </ul>
<b>Motor Skills</b>	Gross and fine motor abilities sufficient to provide safe and effective patient care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handle and use equipment</li> <li>• Position patients</li> <li>• Perform repetitive tasks</li> <li>• Able to grip</li> </ul>
<b>Hearing</b>	Normal, corrected or aided - Auditory ability sufficient to interpret verbal communication from patients and health care team members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hear monitor alarms, emergency signals, and cries for help</li> <li>• Hear telephone interactions</li> </ul>
<b>Visual</b>	Normal or corrected - Visual acuity sufficient for observation and assessment necessary for patient assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observe patient responses</li> <li>• Identify and distinguish colors</li> </ul>
<b>Tactile</b>	Tactile ability sufficient for gross and fine motor coordination necessary for manual assessment of tissues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perform palpation, functions of physical examination and/or those related to therapeutic intervention</li> <li>• Tactile abilities needed to palpate pulses, detect changes in texture, body contour, muscle tone, and joint movement</li> </ul>
<b>Professionalism</b>	Ability to demonstrate professional behaviors and a strong work ethic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate respect, moral and ethical behaviors in all academic and professional settings</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Demonstrate time management skills that promote punctual attendance to class, lab and clinical settings</li> <li>• Recognize personal limitations and request assistance as appropriate</li> <li>• Present professional appearance and maintain personal hygiene</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental</b>	Ability to tolerate environmental stressors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with chemicals and detergents</li> <li>• Tolerate exposure to fumes and odors</li> <li>• Work in areas that are close and crowded</li> <li>• Tolerate shift work (up to 12 hours while wearing personal protective equipment (mask, gloves, gown, goggles) as indicated.</li> </ul>

## Liability Insurance

Each student is required to pay a lab fee for liability insurance once a year. The fee is payable at the time of registration for the clinical course. Non-payment of insurance fees will disqualify the student from being assigned a clinical experience placement. Non-payment of insurance fees will be considered as voluntary withdrawal from the Physical Therapist Assistant program.

## Personal Health Insurance

It is highly recommended that students have their own health insurance coverage while enrolled in the program. Healthcare costs associated with a student's enrollment in the program are the financial responsibility of the student. Some clinical sites require health insurance for clinical placements. Students may be requested to submit proof of personal health insurance in order to attend a particular clinical site. If a student chooses not to carry health insurance, some clinical placements may not be available to that student. Prior to submitting clinical placement requests, please check with the DCE for details about specific facilities that may require students to have an individual health insurance policy.

## Accident Insurance

Each student is required to pay a fee for accident insurance one a year. This insurance covers the student for medical costs incurred when injured while providing direct patient care as a student within the program. Non-payment of fees will disqualify the student from clinical experiences.

Should an accident occur during a clinical affiliation, the student must fill out the appropriate accident form for the facility with the Clinical Instructor. Within 48-72 hours, the student must also obtain and fill out the GCSC **Accident-Incident** form, which is available from the Director of Clinical Education (DCE).

Information on filing insurance claims is also available from the DCE or PTA Program Coordinator. See Appendix A.

## Transportation and other expenses

The student may be required to travel up to 100 miles from the campus for clinical placement. This does not account for the amount of time it takes for you to reach the clinical center – only total miles from campus (main campus). Students should not expect that every clinical assignment will be in close proximity to home. Each student is responsible for their own transportation to and from the clinical site. Inability to arrange childcare is not a consideration for clinical placements. Chronic "car problems" is not a valid excuse for tardiness or absences from internship. Ride sharing is not a valid excuse for altering the working hours as required by the clinical agency.

## Dress Code

A professional appearance is expected while enrolled in the Physical Therapist Assistant program. You are responsible for the dress code at each clinical site. If a dress code is not indicated by the clinical facility, then a navy blue polo and khakis are required.

1. No jeans or shorts. In most facilities, khaki's and polo shirts, or scrubs are standard attire. Khaki pants and a navy blue polo shirt with a collar are required for the program.
2. Students should not wear T-shirts, tank tops, or low-cut necklines to the clinical center.
3. Students should wear good shoes (closed-toed), preferably with non-slip soles. No high heels or sandals. Many facilities will allow sneakers, but some will not. Check prior to each affiliation.
4. Extravagant jewelry must be avoided. (medic alert bracelet or simple necklace is acceptable.) Rings other than plain wedding bands are unacceptable. Rings are a scratch hazard to patients and they may harbor organisms that can be transmitted from patient to patient, or even carry an infection to the wearer. Earrings, other than the small stud-type for pierced ears are not permitted. Dangling earrings may be a source of personal injury should a patient grab hold of one. Visible piercings other than in the ear are not permitted.
5. A watch with a second hand or digital second indicator is considered part of your uniform and is required.
6. Nails should be neatly trimmed to fingertip length and clean. Nail polish, if worn, should be clear or natural. Dark pinks, reds, purple, green or black, etc. are not acceptable. Artificial nails are not allowed.
7. Hair must be pulled back or secured up, if longer than shoulder length. No

radical haircuts or hair dyes are permissible, as they are not considered professional.

8. Personal hygiene is of vital importance. Daily bathing and the use of deodorant should be routine. Consideration should be shown for the fact that the scent of strong perfume, hair spray, coffee or cigarette smoke is offensive to many patients who may not be feeling well.  
\*\*Some clinical sites are smoke-free facilities. It is the student's responsibility to adhere to the smoke-free policy. Violation of a clinical policy is grounds for dismissal from the program.\*\*
9. Each student must be identified as a student PTA by an approved nametag acquired through the college. A patient always has the right to refuse treatment, and they should be aware that you are a student in training.
10. All visible tattoos must be covered while in the clinic. *Policies may vary from facility to facility. It is your responsibility to discuss proper dress code/policy with your CI and/or SCCE.*

## Confidentiality

All information, which you read, observe, generate, hear or over-hear about a patient, is considered confidential and may not be passed on to anyone who is not involved in the direct care of the patient. Violation of confidentiality may be cause for the student to be terminated from the clinical affiliation and/or withdrawn from the program. All program students must review, sign and abide by the confidentiality statement (provided in the Appendix). Approved HIPAA training is also mandatory prior to clinical affiliation and is available through the college.

## Cancellation of Clinical Experience

Any student who is found to be frequently tardy, absent, untrustworthy, unsafe, unable to accept supervisory criticism, unacceptable in terms of professional appearance, quality of work or who is otherwise a disruptive influence may be terminated from the clinical experience after counseling by the clinical instructor and a conference with the student and the Director of Clinical Education. Depending on the circumstances this may result in the student not being allowed to continue in the PTA program, as clinical experiences are a required component of the course. Please refer to Problem Resolution Procedures in General Policies for further details.

### III. Clinical Standards

#### American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

APTA guidelines state that clinical experiences must be consistent with [APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant](#) and the philosophy of the college program. The clinical education is an organized sequence of learning activities integrated within the curriculum. The collective experiences should allow for opportunities in patient care and teaching, as well as opportunities for students to learn through participation and observation of activities such as administration, quality assurance, and supervision of other supportive personnel.

Clinical education provides students with the opportunity to perform their responsibilities under appropriate physical therapist or physical therapist assistant supervision and with positive role modeling. The clinical experiences should provide exposure to a variety of patients and learning activities in a variety of practice and health care settings and ensure participation in direct patient care.

#### Clinical Agreements

A written agreement, which defines the rights and responsibilities of the college and the clinical facility, is necessary. These must be properly endorsed by all parties and on file at GCSC prior to the first day of affiliation. By accepting assignment to a clinical center, the student agrees to carry out all contractual responsibilities.

#### RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENT TO CLINICAL SITES

As part of the contractual agreement with clinical facilities providing training sites for physical therapist assistant students, students are bound to the following responsibilities and will sign a form prior to clinical experience agreeing to adhere to these conditions:

1. To report to the clinical facility on-time and professionally attired on each day of the clinical assignment or to request permission from the clinical supervisor and Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education for an unavoidable absence, according to established policy.
2. To learn and adhere to policies and procedures specific to the clinical facility during the time assigned to that facility.
3. To exhibit exemplary professional behavior at all times as a representative of Gulf Coast State College and a member of the physical therapy profession,



and to exhibit the highest of ethical and moral standards while dealing with patients and their families, staff and employees of the facility.

4. To complete an evaluation of the clinical experience form which will be shared with the clinical supervisor prior to leaving the clinical affiliation and returned to the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Educational
5. To strictly adhere to policies regarding confidentiality of information.
6. To adhere to health prerequisites of the facility.

## Levels of Clinical Experience

There are three levels of clinical experience: introductory, intermediate and advanced. These experiences are designed to provide students with the opportunity to integrate academic knowledge with the application of technical skills, attitudes and interpersonal skills.

**INTRODUCTORY LEVEL:** Physical Therapist Assistant Clinical Practice I This is a full-time (35 hours/week) placement for 4 weeks.

This experience in the fall semester of the sophomore year is a four-week, full-time clinical experience. Students are assigned to an agency, which provides physical therapy services for an introductory experience in the application of skills learned in the classroom to patients in the clinical setting. Students will perform specific clinical tasks under the close supervision of a physical therapist. This is an introductory experience and emphasis will be on developing ease in the moving and handling of patients; confidence in communicating and interacting with staff, patients and their families; sharpened powers of observation; and an understanding of the role of the physical therapist assistant. Students are required to complete a patient care study with a related literature review, and a journal for documentation of the breadth of experiences encountered.

**INTERMEDIATE LEVEL:** Physical Therapist Assistant Clinical Practice II This is a full-time (40 hours/week) placement for 7 weeks.

This course is an intermediate level, full-time clinical placement and is designed to be an in-depth experience in the delivery of physical therapy services to patients in a clinical setting. It is a supervised experience in the application of academically acquired knowledge. Problem solving techniques are employed in the interpretation and execution of patient care plans. An in-depth patient care study will be completed, journaling will be required and an in-service program will be prepared/presented.

### **ADVANCED LEVEL:** Physical Therapist Assistant Clinical Practice III

This is a full-time (40 hours/week) placement for 7 weeks.

This course is an advanced level, full-time clinical placement and is designed to be an in-depth experience in the delivery of physical therapy services to patients in a clinical setting. Although a supervised experience in the application of academically and clinically acquired knowledge, emphasis will be on the students' developing more autonomy in patient care and more independence in involvement with the entire scope of physical therapy services from clerical to patient scheduling and treatment to department maintenance. Also of emphasis will be a continuation of the development of critical thinking, problem solving, and communication/teaching skills. An in-depth case study will be completed, journaling will be required and a quality assurance study on a topic approved by the CI will be completed/presented.

## **Clinical Experience Evaluations**

Specific objectives have been developed for each clinical experience. They reflect the technical skills completed at the time of the internship and the level of the internship. All technical competencies passed in the laboratory setting may be asked of the student in the clinical setting and should be practiced to clinical competency as opportunities arise. In the supervisory relationship, both the clinical instructor and the student assume responsibility for: 1) identifying the students specific learning needs and goals, and 2) formulating a plan of growth which leads to achievement of technical competencies as outlined in the specific objectives for the given clinical experience.

Students will be evaluated at the end of the first clinical experience, and at both the mid-point and end of clinical experiences two and three by the clinical supervisor. Performance should be discussed at those times. Students will evaluate the clinical experience at the end of each affiliation and will share this evaluation with the clinical supervisor. This evaluation form is to be turned in with your performance evaluation. Your grade is not complete until it is turned in. After you have discussed and signed the final evaluation form, the final form will be returned to the DCE.

## **Comments**

1. You are privileged to be a community representative of your college. You are a guest of the facility providing your experience, and their opinion of you will also be their opinion of Gulf Coast State College. This determines whether the facility will accept future Gulf Coast State College students.
2. Never attempt any procedure of which you are not sure without having someone supervise you. Remember, you are a student, and are neither expected nor required to know how to do everything. But, also, don't be

afraid to try. Your clinical instructor would not let you do anything that would harm the patient. Be confident in what you know, and work hard to develop confidence in skills you are unsure of.

3. Never discuss information concerning patients in public or semipublic places (including social networks). Do not gossip about patients (clients), staff or supervisors. Remember that much of the information you come in contact with is confidential, even to the fact that the patient was in the department. This is no one's business except that of the patient, the doctor, and the Physical Therapy staff. Please respect your patient's privacy. Always check with your supervisor before releasing any information regarding a patient. Failure to do so may lead to dismissal of the student from the clinical area and to the withdrawal of the student from the program.
4. Do not discuss your personal life or problems with your patients. Patients have their own problems and do not need yours. Maintain a respectful, professional distance from your patients.
5. Loud noisy behavior is unprofessional and is annoying to patients and staff. Needless to say, one should always maintain a professional attitude with respect to one's use of the English language in a clinical setting.
6. Good manners are a must. This is particularly true if there are disruptions in the department's schedule. Regardless of how a patient may act towards you, treat them with the courtesy that you would like accorded you. Remember, patients are in the department because of a problem and no one's problems are as important to the individual as their own.
7. Your patient may often be preoccupied with themselves because they do not feel well and may be anxious about seeing the doctor or about tests that they must have. Please take this into account. People are not always on their best behavior under these circumstances. However, we must be understanding and extend every professional courtesy to them.
8. Never offer an opinion to the patient as to how their condition should be treated or should have been treated by the doctor. This is the physician's responsibility alone.
9. The amount that you learn on any one affiliation is going to be related to the amount you ask. Ask the clinical supervisor why? how? when? etc. Even if they are rushed, they're usually willing to explain as they go along. You'll be a better assistant if you understand reasons for specific techniques. Never be afraid to say "I don't know" - it's far better to feel a bit foolish than to find yourself in a situation you can't handle. It is also your responsibility to gain from the clinical experience with effort. Do not expect to receive the perfect experience on a silver spoon. An experience where you find yourself with

nothing to do is one where you are not looking. One can always practice with equipment, review office procedures, help with documentation or ask to observe an unfamiliar procedure.

10. Each clinical education center has its own defined policies and procedures, which are specific for that facility. You are expected to become familiar with them and to adhere to them during the time you are assigned.
11. Problems related to the clinical experience should be dealt with by your clinical supervisor and the DCE. Do not hesitate to bring them to their attention no matter how small they are.
12. Confirmation and Additional Information: A minimum of one month prior to the student's arrival, the student must send a brief letter of introduction to the clinical supervisor with a copy to the DCE confirming the dates and times of their affiliation and requesting additional information if necessary. The DCE will provide contact information for the clinical facility to the student at the time of clinical assignment.
13. Additional information regarding the clinical part of the education program may be found in the Physical Therapist Assistant Clinical Education Handbook. A copy is available under resources on the program website and in the office of the Director of Clinical Education DCE .

## **DIRECTOR OF CLINICAL EDUCATION (DCE) RESPONSIBILITIES TO STUDENTS**

- a. Assign all eligible students to a variety of clinical experiences and confirm the assignment, in writing, to each clinical supervisor.
- b. Assure that all written contracts and letters of agreement between the educational institution and facility are signed and reviewed regularly.
- c. Make regular contacts with each clinical agency in which students are placed, either by phone or in person.
- d. Maintain a current file for information on each agency.
- e. Expand the number of clinical contracts to provide a wide variety of options for student clinical experience.
- f. Orient students to the process and purposes of clinical experiences and provide the needed evaluation forms.
- g. Assign a grade to each clinical experience based on the clinical instructor's evaluation and any conferences held with the clinical instructor and the SCCE or CI.
- h. Be available for personal visits to a clinical agency if requested by the student or the agency.
- i. Act as intermediary between the clinical agency and Gulf Coast State College in the case of the necessity for a disciplinary action against a student. Act as the responsible individual for Step 1 in the problem resolution process.

## STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE DCE

1. Keep the DCE informed of any problems arising in the clinical experience on an ongoing basis after discussing the problem with the clinical instructor.
2. After receiving a clinical assignment, check with the DCE to review the facility file. You must check for dress code, working hours, health and other requirements unique to that facility and make sure that you will be in compliance prior to the start of your clinical experience.
3. Provide the DCE with proof of 1) Certificates for immunizations, TB tests etc. as required, 2) CPR and First Aid, 3) Drug Testing, 4) Background Checks, 5) Health Insurance (as indicated), and 6) Orientation certificates for HIPAA, Human Trafficking, HIV/AIDS, Infection Control, Prevention of Medical Errors, etc.
4. Although special requests for specific clinical placements are not guaranteed, should you have a special request, please discuss it with the DCE. All clinical requests must be received prior to March 1<sup>st</sup> of the first year in the program. If there is a need for a clinical request change following March 1<sup>st</sup>, this will need to be discussed individually with the DCE. No changes can be made once clinical assignments have been posted and relayed to the clinical site. (Approximately eight weeks prior to the clinical experience at a minimum.)

# CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE STUDENT

1. Establish an environment in which the student feels comfortable, providing appropriate support for student concerns, frustrations and anxieties.
2. Practice physical therapy with competence, demonstrating professional and ethical behavior as an exemplary role model for the student.
3. Utilize appropriate time management to allow for sufficient time to explain procedures/treatments and assist the student in performing assigned skills.
4. Provide constructive feedback to the student privately, and in a non-threatening manner. Additionally, the CI will openly and honestly assess student performance and encourage interactive dialogue with the student.
5. Allow the student progressive, appropriate independence.
6. Plan effective learning experiences with a variety of patients, helping the student to understand the relationship between academic knowledge and clinical practice.
7. Be available to the student to answer questions and make effective learning experiences out of situations as they arise.
8. Help the student define specific objectives for the clinical experience under the general guidelines of the clinical course syllabus.
9. Schedule formal regular meetings with the student (at least once weekly is suggested) for discussion of strengths and weaknesses.
10. Accept each student as an individual and not judge their performance by comparing them to other students. Be prepared to modify learning experiences to meet individual student needs, objectives and interests.
11. Make the mid-term and final evaluation a constructive process.
12. If the clinical instructor teaches the student a new treatment technique that has not been presented and practiced in the academic setting, the CI is responsible for defining the student's level of competence or proficiency in that technique and for determining if, and when, the student should use the technique with a patient.

# STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CLINICAL INSTRUCTOR

1. Report to the clinical agency on time, properly attired and prepared to go to work every day of the scheduled affiliation period. If this is not possible, request permission from the clinical supervisor and DCE if you will be late or absent due to an emergency/unavoidable absence.
2. Attempt to do your best to safely and effectively perform any tasks requested of you. Ask for supervision or help when you are unsure how to proceed.
3. Discuss problems or concerns with the clinical instructor as soon as they arise. Don't let things fester until they seem overwhelming. Let the instructor know if they are going too slow or too fast for you. Students develop clinical confidence at different rates. Your instructors can't know how you are coping if you don't tell them.
4. Observe, ask questions at appropriate times and places, and brush up on academic work, which relates to the day's experiences. Review textbooks and other resources, which will help you understand why treatments are done certain ways, and change to meet the changing needs of patients.
5. Represent yourself, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program, and Gulf Coast State College with the highest standards of moral and ethical behavior at all times.
6. Strictly adhere to policies for confidentiality of patient information.
7. Complete the evaluation of the clinical experience and share it with the clinical instructor on or before the last day of the affiliation but after you have received your evaluation from the facility. Use the evaluation as a constructive interaction with the clinical agency. Be honest and objective.



# GENERAL POLICIES

## Professional Behaviors

A. Appropriate professional behaviors are expected of all members of the learning community. An effective learning environment is facilitated with the expectation that students adhere to standards for professional behavior in academic settings. Experience shows that behaviors demonstrated in the classroom do carry over into clinical practice. Positive professional behaviors enhance the learning of every student and inevitably affect future PTA-patient and colleague relationships. Students are expected to follow professional standards of conduct when in the classroom, laboratory and clinical settings. Guidelines are as follows:

- [American Physical Therapy Association \(APTA\) Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA](#)
- [APTA Core Values for the PT and PTA](#)
- [APTA Guide for Professional Conduct](#)
- [Florida Statutes Chapters 456, 486 and Florida Administrative Code](#)
- Policies and Procedures of the PTA program (Program Handbook & Clinical Handbook)
- Policies and Procedures of the clinical facility (for clinical rotations and scheduled observations)

B. The following list includes examples of infractions of professionalism that could result in a verbal/written warning and/or dismissal from the program. This list is not inclusive of all infractions that may result in a warning or dismissal. Repeated verbal/written warnings or any combination of these infractions may result in dismissal from the program. A violation of any bolded item may result in **immediate dismissal** from the PTA program. Furthermore, for any 3 (unexcused) infractions documented in the student's file throughout the program, 5 additional community service hours will be required as part of the final portfolio for PHT 2931. Please refer to the Professional Behavior Documentation Form in Appendix R(2) for details.

- Tardy to lab/class
- Failure to complete assigned work in a timely manner
- Failure to follow directions
- One unexcused absence
- Cell phone interruptions/texting/non-class related computer use

- Inappropriate class/lab or clinical attire
- Lack of participation or preparation of class –text/supplies
- Use of inappropriate resources online to complete written work
- Failure to participate or complete group assignments
- Behavioral outburst
- **Inappropriate use of social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter; refer to social network policies for examples)**
- **Late to clinical site (clinical observation or rotation)**
- **Excessive absences (This may include a combination of excused and unexcused absences.)**
- **Rude behavior (Repetitive lewd/inappropriate comments, gestures, cursing)**
- **Safety Issues (e.g. Failure to seek assistance when unsure of correct procedure or equipment use, blatant misuse of PTA program equipment, using equipment without proper supervision.)**
- **Cheating (including using another person’s help to complete any type of homework, test, quiz, etc., online or in class)**
- **Plagiarism**
- **Forgery of student, staff, or instructor signature**
- **Discussing a practical examination before all examinations have been completed.**
- **Giving others content, questions or answers for any quiz or examination**
- **Stealing**
- **Violation of Health Sciences Drug & Alcohol Policy**
- **Blatant violation of FL State laws, HIPAA, APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA, Gulf Coast State College Student Policies and Procedures, PTA Program Handbook**
- **Failure to report any arrests and/or convictions**
- **Any other behavior deemed unprofessional by academic instructor or clinical instructor**

- C. Each PHT didactic and laboratory course includes at least one professionalism assignment that is graded. Unprofessional behavior will impact the grade earned in a course by decreasing points for each incident as documented on the Professional Behavior Documentation Form. A sample of

the Professional Behavior Documentation Form is located in Appendix R(2) for reference. Each write-up results in either a five- or ten-point deduction to the professionalism grade. The student is also responsible for keeping a running tally per course/semester as part of the professionalism portfolio that will be submitted at the end of the program in PHT 2931. If three write-ups occur within the program, an additional 5 hours of community service will be required as part of the Professional Activity Portfolio, submitted in PHT 2931. [Please refer to the syllabus for each course with respect to the number of assignments or overall weight the professionalism grade.]

- **10 Point Deduction for the following:**
  - ☐ Late to a clinical observation or clinical rotation
  - ☐ Unexcused absence (*After a student has accumulated 3 tardies, every 2 additional tardies will equate to an unexcused absence.*)
  - ☐ Any bolded item on the form
- **5 Point Deduction for the following:**
  - ☐ Each written warning (After three unexcused written warnings accumulated in the program, an additional 5 hours of community service will be required.)

**In order for an absence and tardiness to be considered excused the student must call before the start of class & will be determined by the instructor.**

**An excused absence consists of the following:**

- **Military duty**
- **Illness that may be contagious to others (A doctor's note may be requested depending on the situation; contact your instructor prior to class. An excused absence does not include a regularly scheduled doctor's appointments or wellness checks.)**
- **Death in the family**

**\*\* All professionalism deductions are at the discretion of the instructor.\*\***

**A violation of the professional behavior policy may result in a change of status for a student in the PTA program leading to probation or possible dismissal. (Please see Part E. for details.)**

**D. Social Network Policies:**

It is important to maintain professional conduct in and out of the class and clinical setting. Students should use discretion when posting on social networks such as Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. Students should never post anything concerning patients, patients' families, clinical instructors or

clinical sites at any time before, during or after their clinical rotation. Any violation of this policy will result in academic probation and/or dismissal from the program. Refer to Appendix Q (1) APTA's Standards of Conduct in the Use of Social Media, and Appendix Q (2) Gulf Coast State College Health Sciences Programs, Guidelines for Responsible Use of Social Media.

E. Problem Resolution Procedure for Unprofessional Behavior:

**Step 1: Problem is identified**

The unprofessional behavior is documented using any written or verbal form. This documentation is shared with the student and the student is encouraged to discuss the issue with the course instructor.

**Step 2: Impact on grade**

Point deduction is applied to the student's professionalism grade in accordance with the grading procedure outlined by the course instructor in the course syllabus. The student and the instructor may identify a course of action to resolve the concern.

**Step 3: Recommendation for change in program status**

A student that has not demonstrated acceptable levels of professional conduct may be placed on academic probation and/or dismissed from the program.

F. Professional Activity Expectations

Your participation in professional development activities is important now and once you embark on your career. Professional development goes hand in hand with behaving as a professional and succeeding in a career as a healthcare provider. In the PTA program you will be required to participate in at least 40 hours of approved activities throughout the curriculum. There are two categories that must be met within the total number of hours, 20 hours must fall under the General/Community category and the other 20 hours must fall under the Healthcare category. This participation will be graded as part of PHT 2931 in your final spring semester. The hours may be completed at any time during the course of the program.

- All activities must be approved prior to the day the activity is scheduled
  - 20 Hours in General Category – This category would include general community events and activities.
  - 20 Hours in Healthcare Category – This category must relate to PTA program outcomes with respect to volunteer experience, which will likely require supervision by program faculty.

- All students are required to attend the PTA program pinning ceremony during their freshmen year. (Note: This event does not typically count toward service hours.)
- The general category requirement may be met with any combination of at least 4 activities, but one activity must include interprofessional collaboration, leadership, community outreach, and professional advocacy. (For the general category, the student may not complete all 20 hours at one activity; there is a limit of five hours that can be recorded per activity, unless prior permission is granted from core faculty.)
- The student must provide proof of participation to the instructor. (activity log, agenda, flyer, signed by the individual in charge/supervising the event.)
- Any required service learning activity may or may not count toward your required hours and is at the discretion of the instructor.
- If three write-ups are accrued in any PHT class, an additional 5 hours of service will be required.
- For each unexcused absence, an additional 5 hours of service will be required.
- The student is responsible for maintaining all documented hours. The hours must be presented in a portfolio during PHT 2931.
- Failure to present required hours during PHT 2931 will result in an incomplete for the course and will impact graduation.

## Part-Time Work

The Physical Therapist Assistant program has an intensive curriculum designed for professional preparation to work in a variety of settings. It will demand many hours of study and skill practice on the part of the student. It is strongly advised that students do not hold more than minimal hours of part-time employment during the time they are enrolled in the program. Although the college recognizes the fact that employment may be necessary, a full-time student is expected to put full-time effort into their studies. During the second year of the program (August-September; January-April ) there is little time for paid employment because students are completing clinical experiences for 35-40

hours per week. Plan ahead and set some money aside to carry you through these few months.

## Financial Aid

Gulf Coast State College offers an extensive program of aid to students with documented need. Additional opportunities exist for others. Those substantially aided are expected to be at least half (six or more hours) enrolled students. Several programs provide limited aid to less than half-time students. A number of scholarships are awarded each year to students with special talents and to those who have achieved academically. Information can be obtained from the Financial Aid Office and the various academic divisions.

Students are encouraged to apply as soon as possible during the spring and summer preceding the beginning of the academic year in which they wish aid. Applications are accepted in some programs as late as April of the ongoing academic year. Do not assume that you are too late in applying. Ask the Financial Aid Office. Apply early--some deadlines occur during the spring before school starts.

## Counseling and Advising

- A. Counseling services related to testing, placement, academic adjustment, or personal problems are integral functions of the Counseling Center. Counseling is considered personal in nature and care is taken to insure the confidentiality of contacts between counselors and students. If you are having problems succeeding in a course, please visit a counselor. A plan can be developed that will put you back on the road to success. Whether your problem is academic or personal the counselors in the Counseling Center are available to help you. The Counseling Center is located in the Student Union East.
- B. Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor. The program encourages an open-door policy with respect to student/faculty communication. Plan to see your faculty (academic) advisor at least once each semester for review of academic progress in the classroom and clinic and for program advising, assistance and support.

**It is required that you meet with your faculty advisor a minimum of two times throughout the program, once in the second semester and again in the fourth semester.** There is a form that needs to be signed by your program advisor prior to registration for the third and fifth semesters respectively. These forms will need to be submitted with your professional portfolio as part of a course requirement for PHT 2931.

Problems, complaints and concerns should be shared with your faculty advisor. Special problems and unforeseen circumstances relative to graduation should be called to the attention of the Program Coordinator.

## Dress Code

- A. Lecture classes: It is expected that students will wear clothes that do not cause any undue classroom interruption to the teaching/learning process. In addition, when there are guest speakers, a PTA uniform/professional attire must be worn as indicated by the instructor.
- B. Laboratory classes: Laboratory dress consists of shoes (with non-slip soles), socks, shorts, and a GCSC PTA T-shirt. Clothes such as sweat suits may be worn over lab attire when the student is not practicing skills. Shoes must be worn except when necessary to remove them during practice. Laboratory dress for all labs is expected unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Students may not be admitted to lab without appropriate dress. Laboratory time is not available for changing clothes. Arrive at the lab, on time and appropriately dressed. Special clothing requirements may be necessary (such as bathing suits for aquatic therapy) and you will be advised of these requirements by the instructor.
- C. Clinical dress code: see dress code, under Clinical Policies.

## General Class/Laboratory Procedures

- A. Breaks are provided between classes and during classes as necessary.
- B. Family and friends are not allowed in class sessions or in practice sessions in the laboratory due to safety and liability considerations.
- C. Students may practice procedures in the laboratory when it is not being used for class. When a student is practicing in the laboratory, a faculty member must be present in the Physical Therapist Assistant Department to provide supervision.
- D. Should an accident occur during class or laboratory instruction, the student must fill out the appropriate accident form with the course instructor, within 48-72 hours. If appropriate forms are not filled out and filed within 30 days of the incident, it may affect liability insurance coverage for the student.

As students at Gulf Coast State College, Physical Therapist Assistant students are subject to all rules and regulations of the college. Any alleged infractions, as outlined in the [GCSC Student Handbook](#) will be reported to the Discipline Committee for possible disciplinary action as provided in the college policy.

## Problem Resolution Procedure

The Problem Resolution Procedure is an orderly process for the student to present their problems, complaints, suggestions or ideas to the faculty. In turn, the procedure provides faculty with an opportunity to listen to and address students' concerns.

1. A problem is any matter of concern to a student.
2. This resolution procedure is not a substitute for informal, one-to-one conversations between faculty and students. This should always be the first step in resolving a problem, but if, due to circumstances, the usual avenues of discussion are ineffective or insufficient, a more formalized approach may be necessary.

### Procedure:

- Step 1:** The student discusses the problem with the clinical instructor or the faculty advisor as soon as possible after the problem arises. The faculty advisor listens to the student's version of the problem, conducts a speedy and thorough investigation of the situation and meets again with the student to discuss the resolution.
- Step 2:** If the student is not satisfied by the resolution of Step 1 or if the resolution requires action beyond the authority of the faculty advisor, the faculty advisor and the student will meet with the Chair of Health Sciences. At this meeting, the problem, again, will be thoroughly explored and if possible, resolved.
- Step 3:** If the complaint or problem remains unresolved at this level, it should then be discussed with the Dean of Student Life in accordance with the grievance procedure outlined in the [GCSC Student Handbook](#).
- Note:** The student has the option to initiate the discussion at any step of the procedure - with the understanding that if the problem should properly be brought to the attention of a lower level, the problem will be referred back to the program faculty for initial review.

### Complaints

Written complaints help the program and college identify systemic problems and provide opportunities for improvement. Complaints may be submitted by students or members of the community. Complaints regarding the PTA program or program graduates should follow the GCSC Policy for written complaints as outlined below. Complaints initiated by persons other than students, will follow the same process as outlined for students.



Complaints regarding accreditation of the PTA program should be addressed to the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) through their website referenced in the last paragraph.

1. GCSC Procedure per [GCSC Student Handbook](#): Any written complaint, whether submitted as an email or in some other written form, will be accepted (from anyone) and acted upon as long as it contains the person's name, contact information and a general description of the problem. Complaints about the PTA program can be submitted to the PTA program coordinator, Dr. Melinda Cumbaa at [mcumbaa@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:mcumbaa@gulfcoast.edu), or to the division chair of Health Sciences, Mrs. Laura Justice at [ljustice@gulfcoast.edu](mailto:ljustice@gulfcoast.edu).
2. Following a thorough review of a complaint received, the college administrator will forward all written complaints, along with resolutions/responses, to the Dean of Student Life via the internet/web-based form. The administrator will maintain a copy of all complaints received within their respective departments, divisions. A copy will be maintained by the program coordinator for five years for analysis purposes.
3. The Dean of Student Life will review each complaint to determine whether:
  - complaints are being fairly and properly addressed
  - specific problems are occurring repeatedly and/or at multiple campuses and locations
  - changes or adjustments can be made to eliminate specific problems
  - repeated complaints indicate the need for review of a program or area
4. The Dean of Student Life will also analyze complaints annually (June 30) and provide a report to the Vice President of Academic Affairs. The annual report summarizes student complaints and recommends corrective action where needed. If the Vice President concurs with the recommended corrective action, the recommendation(s) will be forwarded to the appropriate administrator(s) for implementation.

The policy and procedures for handling complaints is available to internal and external stakeholders on the PTA program website, <https://www.gulfcoast.edu/academics/academic-division/health-sciences/physical-therapist-assistant/complaints.html>. The PTA Program Handbook and PTA Clinical Handbook also provide information on submitting complaints with respect to the program. Any written complaint received by program faculty should be forwarded to the PTA program coordinator. If the complaint is concerning the program coordinator, the division chair will also be notified. The program will consider three types of complaints: 1) those that may impact the institution/program with respect to set policies and procedures in the GCSC Student Handbook, 2) those that are specific to the PTA Program Handbook/Clinical Handbook policies and procedures, 3) those that do not fall into the category of due process. Complaints will be reviewed within the week

and addressed individually or during subsequent department/coordinator meetings as applicable. It is important to note that the purpose of the complaint process should be for improvement purposes, and retaliation will not be tolerated. The program coordinator and DCE maintain records of complaints received for analysis purposes and will submit the appropriate internal form as indicated by GCSC policy or as directed by the Dean of Student Services. If a complaint falls into the third category, the program coordinator will address the situation, and if warranted, will seek input from the Division Chair and/or Dean of Student Services to determine how to proceed.

In addition, 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 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. The mechanism through which the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) can act on concerns is through the formal complaint process. Information about CAPTE's formal complaint process can be found at the following link: <http://www.capteonline.org/Complaints/>

## Transfer Policy

Applicants who wish to transfer from another Physical Therapist Assistant program to the GCSC PTA program must 1) meet all current admission requirements, 2) apply by the May deadline prior to the Fall semester they wish to enter, 3) notify the coordinator in writing stating reason for transfer, 4) provide evidence of successful completion of previous core PTA courses from a CAPTE accredited program, and 5) provide a letter from the program chair stating that the student is in good academic/clinical standing and is eligible to return to the PTA program they are transferring from. Acceptance of any transfer student will be dependent upon available resources.

Transferability of GCSC PTA program to another institution will be dependent on the receiving institution. *Note: Due to a lack of uniformity for specific curriculum course content among PTA programs, most AS courses do not transfer very well between PTA programs.*

## Phone Calls

Permission must be obtained from the Program Coordinator for placing urgent and necessary calls on the program office phone. It is expected that discretion will be displayed in the use of the telephone and that this privilege will not be

abused. Cell phones may be used to enhance learning opportunities, but should be turned OFF when testing in both lecture and laboratory environments.

## **Student Bulletin Boards and/or online sources**

Information pertinent to Physical Therapist Assistant students will be posted on the student bulletin boards in classroom or on the cabinets above the sink in the lab. Each student is responsible for being aware of this information. Please check the bulletin boards or online sources (GCSC PTA Facebook page) frequently for new postings. Students are also responsible for checking emails connected with GCSC's online learning system for daily updates.

## **Licensing Examination**

Each state determines its own licensure or certification requirements to be eligible to practice as a PTA. It is mandatory for graduates of the program to become licensed if they wish to practice in the state of Florida and in a majority of the other states. There is a national licensing examination, administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT). It is recommended that graduates schedule their licensing exam soon after graduation, while academic material is still fresh. There is also a jurisprudence exam required for licensure in the state of Florida. Licensing is expensive and fees for testing and licensure may run between \$700 - \$900. You should start saving for these costs at the beginning of the program so that lack of fees will not be a deterrent to taking the licensure exam following graduation. The longer you wait the more arduous the process of preparation.

Additional recent requirements for licensure are included in Appendices C, D, & I.

When you make application for your Florida license, you will be required to complete a section on the application relative to a prior arrest record and explain any convictions. If you have a record, you may be required to produce court records regarding the incident and in some cases appear before the board. Depending on the resolution of your case, you could be denied a PTA license. You should check with the State Board of Physical Therapy if you have a concern in this area before investing two years in your educational program. See Appendix I for specific requirements.

## **American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)**

Students are eligible for student affiliate membership in the APTA. Forms for application are made available at the beginning of the year. This is an important association that advocates for the physical therapy profession. They also provide resources to members and facilitate networking within the profession.

Participation in events and meetings sponsored by the Northwest District - Florida Physical Therapy Association (FPTA) are encouraged. Information for scheduled events may be posted on the Program's Facebook page or on the FPTA website.

## Current Address

Students are required to inform the program coordinator of any address or phone number changes as they occur. This is necessary so that you can be contacted in case of emergencies or in the event of unpredicted schedule changes.

Please give address and phone number changes to the coordinator or to the PTA Administrative Assistant in Health Sciences room 309. You must also change your address in the office of admissions.

When you are on clinical affiliations and/or off campus, please let family (children, spouse) and friends know where they can reach you. It is not the responsibility of college staff to take messages for you or to track you down in case of an emergency.

## Student Files – Privacy and Data Security/Continuity Plan

The college provides many technology resources for employees and students in support of the mission of GCSC. Resources are expected to be used in a manner which is responsible, efficient, ethical, legal, and in accordance to college policies. Employees and students will accept these policies and guidelines as the condition for using college resources. (*Manual of Policy/Internal Management Memoranda 5.063*)

Protected Health Information (PHI) is any information about a person's health status that can be linked to a specific individual (medical record or payment history). PHI is protected by the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and includes paper documents, photographs, radiographs, and electronic data (ePHI). Personally Identifiable Information (PII) includes the individual's name plus one or more other identifying bits of information (social security number, credit or debit card number, driver's license number, etc.). Health Sciences employees are responsible for completing annual SANS training relative to HIPAA, PHI, and PII. Should the program handle or retain physical copies of PHI or PII, it must be secured in a locked cabinet or container in the faculty member's locked office space. Electronic PHI/PII should not be maintained outside of the approved application; if necessary, the data should be encrypted and stored in access folder on the R:drive. Do not save PHI or PII to removable media as these devices can be lost.

- **Program applications** are stored in locked file cabinets in the program Coordinator and/ or Academic Program Specialist's offices.

- All Health Sciences programs utilize a third-party vendor **to manage PHI** that is required for program admissions. The vendor's security standards have been reviewed and approved by the GCSC ITS department.
- The **Physical Therapist Assistant program** periodically offers treatment to faculty and community members for demonstration purposes only, as it applies to the curriculum. The program currently uses paper documentation and stores patient records in a locked file cabinet in the program coordinator's office. Each patient and physical therapist assistant student in the program signs a Risk Agreement Form prior to receiving physical therapy services. These records are maintained for seven years following treatment per R. 1B-24.003(1) (d), Florida Administrative Code, General Schedule 4 (GS4), item #80, then shredded.

In the event of a suspected security incident or breach, the Program Coordinator must be notified immediately. They will then notify the Division Chair and the Chief Information Officer for directives regarding legal obligations. If you receive a request from an individual pertaining to PHI or PII, do not grant the request and explain that the Chief Information Officer must handle all such requests. The Chief Information Officer should be consulted regarding any HIPAA, PHI, or PII related questions.

In the event of a disaster, the Chief Information Officer shall establish and implement procedures necessary to restore any data lost or suspected to be lost. Procedures will be established to enable operation and continuation of critical business processes.

### **Student Records/FERPA:**

All student records are confidential and employees are expected to comply with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). Students must sign a standard form authorizing the use of the social security number for purposes within the department (applying for license verification, insurance, etc). All records are kept in a locked filing cabinet according to the established time frame, flagged for destruction when warranted, and disposal documentation maintained indefinitely.

## **Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy**

(For a copy of the complete policy, see Appendix F).

In compliance with the Drug Free School and Communities Act Amendment of 1989, Gulf Coast State College:

. . .prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by all students and employees.

. . .enforces sanctions, including those applicable under local, state, and federal law, for unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol, including but not limited to suspension, expulsion, termination of

employment, and referral for prosecution which may result in arrest, appropriate fines, and imprisonment.

. . . encourages anyone with a drug or alcohol problem to seek help at one of the local agencies.

Any evidence of suspected use of drugs or alcohol, which might impair the individual's ability to safely provide care to patients in a clinical setting, is cause for immediate withdrawal from clinical training. Students are subject to all drug/alcohol use policies of the affiliating agency including mandatory random drug testing. Refusal to comply with the agency's policy is cause for dismissal from the clinical experience.

## Background Check Information

Gulf Coast State College ( GCSC) students who are granted conditional acceptance into a Health Sciences or Nursing program must receive a satisfactory criminal background check prior to final acceptance into the program. The background check will be scheduled and performed at the discretion of the division and instructions on how to complete the background check will be sent by the program coordinator.

Please Note: Criminal background checks performed through other agencies will not be accepted. Also, be aware that clinical agencies may require an additional background check prior to clinical access. Although background checks are required before program entry, it is possible to graduate from a program at GCSC, but be denied licensure or the opportunity to take the licensure exam because of an unfavorable background check. Even if the student has been accepted into and completed a program at GCSC, this does not guarantee authorization for licensure or eligibility to take the licensure exam. Those authorizations are granted by the governing professional licensure boards in the state ( Florida Board of Physical Therapy for PTA graduates). **Let this serve as notification that Gulf Coast State College has no authority over any state level medical licensure board and cannot be held responsible if the student is accepted into or completes a Health Sciences or Nursing program and subsequently is denied authorization to take the program specific licensure exam due to criminal background information.** Each applicant/student must consider how their personal history may affect the ability to meet clinical requirements, sit for various licensure exams, and ultimately gain employment. You may visit the [Florida Department of Health](#) website for more information regarding licensure.

All program students will be asked to read, review and sign the Health Sciences and Nursing Divisions Acknowledgement of Background Check Information Form (Appendix I) during program orientation.

## GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS WITH ARREST RECORDS:

- A. All applications to the Florida Board of Physical Therapy (FBPT) for licensure, which indicate an arrest record by the candidate, are individually reviewed by the FBPT. It may be necessary for the applicant to appear before the Board at a regularly scheduled meeting to determine licensure eligibility.
- B. The Florida Board of Physical Therapy will not accept calls from physical therapist assistant students with arrest records to determine if you are eligible for licensure. The determination can only be made after graduation, when your application and all supporting documentation is received and reviewed by the Board. Please read the following information carefully: Any student who has been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere, or guilty to, any offense under the provision of 456.0635 (see below) may be disqualified from admission to any Health Sciences program.

In addition to these specific convictions, there are other crimes which may disqualify applicants from entering into the Health Sciences programs and/or clinical rotations.

The statute listed below can also be found online at:

[http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String= URL=040 0-0499/0456/Sections/0456.0635.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String= URL=040 0-0499/0456/Sections/0456.0635.html)

456.0635 Health care fraud; disqualification for license, certificate, or registration.

- (1) Health care fraud in the practice of a health care profession is prohibited.
- (2) Each board within the jurisdiction of the department, or the department if there is no board, shall refuse to admit a candidate to any examination and refuse to issue a license, certificate, or registration to any applicant if the candidate or applicant or any principal, officer, agent, managing employee, or affiliated person of the applicant:
  - (a) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under chapter 409, chapter 817, or chapter 893, or a similar felony offense committed in another state or jurisdiction, unless the candidate or applicant has successfully completed a drug court program for that felony and provides proof that the plea has been withdrawn or the charges have been dismissed. Any such conviction or plea shall exclude the applicant or candidate from licensure, examination, certification, or registration unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended:
    - 1. For felonies of the first or second degree, more than 15 years before the date of application.
    - 2. For felonies of the third degree, more than 10 years before the date of application, except for felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6) (a).
    - 3. For felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6) (a), more than 5 years before the date of application;

- (b) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under 21 U.S.C. ss. 801-970, or 42 U.S.C. ss. 1395-1396, unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended more than 15 years before the date of the application;
- (c) Has been terminated for cause from the Florida Medicaid program pursuant to s. 409.913, unless the candidate or applicant has been in good standing with the Florida Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years;
- (d) Has been terminated for cause, pursuant to the appeals procedures established by the state, from any other state Medicaid program, unless the candidate or applicant has been in good standing with a state Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years and the termination occurred at least 20 years before the date of the application; or
- (e) Is currently listed on the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General's List of Excluded Individuals and Entities, except when such applicant is listed solely based on a default or delinquency on a student loan as provided in s. 120.82.

This subsection does not apply to an applicant for renewal of licensure, certification, or registration who was arrested or charged with a felony specified in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) before July 1, 2009.

(4) Licensed health care practitioners shall report allegations of health care fraud to the department, regardless of the practice setting in which the alleged health care fraud occurred.

(5) The acceptance by a licensing authority of a licensee's relinquishment of a license which is offered in response to or anticipation of the filing of administrative charges alleging health care fraud or similar charges constitutes the permanent revocation of the license.

- C. IF THE APPLICANT COMMITS A FELONY OR MISDEMEANOR AFTER THE LICENSURE APPLICATION HAS BEEN SUBMITTED, THE APPLICANT MUST NOTIFY THE PTA COORDINATOR AND THE FLORIDA BOARD OF PHYSICAL THERAPY.
- D. Applicants to Gulf Coast State College's Health Science programs must be free of offenses that would disqualify one for employment in a health care or community health care agency. This policy is the result of requirements by clinical agencies which must comply with state and federal regulations. Each applicant must be screened through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE) and comparable checks from state(s) of prior residence. Other state and federal screenings that are required by the clinical agencies will be used in the physical therapist assistant program.
- E. An exemption from disqualification from the program can only be sought through



a college appeal process. Students should make their request for appeal in writing to the Division of Health Sciences – Chair of Health Sciences: 5230 West U.S. Highway 98, Panama City Florida 32401-1058.

- F. While enrolled in Gulf Coast State College Health Sciences Program/s, the student is also responsible for notifying the appropriate coordinator in the Health Sciences division of any arrests, regardless of adjudication, that occur after acceptance and during enrollment in that program.
- G. FAILURE TO PROMPTLY NOTIFY THE APPROPRIATE COORDINATOR SHALL BE GROUNDS FOR DISMISSAL FROM THE HEALTH SCIENCES PROGRAM ENROLLED. After admission into the program, the student must continue to remain free of convictions or if convicted and plead nolo contendere, the student may be subject to dismissal from the health sciences program enrolled.

## **Smoking Policy**

In accordance with GCSC's policy smoking is prohibited on campus beginning January 1, 2012. Violation of this policy may result in probation/suspension from the program.

## **Health and Wellness Policy**

As a future healthcare provider, it is important for students to remain healthy and protect themselves from infection, disease and injury. There are several Health Sciences Division policies and protocols in place to help students safely navigate through the PTA Program. It is important to read and adhere to each policy or guideline in the Health Sciences Division Infection Control Resources Manual (Appendix A). Below is a list of important applicable topics in this resource manual:

- Section 1 - Bloodborne Pathogens and Personal Protective Precautions
- Section 2 – Hazards of the Environment
- Section 3 – Needle Stick, Blood or Potentially Infectious Body Fluids Exposure Policy/Protocol
- Section 4 – Accident/Incident Report Forms
- Addendum 1 – HS COVID-19 Shared Commitment Protocol
  - A. CMS Interim Final Rule 2022
  - B. GCSC\_Medical Exemption Form (for clinical experiences)
  - C. GSCS\_Religious Exemption Form (for clinical experiences)
- Addendum 4 - Infectious Disease Reference Chart

# Appendices



**HEALTH SCIENCES DIVISION**

**NURSING DIVISION**

**INFECTION CONTROL RESOURCE MANUAL**

**2023-2024**

# Infection Control Manual Document

## Revision History

<b>Date</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Action</b>
July 2021	Infection Control Manual Created (Deborah S. Van Zant, RN- BSN Student and Sandra M. Zapata, RN -BSN Student)	Reviewed
August 2021	Manual Reviewed - Health Sciences Division Chair, Laura Justice/Health Sciences Faculty	Approved and Adopted
August 2021	Infection Control Manual uploaded to Health Sciences Central	Implemented
July 2022	Reviewed and Revised Laura Justice, Health Sciences Division Chair Dr. Keri Matheus, Nursing Division Chair	Revisions Adopted
August 2022	Infection Control Manual uploaded to Health Sciences Central	Implemented
July 2023	Reviewed and Revised Laura Justice, Health Sciences Division Chair Dr. Keri Matheus, Nursing Division Chair	Revisions Adopted
August 2023	Infection Control Manual uploaded to Central Commons (CANVAS)	Implemented

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# INTRODUCTION

When one elects to become a health care provider, one does so with the understanding that all types of patients will need health services and should be administered to in a spirit of love, concern, and compassion. All people have a right to quality health care and to the provision of that care by people who hold no discriminatory attitudes towards certain people or illnesses. One should consider these conditions when making the decision to become a health care provider.

Recognizing that the health care field is subject to certain risks, the student has a right to assistance by responsible faculty in becoming prepared to care for a high-risk patient. It is also the students' responsibility to be prepared themselves and to accept individual responsibility for protecting themselves and clients under their care. Additionally, and after consultation with the supervising faculty, students have the option to refuse situations or clients that they feel are a risk to themselves, either through exposure to the patient or if they feel unprepared to care properly for a patient.

During their education, the faculty will provide students with the instructions and with written policies on infection control within each department. A student is expected to follow current guidelines for universal precautions recommended by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) when providing direct care in a clinical setting. Supervising faculty will also evaluate each student for clinical competency and knowledge in the management of high-risk patients to ensure that a student is able to perform procedures correctly. If the evaluation indicates that a student needs more training or assistance, the faculty will provide this.

Students will be continually monitored during clinical assignments and the faculty will serve as supervisors and resource personnel. Students will attend program specific orientation and complete the following Healthcare Interprofessional Training courses: HIPAA, HIV/AIDS, Infection Control, Prevention of Medical Errors, Airborne Precautions with Mask Fit, Interprofessional Education, Human Trafficking, and Domestic Violence. The clinical agencies provide appropriate safety equipment except for protective eyewear. OSHA approved protective eyewear is available in the GCSC Bookstore as well as other vendors.

## **SECTION 1 – BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS AND PERSONAL PROTECTIVE PRECAUTIONS**

- 1) To standardize the delivery of health care to all patients and to minimize the risk of transmission of blood borne pathogens, Health Sciences and Nursing students will:
  - a) Be taught basic skills in isolation techniques, injections, according to CDC specifications, and handling of body fluids in the skills laboratory before actual clinical practice of these skills on a patient.
  - b) Be provided classroom instruction related to treatment, modes of transmission and prevention.
  - c) Receive clinical agency orientation on specific policies for blood and body fluid precautions.
  - d) Utilize blood and body fluid precautions consistently on all patients.
  - e) Wear gloves when touching blood and body fluids, mucous membranes or non-intact skin of patients, or when touching items or surfaces soiled with blood or body fluids including performing venipuncture and other vascular access.
  - f) Wash hands immediately before gloving and again after removing gloves. Hands should also be washed immediately and thoroughly when contaminated with blood or body fluids.
  - g) Change gloves between each patient.
  - h) Wear gowns or plastic aprons, masks, and protective eyewear for any procedure likely to generate airborne droplets, result in or prone to splashing of blood or body fluids.
  - i) Not recap used needles, purposely bent or broken by hand, removed from disposable syringes, or manipulated by hand and use only approved needle recapping devices.
  - j) Disposable needles, syringes, scalpel blades and other sharp items should be placed in puncture resistant containers for disposal (Sharps Containers).
  - k) Place soiled linen in a bag and tie closed. Linen should be handled as little as possible with minimum agitation.
  - l) Wear gloves for post-delivery care of the umbilical cord and until all blood and amniotic fluids have been cleaned from the infant's skin.
  - m) Be aware of and follow isolation/labeling on patient's room.

- n) Place specimens of blood and body fluids in a leak-proof container. When collecting the specimen, care should be taken to prevent contamination of the outside of the container. All containers should then be placed in a zip-lock bag.
  - o) Use mouthpieces and resuscitation bags in place of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.
  - p) Not care for any patient requiring the specially fitted HEPA Mask for care (Airborne Isolation, Specifically TB)
  - q) Report alterations in health status, such as, fractures, surgery, seizure activity, or exacerbation of chronic illness / disease, to the program coordinator. Additional documentation of fitness for practice from a healthcare provider may be required to be submitted before the student can return to the clinical setting.
  - r) Update the Report of Physical Examination Form and Technical Standards Attestation annually. The student is responsible for reporting any major health changes as well as maintaining and updating their file with current CPR and Annual TB/Mantoux documentation in the compliance management software designated by the program and/or clinical facilities.
  - s) Follow current guidelines for universal precautions recommended by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) when providing direct care in a clinical setting.
- 2) Hepatitis B Vaccination:
- a) In accordance with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines, Health Science Division and Nursing students should be immunized against Hepatitis B Virus and demonstrate proof of immunity or formally decline vaccination (CDC, n.d.).
  - b) Students who decline to be vaccinated are required to sign a formal declination waiver form.
- 3) Adult Immunizations:
- a) Students are required to demonstrate proof of immunity or be immunized against other infectious diseases (CDC guidelines for adult immunizations) as part of their preparation for clinical training (CDC, n.d.).



- b) Annual Tuberculosis Test: Students are required to receive a TB / Mantoux skin test and submit the results prior to the first clinical day of the semester on an annual (yearly) basis. TB forms are available from the program coordinator or the Health Sciences /Nursing Office Administration and contain additional information regarding those students who have tested positive for TB in the past or have an allergy. Students who fail to maintain current updates may be dismissed from the Health Science Division/ Nursing program.
- 4) Students should always be aware of what is going on around them, but here are some precautionary measures that can be taken to prevent accidents from occurring.
  - a) Precautions to be taken to avoid contact with body fluids and needle sticks. The best way is to utilize your Personal Protective Equipment (PPE). Some examples of PPE include gowns, gloves, masks, or goggles.
  - b) The type of PPE appropriate for a given task is dependent upon the degree of exposure reasonably anticipated. If the student is unsure of which PPE to use for a particular case, he/she must consult a class instructor.
  - c) General Rules on PPE:
    - i) The student must be trained to use the equipment properly.
    - ii) PPE must be appropriate and readily available for the task.
    - iii) Appropriate PPE must be used in performing each task.
    - iv) Equipment must be free of physical flaws that could compromise safety.
    - v) PPE must fit properly.
    - vi) If when wearing PPE, it is penetrated by blood or other potentially infected materials, remove it as soon as feasible.
    - vii) Before leaving the work area, remove all protective equipment and place it in the designated area or container for washing, decontamination, or disposal.
  - d) Exception to the PPE Rules:
    - i) If using PPE would prevent proper delivery of healthcare or jeopardize the safety of the student or personnel, its use may be temporarily and briefly abandoned, only in an emergency.
- 5) The student will:
  - a) Properly dispose of any contaminated materials.
  - b) Place reusable items such as linen in the appropriate receptacle for the protection of the persons handling laundry.

- c) Dispose of contaminated disposable equipment properly as per clinical education site department policy.
- d) Dispose of any used or opened “sharps” considered contaminated and place in an appropriate puncture-resistant container immediately after use.
- e) Disinfect all equipment and environmental working surfaces as soon as possible after contact with potentially infectious materials.

## **SECTION 2 – HAZARDS OF THE ENVIRONMENT**

Injuries and disease in the workplace can occur for a variety of reasons including fatigue, ignorance, haste, defective equipment, carelessness, clutter, crowding, inadequate lighting or improper use of storage. There is no substitute for the individual's personnel safety consciousness in creating a safe working environment.

### **THE FOLLOWING GENERAL SAFETY PRACTICES WILL BE FOLLOWED:**

- Entrances/exits will not be blocked.
- Hallways will not be used as storage areas for boxes, etc.
- Burned out light bulbs should be reported immediately and replaced as soon as possible.
- All personnel will be alert for damaged/defective electrical plugs/outlets/cords and report problems to the Program Coordinator or Division Chair.
- Potential for back injury or muscle strain.
  - It is the student's responsibility to follow all protocols of safe body mechanics including assistive devices when lifting, pushing, or standing for long periods of time.
  - When lifting heavy objects, ask for help. Use appropriate body mechanics for the situation.
- Gas cylinders will be stored in the rack(s) designed for that purpose or secured to the wall by a belt system.
- Avoid undo haste that jeopardizes safety. DO NOT RUN.
- Keep drawers and cabinets closed unless being used. Disinfect work surfaces using disinfectant daily.
- Eating, drinking, or smoking in any area other than a designated area for either eating/drinking or smoking is prohibited.
- **SMOKING AREAS:** Smoke from tobacco is a documented health hazard to both the smoker and those nearby. Also recognizing our responsibility as health care providers, we have an obligation to present a healthful image to our patients. For these reasons, the college has adopted a **SMOKE FREE CAMPUPS POLICY** (GCSC Student Handbook, 2023-2024).

- 1) **RADIOLOGY:** Ionizing radiation is a known health hazard. Students will follow appropriate policy regarding limiting exposure to radiation hazards including wearing protective equipment as required. Students will not hold films for surgical exposure. Students will receive proper training regarding safety practices and is responsible for following practices. When not in use, the lead aprons will be hung on the rack(s) provided. Folding the aprons increases their chance of developing cracks, thereby decreasing their effectiveness. Students who are pregnant or think they might be must notify the instructor and follow appropriate operator safety policies.
- 2) **ANESTHETIC GASES:** Hazards are associated with the inhalation of anesthetic gases; scavenger systems are utilized in the facility to limit exposure to the gases. Acute exposure to high concentrations of Waste Anesthetic Gases (WAGs) can cause a narcotic effect resulting in reduced mental performance, audiovisual ability, and manual dexterity. Some studies have shown that chronic exposure to WAGs may increase the risk causing other health effects including reduced fertility, spontaneous abortion, an increase in birth defects, and neurological, renal, and liver disease. Students will be given instruction on the hazards and precautions associated with WAGs prior to laboratory or clinical practices.
- 3) **PREGNANCY AND STUDENTS:** It is the responsibility of the student who thinks they maybe or who becomes pregnant to inform the instructor of pregnancy status and obtain release from physician regarding possible limitations and health status It is the student's responsibility to monitor for possible exposure to any potentially known hazards including ionizing radiation, excuse self from case to prevent possible exposure when indicated, and notify instructor for reassignment to another area as approved by the physician's release document.
- 4) **EQUIPMENT OPERATION HAZARDS:** Operating procedures will be taught and a designated preceptor will monitor operation of these devices. Autoclaves and other hazardous equipment will be used only by those trained in their use. It is the responsibility of the student to utilize the appropriate safety precautions when operating or in the presence of any piece of equipment. Defective equipment will not be used. It will be reported to the lab faculty.

- 5) **LASERS:** Students must wear appropriate eyewear and follow all precautions for the type of laser being utilized. In addition, due to cellular contents within the plume, students must wear a laser mask for an Electro-Surgical Unit (ESU) removal of all condylomas, warts and/or whenever a laser is in use.
- 6) **FIRE PROTECTION:** All personnel will be familiar with the evacuation plan and location of the fire extinguishers. Trash and other combustibles will not be allowed to accumulate in the clinical/laboratory/classroom/office setting. Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the George Tapper Health Science Building. Flammables and caustic materials should be stored in a flame retardant metal cabinet that meets Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) standards. In case of fire, call 911, then report it to the college operator, and get the fire extinguisher from the hallway nearest the area.
- 7) **INSTRUMENTS:**
- a) Remove all disposable scalpel blades and needles prior to disposal of drapes into appropriate labeled sharps containers. Handle sharps with closed instruments such as a needle holder or hemostat only and be alert to the potential for needle stick injury at all times. Do not recap or repackage or bend or remove by hand. Package or separate sharp instruments from all others to prevent accidental injury. Perform the Scoop technique –one handed can be used to recap if necessary. Use smooth motion away from body during removal of caps or blades (do not attempt to control – may jerk hand and bring it back into the sharp item).
  - b) Keep instrument tray orderly, return items to their place. Immediately remove scalpel or other sharps from sterile drape/patient field to the Mayo to prevent accidental sick. Utilize neutral zone when possible.
  - c) Store sharps and loaded needle holders in such a way that it cannot accidentally perforate drapes or be exposed to the team's moving hand. Position sharp items so that they are in the area of least traffic (hands moving back and forth increase potential injury).
  - d) Disinfect all used instruments and supplies after each surgery including mock surgeries in the lab. Sterilize as appropriate.
  - e) Use only packaged sterile instruments and supplies for patients. INSPECT PRIOR TO USE.

- 8) UTILITY GLOVES:** Wear utility gloves to handle contaminated items; return contaminated items to the designated area in enclosed containers. Process and package instruments and equipment according to instructions given. Wash after removal.
- 9) CHEMICAL DISINFECTANTS:** Adhere to manufacturer's directions and reference the Safety Data Sheets (SDS). Instruction will be provided regarding the interpretation of SDS prior to use in the laboratory or clinical setting. The location of the SDS book will be disclosed to students.
- 10) RESPONSIBILITY:** In addition, workers/students are exposed to other hazards from mechanical devices, noxious vapors, heat, caustic chemicals, latex allergies, and high-pressure gas lines, among others. It is the responsibility of all staff and students to fully understand the hazards associated with the lab, classroom, or workplace and how to avoid/prevent a safety or health problem from occurring. If you have any questions, have them clarified immediately by one of the instructors or monitors. An eyewash station is in each lab and clinical area so chemicals coming in contact with the eyes can be flushed immediately. Proper use of the eyewash station will be demonstrated in the laboratory setting.

### SECTION 3 – NEEDLE STICK, BLOOD OR POTENTIALLY INFECTIOUS BODY FLUIDS EXPOSURE POLICY/PROTOCOL

- 1) It is the policy of Gulf Coast State College that any student who sustains a needle stick or other wound resulting in exposure to blood or bodily fluids while engaged in a college sponsored educational program should receive prompt medical attention, including counseling, prophylactic drug treatment, and baseline and follow up laboratory values, as necessary. In accordance with this policy, the following procedures must be followed by students who have been exposed to blood/body fluids.
  - a) Drug prophylaxis is time sensitive; therefore, the student must immediately seek help from the appropriate supervising personnel. The student and faculty member will fill out the incident reports at both the facility and Gulf Coast State College. Faculty will report the incident immediately to his/her immediate supervisor.
  - b) The employee/student, notified supervisor, or faculty will initiate an incident report (FLORIDA COLLEGE SYSTEM RISK MANAGEMENT CONSORTIUM, ACCIDENT-INCIDENT FORM), detailing the particulars of the event, completing the appropriate sections on the form, and evaluating the circumstances of the accident. This form must be signed by faculty, the injured person, and a witness. If the injured person declines medical treatment, this should be documented and signed by that individual. The original form(s) will be sent to the Vice President of Administration and Finance Office. A copy of the form(s) will be retained in the office of the Administrative Specialist of Health Sciences/Nursing on the second floor of the Health Science Building (Room 200). A copy of the original form will be placed in the student's records. *For dental incidents, a copy of the original form should be placed in the BLOODBORNE PATHOGENS notebook that is kept locked in the program Coordinators office(s).*
  - c) Initial Wound Care/First Aid for exposure
    - i) Express blood from puncture wound
    - ii) Clean wound with soap and water
    - iii) Flush mucous membranes with water or saline
  - d) It is recommended that appropriate medical follow-up be obtained.
    - i) **Students** who sustain a needle stick or exposure will go to the medical facility where the incident occurred. If the student is "off-site" then the student will go to either hospital or medical facility in Bay/Franklin/Gulf County for the appropriate

consultation and testing. These services will be administered by **A-G Administrators for QBE** and student enrollment is arranged by the college. Students are issued a card at the beginning of the fall semester and/or when they begin the Health Science program. Students should be instructed to always carry the card with him/her while participating in college sponsored educational programs.

- ii) **Faculty** who sustain a needle stick or exposure and the source person will go to any Medical Facility for the appropriate tests and counseling at no charge. In addition to submitting a completed Accident/Incident Report, the employee is responsible for contacting Human Resources for Workers Compensation processing.
- e) The facility director in charge at the facility where the needle stick or exposure occurred will obtain permission from source patient for blood testing by contacting the attending physician of the source patient.
  - i) The student will NOT ask the source patient for permission to provide blood for testing. It is against Federal and state laws for the student to request permission of the source patient.
- f) The student will be counseled and advised regarding post exposure prophylaxis, if necessary.
- g) If indicated, the student will be given a starter pack of prophylactic drugs which are recommended in accordance with the current guidelines of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention. Student Accident insurance covers the cost for the drugs.
- e) Baseline blood tests will be drawn on the student in accordance with the facility's policy and the current CDC and Prevention recommendations.
- f) Using current CDC and Prevention recommendations, re-testing should occur as deemed necessary by the primary care provider.
- g) See information provided in:
  - i) OSHA Regulations for Management and follow-up after exposure to blood
  - ii) Management of persons exposed to blood
  - iii) Post exposure protocol for occupational exposure to blood borne diseases
- h) All procedures, testing, and results WILL REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL.
- i) The facility and personnel involved will evaluate the root cause of the incident to discover policy changes that may help to prevent further occurrences.



## **SECTION 4 – ACCIDENT/INCIDENT REPORT FORMS**

### **1) ACCIDENTS/INCIDENTS INVOLVING STUDENTS AND/OR PATIENTS IN CLINICAL SITUATIONS**

#### **a) ACCIDENTS INVOLVING STUDENTS**

##### **i) Forms to be completed are:**

- (1) Accident – Incident Report Form (sections 1,4,5,6,7); provide specific details regarding the incident in section 6, especially the use of personal protective equipment (PPE).
- (2) A-G Administrators Student Accident Claim Form
- (3) See Attachment 1 when immediate medical treatment is required, see attachment 2 when immediate treatment is not required.

#### **b) ACCIDENTS INVOLVING PATIENTS (ALLIED HEALTH INCIDENT)**

##### **i) Complete an Accident - Incident Report Form**

- (1) Complete sections 1,4,5,6,7.
- (2) Forward the completed form to the Chair of the Health Science or Nursing Division.

##### **ii) Complete an Allied Health Incident Form**

- (1) Complete ALL sections.
- (2) Forward form with a completed Accident – Incident Report Form to the Chair of the Health Sciences or Nursing Division.

#### **c) INCIDENTS INVOLVING STUDENTS (Harassment, Report of Stolen Personal Property, etc.)**

##### **i) Complete an Accident – Incident Report Form**

- (1) Complete sections 1,4,5,6,7; provide specific details regarding the incident in section 6.
- (2) Forward the completed form to the Chair of the Health Science or Nursing Division immediately.
- (3) An incident may require an investigation by Human Resources or Student Development; therefore, it is important all information be reported on the Accident – Incident Report Form.

#### **d) INCIDENTS INVOLVING STOLEN COLLEGE PROPERTY**

##### **i) Complete an Accident – Incident Report Form**

(1) Complete sections 1,3,5,6,7.

(2) Forward the completed form to the chair of the Health Sciences or Nursing Division.

## **2) FOR STUDENT INJURY REQUIRING IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION**

- a) Assess the situation – (this is a judgement call on the instructor’s part). If the student needs immediate medical attention, CALL 911. If using a campus phone, CALL 9-911.
- b) CALL HOSPITAL to which student will be transported to let them know student is coming. Give the hospital the following information regarding the student’s insurance: Policyholder: Florida Colleges System Risk Management Consortium. Claims must be mailed to: A-G Administrators, Post Office Box 979, Valley Forge, PA 19482. Tell the student to present the insurance information card to hospital staff upon arrival (if possible), but let the student know you will call ahead.
- c) Immediately notify the Office of the Division Chair who will notify administration.
- d) You must complete sections 1,4,5,6, and 7 of the Accident – Incident Report Form. You sign as supervisor, and the student as claimant. If the student is unable to sign, indicate this, and get the form to the Division Chair’s office as soon as possible. It is very important that you ensure thorough completion of the Accident – Incident Report Form. Witnesses and their pertinent information must be obtained immediately while they are present. Specific details (#6) of the accident are also very important (i.e. how did it occur?). Example: Simply indicating possible exposure to TB does not describe how the accident occurred. Give the fully completed Accident – Incident Form to the Health Science Division Administration Assistant as soon as possible.
- e) In addition, an A-G Administrators Student Accident Claim Form needs to be completed. As soon as the student is able, he/she must complete and sign the claim form. The form is then to be forwarded to the Division Chair for review/signature and forwarding to the Vice President of Administration & Finance Office. Medical providers cannot be paid until the A-G Administrators Student Accident Claim Form has been processed.

## **3) FOR STUDENT INJURY NOT REQUIRING IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION**

- a) Whether treatment is required or not, the Accident – Incident Report Form must always be completed, as it provides specific information for college records and state reporting.
- b) The A-G Administrators Student Accident Claim Form will also have to be submitted for arrival at the insurance company’s office in Valley Forge, PA within 30 days of the incident if the student thinks they may have to seek attention at a future date. The student

must incur first medical expense within 26 weeks after the accident for coverage to apply for Accident Medical Benefit.

## ACCIDENT – INCIDENT REPORT INSTRUCTIONS

This form is used to notify the Florida College System Risk Management Consortium (FCSRMC) of accidents/incidents/occurrences for review as possible claims. This form should be used to document the following types of occurrences: Accidents, Injuries, Crimes/Theft, Property Damage (College Owned), Property Damage (Non-College Owned), Internet Crisis (stolen, lost, or hacked personal information), Equipment Breakdown (fka Boiler and Machinery), Student Accidents, Athletic Injuries, and Allied Health (Professional Liability Claims). **Please note, Worker's Compensation claims are not reported to the FCSRMC using this form. The College's Worker's Compensation Coordinator should submit all claims via the dedicated reporting line: 877-842-6843.**

### 1. LOCATION AND DATE OF INCIDENT/OCCURRENCE

COLLEGE: Clearly check the FCSRMC abbreviation for your college.

CAMPUS/LOCATION CODE: Please use the campus codes as noted on the College's Property Listings on file with the FCSRMC.

LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE (BE SPECIFIC): Provide campus name and building name or number. If accident occurred off campus, provide street address and city.

### 2. INJURED EMPLOYEE

OCCUPATION & DEPARTMENT: List the occupation and department in which the employee is primarily employed.

PART OF BODY INJURED: Loosely identify the part of the Employee's body which has been injured (i.e. wrist, ankle, back etc.)

TYPE OF INJURY: Loosely identify the manner in which the Employee has been injured (i.e. cut, sting, bruise etc.)

DATE INJURY FIRST REPORTED: If the injury was originally reported on a date different from the date of completing the A/I, please list the original date the injury was reported.

### 3. PROPERTY (COLLEGE OWNED)

IDENTIFY THE DAMAGED/LOST PROPERTY: Describe the damaged or stolen college-owned property. Enter information such as: "Flood damage to 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Building K; or 1998 white Mercedes driver side door; or Glass broken in classroom window; or IBM Pentium II computer, monitor, keyboard, and Hewlett-Packard LaserJet printer."

ESTIMATED COST OF DAMAGED/LOST PROPERTY: Enter your best guess of the value. This figure will not be used in evaluating the claim. It will be an indication of whether or not it falls within the college deductible and whether or not it needs to be submitted to the servicing office.

### 4. INJURED PARTY/PROPERTY (INJURY/LOSS TO PERSONS NOT EMPLOYED BY COLLEGE AND/OR PROPERTY NOT OWNED BY COLLEGE)

NAME: Report the name of the impacted person, such as, students who are not employees of the college at the time of injury, visitors, or owners of property that is stolen or damaged while at the college, including art exhibits.

IDENTIFY THE INJURY OR THE DAMAGED/LOST PROPERTY: Enter information such as "Twisted knee; or 1989 white Mercedes convertible; or blue backpack with 4 textbooks; or Walkman radio/tape player; etc."

#### 5. WITNESS(ES)

This information is extremely valuable in adjusting the claims or if suits are filed later. Please supply the information if it is available.

#### 6. DESCRIBE THE LOSS/OCCURRENCE/INJURY (To be completed by the injured person, if at all possible):

Please do not write "SEE ATTACHED." Please give a brief description of accident using words such as: "College-owned vehicle was hit by vehicle owned by student; or Employee tripped over phone cord; or Student left backpack on library steps for 10 minutes; or Vehicle 1 (student-owned) hit vehicle 2 (student-owned) while backing out of parking space."

If additional space is required, feel free to **attach a second A/I form**.

It is extremely important to remember that those of us reading the accident/incident reports after they have left your college have no idea who the involved people are, whether they are college employees, students or visitors, and we have some difficulty determining whether or not damaged property is college owned or non-college owned.

#### 7. SIGNATURES

Where possible, please get the signature of the Injured Employee/Party and a Department Contact.

#### 8. RISK MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR REVIEW (To be completed by the College's Risk Management Coordinator):

Review by the Risk Management Coordinator or his/her designee are extremely important. Our belief is every incident should be submitted through the Coordinator's office for review and that office should accept responsibility for submitting the report to the Consortium office. It is important for loss control purposes to have one person at the college coordinating incident information and taking responsibility to make sure areas in need of repair are reported to the proper people for this to be accomplished.

GENERAL LIABILITY: Check this block when incident involves students, visitors, property of students or visitors.

COLLEGE PROPERTY: Check this block when incident involves property owned by the college.

EQUIPMENT BREAKDOWN: Check this block only when incident involves your college owned boiler and/or refrigeration equipment.

STUDENT ACCIDENT: Check this block if the injured party is enrolled in a covered curriculum.

ATHLETIC: Check if claimant was participating in an enrolled sport.

FACILITIES USE: Check this block when incident involves visitors to an event for which Facilities Use coverage has been purchased.

ALLIED HEALTH: Check this block when incident involves patients of students enrolled in the Allied Health Program. Be sure to attach an Allied Health Incident Form found at [http://fcsrmc.com/attachments/Allied\\_Heath\\_Incident\\_Form.pdf](http://fcsrmc.com/attachments/Allied_Heath_Incident_Form.pdf)

RISK MANAGEMENT REVIEW STATEMENTS: Initial the appropriate statements to let the FCSRMC staff know that the Risk Management Coordinator has reviewed the claim and determined that the A/I is for FYI purposes only, is a Student Accident claim that has been forwarded to Fringe Benefits, OR is an Athletic claim which has been submitted to Summit America. By initialing the appropriate statements, we hope to make the notification process more efficient and limit the number of follow-up calls the FCSRMC has to make to the College Risk Coordinator.

## Florida College System Risk Management Consortium

### ACCIDENT – INCIDENT REPORT

(A copy of this report is **NOT** authorization for medical treatment)

<b>INSTRUCTIONS:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If loss/occurrence/injury is to a <b>college employee</b>, please complete sections: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7 and 8.</li> <li>If loss/occurrence is to <b>college-owned property</b> please complete sections: 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8.</li> <li>If loss/occurrence/injury is to a <b>non college employee or non college-owned property</b>, please complete sections: 1, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.</li> </ul>							
<b>1. LOCATION AND DATE OF INCIDENT/OCCURRENCE</b>							
COLLEGE: (Check One)							
<input type="checkbox"/> BC	<input type="checkbox"/> EFSC	<input type="checkbox"/> IRSC	<input type="checkbox"/> PBSC	<input type="checkbox"/> SJRSC	<input type="checkbox"/> TCC	CAMPUS/LOCATION CODE:	
<input type="checkbox"/> CC	<input type="checkbox"/> FGC	<input type="checkbox"/> LSSC	<input type="checkbox"/> PHSC	<input type="checkbox"/> SPC	<input type="checkbox"/> VC		
<input type="checkbox"/> CF	<input type="checkbox"/> FSWSC	<input type="checkbox"/> MDC	<input type="checkbox"/> PeSC	<input type="checkbox"/> SSC			
<input type="checkbox"/> CFK	<input type="checkbox"/> GCSC	<input type="checkbox"/> NFC	<input type="checkbox"/> PoSC	<input type="checkbox"/> SFSC			
<input type="checkbox"/> DSC	<input type="checkbox"/> HCC	<input type="checkbox"/> NWFSC	<input type="checkbox"/> SFC	<input type="checkbox"/> SCFMS			
DATE OF OCCURRENCE:		TIME OF OCCURRENCE: AM                      PM		LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE (BE SPECIFIC):			
<b>2. INJURED EMPLOYEE (INJURY/LOSS TO COLLEGE EMPLOYEE)</b>							
NAME OF EMPLOYEE:			AGE:	OCCUPATION & DEPARTMENT:		EMPLOYEE #:	
ADDRESS:			CITY:		ST:	ZIP:	
PHONE: (    )	PART OF BODY INJURED:		TYPE OF INJURY (CUT, STING, BUMP, BRUISE ETC.):				
DOES EMPLOYEE WISH TO SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION TODAY: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO*		WILL EMPLOYEE REQUIRE TIME OFF FROM WORK: <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO		DATE INJURY FIRST REPORTED:		TIME INJURY FIRST REPORTED:	
* A "no" answer does not waive the employee's right to request medical attention at a later date.							
<b>3. PROPERTY (COLLEGE OWNED)</b>							
IDENTIFY THE DAMAGED/LOST PROPERTY:					ESTIMATED COST OF DAMAGED/LOST PROPERTY: \$		
<b>4. INJURED PARTY/PROPERTY (PERSONS NOT EMPLOYED BY COLLEGE AND/OR PROPERTY NOT OWNED BY COLLEGE)</b>							
NAME:			AGE:	PHONE: (    )			
ADDRESS:			CITY:		ST:	ZIP:	
IDENTIFY THE INJURY OR THE DAMAGED/LOST PROPERTY:					STUDENT ID # (If Injured Party is Admitted Student):		
<b>5. WITNESS(ES)</b>							
NAME:				PHONE: (    )			
ADDRESS:				CITY:		ST:	ZIP:
NAME:				PHONE: (    )			
ADDRESS:				CITY:		ST:	ZIP:

DATE:



P.O. Box 979  
Valley Forge, PA 19482  
610.933.0800  
Fax: 610.935.2860  
www.agadministrators.com

## Student Accident Claim Form

Please complete and submit to A-G Administrators with itemized medical bills and primary insurance explanation of benefits. For questions, please contact A-G Administrators.

College/University _____				
Student's Name _____				
	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE INITIAL	LAST NAME	
Date of Birth _____	Sex: <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female		Cell Phone _____	
Email Address _____				
School Address _____				
	STREET	CITY	STATE	ZIP
Home Address _____				
	STREET	CITY	STATE	ZIP
.....				
<b>ACCIDENT INFORMATION</b>				
Place of Accident _____		Accident Date _____		
Body Part Injured _____		Activity _____		
Nature of Injury — Details of What Happened _____				
_____				
_____				
.....				
<b>INSURANCE INFORMATION</b>				
Does the claimant have primary insurance? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <i>(Attach separate sheet if necessary.)</i>				
Insurance Company Name & Address _____				
Policy Number _____		ID# _____		
.....				
<b>AUTHORIZATION</b>				
<b>AFFIDAVIT:</b> I verify that the statement on other insurance is accurate and complete. I understand that the intentional furnishing of incorrect information via the U.S. Mail may be fraudulent and violate federal laws as well as state laws. I agree that if it is determined at a later date that there are other insurance benefits collectible on this claim I will reimburse A-G Administrators to the extent for which A-G Administrators would not have been liable.				
<b>AUTHORIZATION TO RELEASE INFORMATION:</b> I authorize any Health Care Provider, Doctor, Medical Professional, Medical Facility, Insurance Company, Person or Organization to release any information regarding medical, dental, mental, alcohol or drug abuse history, treatment or benefits payable, including disability or employment related information concerning the patient, to A-G Administrators and its designees.				
<b>PAYMENT AUTHORIZATION:</b> I authorize all current and future medical benefits, for services rendered and billed as a result of this claim, to be made payable to the physicians and providers indicated on the invoices.				
STUDENT SIGNATURE <small>(Parent or guardian, if participant is a minor)</small> _____				Date _____
SCHOOL OFFICIAL SIGNATURE _____				Title _____ Date _____

ACC 07/14



## Summary of Coverage

Underwritten by QBE Insurance Corporation (QBEIC)

QBEIC has issued the policy identified below, to the Policyholder. The policy insures persons who qualify under its terms. Important policy provisions are summarized in this Summary of Coverage. For a complete description of the coverage, including the limitations, exclusions and terms of coverage, please refer to the policy which is on file with the Policyholder.

Policy No: **IHH000461** Policy Term: **March 1, 2023 to March 1, 2024**  
Policyholder: **Florida College System Risk Management Consortium**

**Coverage is provided** to registered students in the named education / training course(s) of the Policyholder that are on file with the underwriting company.

**Coverage is provided during** the policy period while students are participating in scheduled, sponsored and supervised on campus college courses, labs or clinical training held at Policyholder approved off-site premises, and while traveling under the supervision of the Policyholder as a group directly to or from such activities. A covered activity does not include dorm room exposures of any kind or participating in any sports activities.

### Excess Accident Medical Expense Benefit:

Maximum Benefit:	\$25,000
Deductible Amount:	\$0
Heart and Circulatory Benefit:	Included
Short-Term Emergency Sickness Benefit Maximum:	\$1,000

<b>Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit Maximum:</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>
Accidental Death and Dismemberment Aggregate Limit:	\$2,000,000

### IMPORTANT DEFINITIONS

**Covered Accident** – means a sudden, unforeseeable, external event that results, directly and independently of all other causes, in an injury or loss and meets all of the following conditions:

1. occurs while the covered person is insured under the policy;
2. is not contributed to by disease, sickness, or mental or bodily infirmity; and
3. is not otherwise excluded under the terms of this policy.

**Emergency Sickness** - means an illness or disease diagnosed by a physician which:

1. causes a severe or acute symptom that, if not provided with immediate treatment, would reasonably be expected to result in deterioration of a covered person's health or place his life in jeopardy; and
2. first manifests itself suddenly and unexpectedly while a covered person is participating in a covered activity.

### EXCESS ACCIDENT AND EMERGENCY SICKNESS MEDICAL EXPENSE BENEFITS

Benefits are payable for covered medical expenses that are not payable under any other health care plan. Medical expense benefits are secondary to all other insurance policies the covered person has. If no other health insurance exists, benefits will be payable like primary coverage. This benefit will pay the usual and customary expenses incurred, for medical care if: a) the first expense for a covered injury is incurred within 26 weeks after the date of the accident; and b) the expense is incurred within 104 weeks after the accident (52 weeks for Emergency Sickness). No more than the Maximum Benefit will be paid for all medical care, treatment, services and supplies as the result of any one Covered Accident (or Emergency Sickness).

### ACCIDENTAL DEATH AND DISMEMBERMENT BENEFIT

If within one year from the date of a covered accident, a covered person suffers any of the losses specified below, this coverage will pay the following benefit amounts. If the same accident causes more than one of these losses, the largest amount that applies will be paid.

	Benefit Amount:
Loss of Life.....	\$25,000
Loss of Two or More Hands or Feet, or Sight of Both Eyes.....	\$25,000
Loss of One Hand or Foot and Sight in One Eye.....	\$25,000
Loss of One Hand or Foot or Sight in One Eye.....	\$12,500
Loss of Thumb and Index Finger of the Same Hand or	
Four Fingers of the Same Hand.....	\$6,250

**Loss** means with regard to:

- a) hands and feet, actual severance through or above wrist or ankle joints;
- b) sight, total and permanent loss thereof;
- c) thumb and index finger, actual severance through or above metacarpophalangeal joints.

## EXCLUSIONS and LIMITATIONS

### The policy does not cover loss resulting from:

1. intentionally self-inflicted Injury, suicide or any attempt thereat while sane or insane;
2. commission or attempt to commit a felony or an assault;
3. commission of or active participation in a riot or insurrection;
4. bungee jumping; parachuting; skydiving; parasailing; hang-gliding;
5. declared or undeclared war or act of war;
6. flight in, boarding or alighting from an Aircraft or any craft designed to fly above the Earth's surface, except as a fare-paying passenger on a regularly scheduled commercial or charter airline;
7. travel in or on any off-road motorized vehicle not requiring licensing as a motor vehicle;
8. participation in any motorized race or contest of speed;
9. an accident if the covered person is the operator of a motor vehicle and does not possess a valid motor vehicle operator's license; except while participating in Driver's Education Program;
10. sickness, disease, bodily or mental infirmity, bacterial or viral infection or medical or surgical treatment thereof, except for any bacterial infection resulting from an accidental external cut or wound or accidental ingestion of contaminated food;
11. travel or activity outside the United States or Canada;
12. the covered person's intoxication as determined according to the laws of the jurisdiction in which the covered accident occurred;
13. voluntary ingestion of any narcotic, drug, poison, gas or fumes, unless prescribed or taken under the direction of a Physician and taken in accordance with the prescribed dosage;
14. injuries compensable under Workers' Compensation law or any similar law;

### We will not pay benefits for:

15. services or treatment rendered by a physician, nurse or any other person who is:
  - a. employed or retained by the Policyholder;
  - b. living in the covered person's household;
  - c. who is a parent, sibling, spouse or child of the covered person;
16. any Hospital Stay or days of a Hospital Stay that are not Appropriate Treatment for the condition and locality.
17. a covered person's covered loss if:
  - a. he was driving a private passenger automobile at the time of the covered accident that resulted in the covered loss; and
  - b. he was intoxicated, as that term is defined by the law of the jurisdiction in which the covered accident occurred.

### Accident Medical Benefit limitations and excluded expenses:

1. Blood, blood plasma or blood storage except expenses by a Hospital for processing or administration of blood.
2. cosmetic surgery or care, or treatment solely for cosmetic purposes, or complications therefrom. This exclusion does not apply to:
  - a. cosmetic surgery resulting from an accident, if initial treatment of the covered person is begun within 12 months of the date of the accident;
  - b. reconstruction incidental to or following surgery resulting from a covered accident.
3. Any elective or routine treatment, surgery, health treatment or examinations.
4. Examination or prescriptions for, or purchase of, eyeglasses, contact lenses or hearing aids.
5. Treatment in any Veterans' Administration, Federal or state facility unless there is a legal obligation to pay.
6. Services or treatment provided by persons who do not normally charge for their services, unless there is a legal obligation to pay.
7. Rest cures or custodial care.
8. Repair or replacement of existing dentures, partial dentures, braces or bridgework.
9. Personal services such as television and telephone, or transportation.
10. Expenses payable by any automobile insurance policy without regard to fault.
11. Services or treatment provided by an infirmary operated by the Policyholder.
12. Treatment of injuries that result over a period of time, such as blisters, tennis elbow, et al, that are a normal, foreseeable result of participation in the covered activity.
13. Treatment or service provided by a private duty nurse.
14. Treatment of hernia of any kind.
15. Treatment of injury resulting from a condition that a covered person knew existed on the date of a Covered Accident, unless we have received a written medical release from his Physician.

This information is a brief description of the important benefits and features of the policy. It is not a contract. Full terms and conditions of coverage are set forth in the policy.

**GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE**  
**HEALTH SCIENCES and NURSING DIVISIONS**

**SHARED COMMITMENT TO REDUCE RISK OF CONTRACTING AND/OR TRANSMITTING COVID-19**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES:**

- Students accept and share a commitment to reduce the risk of contracting and/or transmitting COVID-19.
- **FACE MASKS ARE STRONGLY RECOMMENDED INSIDE ALL COLLEGE FACILITIES TO ENSURE THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF THE ENTIRE COLLEGE COMMUNITY.**
- If/when wearing a mask, it should fully cover nose and mouth appropriately. DO NOT lower mask to chin, even while speaking. If mask becomes soiled, or moist it should be changed immediately. *Regardless of vaccination status, Faculty/staff while alone in their offices will be permitted to remove their mask.*
- All faculty, staff, and students should notify their Instructor and stay home if experiencing symptoms of illness such as a temperature  $\geq 100.4$  F and/or chills, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing, headache, diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, body aches (myalgia), new loss of taste or smell, congestion or runny nose, cough, and fatigue. *If you have any trouble breathing, persistent pain or pressure in the chest, new confusion, inability to wake or stay awake, bluish lips or face, call 911 or call ahead to your local emergency room.*
- As with any communicable or contagious disease, be mindful of hand hygiene and infection control and practice standard precautions. Abide by any additional infection control protocols that have been created for your specialized program of study.
- Exposures, as defined in the GCSC COVID-19 guidelines, must still be reported to the Campus Safety Office, and if symptoms develop, the exposed person should immediately quarantine and it is strongly recommended that they be tested. If the results of the test indicate a positive case of COVID-19, the normal quarantine procedures will apply.
- Guidelines relative to **Exposure Quarantine/Tested Positive Quarantine** can be found on the GCSC COVID-19 Information webpage: <https://www.gulfcoast.edu/covid-19-coronavirus.html>
- In addition to what is listed above, students participating in external clinic rotations will follow respective protocols at each facility.

**Note:** *Gulf Coast State College is **not requiring a COVID-19 vaccination**; however, clinical facilities may require proof of COVID-19 vaccination status prior to student clinical assignments. To assist faculty in scheduling appropriate clinical rotation assignments based on such requirements, we request that you upload documentation of your COVID-19 vaccination status to your PreCheckSentryMD account and/or follow the clinical facility's mechanism for documentation of vaccinations and/or exemptions, as directed by your program coordinator. While we will attempt alternative placements for any unvaccinated student (or non-reporting student), please be aware that clinical assignments are limited based on the number of clinical facilities that may require the COVID-19 vaccine. In the event that placement is not possible and the student is unable to meet clinical requirements, there may be a delay in course and program completion. If warranted, consultation with the Program Coordinator and/or the Division Chair may be necessary to guide successful program completion or readmission.*

**ATTENDANCE:**

- If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19: Prior to class start time, notify your Instructor (in writing/email) of your illness and resultant absence from class, lab, or clinical.
- Returning to campus/clinical sites: Obtain written permission to resume class activities – this can be provided by your HCP or satisfaction of prescribed quarantine by Dr. David Thomasee.
- Each episode of quarantine will be considered one occurrence for attendance purposes. Any relapse or additional exposure that extends the number of days quarantined will count as a 2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence.
- Should episodes of quarantining become excessive (>2), counseling will be provided by the program Coordinator to determine if a medical withdrawal might be necessary as a result of missed instructional hours.

*Please continue to monitor all Gulf Coast State College communication channels for the most up-to-date information and specifics regarding this evolving situation. New information, guidelines or regulations will be accessible at:*

[\*\*https://www.gulfcoast.edu/covid-19-coronavirus.html\*\*](https://www.gulfcoast.edu/covid-19-coronavirus.html)

*Unique situations not addressed here can be discussed individually with the program Coordinator.*

**Content Sources:**

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/>  
<https://www.gulfcoast.edu/covid-19-coronavirus.html>  
[National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases \(NCIRD\), Division of Viral Diseases](#)

I have read and agree to follow the COVID-19 Protocol procedures documented above for the Health Sciences Program in which I am enrolled.  
Signature and Date: \_\_\_\_\_



Dear Health Sciences Students,

On November 4, 2021, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (“CMS”) published its Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination Interim Final Rule, which generally establishes mandatory COVID-19 vaccination requirements for all eligible staff, which includes students and interns, at Medicare and Medicaid certified health care facilities, subject to certain limited exceptions.

In compliance with these regulations, Gulf Coast State College Health Sciences students who must complete clinical/practicum experiences in agencies and sites that bill patients under Medicare and Medicaid must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or have received an exemption according to the CMS Interim Final Rule. As part of your program’s clinical requirements, you are required to comply with these rules. The purpose of this letter is to set forth in detail these requirements.

All Health Sciences students are required to report their vaccination status, and if vaccinated, to upload proof of vaccination to their individual CastleBranch account to maintain confidentiality. Students who fail to provide truthful information regarding their vaccination status may be subject to discipline, including but not limited to, dismissal from their assigned clinical facility and program of study.

Other than students who have requested and received an exemption from the CMS Interim Final Rule, as explained in more detail below, students who are assigned to a Medicare or Medicaid certified health care facility for clinical assignments are required to comply with the Interim Final Rule’s phased implementation timeline:

- a. Phase 1: Must have received at least the first dose of a two-dose COVID-19 vaccine or a one-dose COVID-19 vaccine prior to providing any services for a Medicare or Medicaid certified health care facility by **January 27, 2022**.
- b. Phase 2: Must have received the necessary shots to be fully vaccinated (either two doses of Pfizer or Moderna or one dose of Johnson & Johnson) by **February 28, 2022**.

Medicare and Medicaid certified health care facilities may choose to grant exemptions to students using their own policies/procedures/expectations OR request that the College facilitate the exemption process for them. The College cannot guarantee that a College-approved accommodation will be acceptable to any or all clinical/practicum agencies or placement sites, or that clinical/practicum agencies or placement sites will be able to identify reasonable accommodations for vaccine exemption requests. It is solely your responsibility to adhere to all clinical/practicum agency/placement site policies and expectations.

For students who have requested and not been granted an enumerated exemption under this policy, the College will make reasonable efforts to reassign them to a non-Medicare or Medicaid certified facility as the Interim Final Rule



does not recognize a testing opt-out provision for unvaccinated students, however the College cannot guarantee that this will be possible in all cases.

Should a CMS facility request that Gulf Coast State College collect and maintain such exemption forms, adapted versions of the Florida Department of Health forms will be utilized (attached). Students may request an exemption from the CMS mandated vaccination requirements based on the following:

- a. *Reasonable Accommodation for Disability/ Medical Reasons:* Student requests for an exemption from complying with the Interim Final Rule as a reasonable accommodation for a disability or medical reasons must be uploaded to their individual CastleBranch account using the attached form. Such requests will be evaluated in accordance with state and federal law governing such requests.
- b. *Sincerely Held Religious Belief:* Student requests for an exemption from complying with the Interim Final Rule due to a sincerely held religious belief must be uploaded to their individual CastleBranch account using the attached form. Such requests will be evaluated in accordance with state and federal law governing such requests.

Finally, as the Interim Final Rule applies to Medicare or Medicaid certified facilities as a matter of federal law, the College disclaims all responsibility for the decisions of clinical facilities, as well as any impacts upon a student's education or injuries that may arise from either a student's decision to be vaccinated or a decision to seek an exemption.

I acknowledge receipt of this information and understand that a copy of this notification has been provided to the applicable CMS clinical/practicum agencies or placement sites required to comply with the Omnibus COVID-19 Health Care Staff Vaccination Interim Final Rule.

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# CLINICAL STUDENT DISABILITY ACCOMMODATION/ MEDICAL EXEMPTION FROM COVID-19 VACCINATION

## PART 1 – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE STUDENT

<b>Clinical Student Name</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>Name of CMS Clinical Facility (if known)</b>		<b>Date of Request</b>

## PART 2 – TO BE COMPLETED BY THE CLINICAL STUDENT’S MEDICAL PROVIDER

<b>Clinical Student’s Name</b>	
<b>Physician, Physician Assistant, or Advanced Practice Registered Nurse</b> It is my professional opinion as a physician or physician assistant who holds a valid, active license under chapter 458 or chapter 459, Florida Statutes, or an advanced practice registered nurse who holds a valid, active license under chapter 464, Florida Statutes, that COVID-19 vaccination is not in the best medical interest of the student.	
<b>Medical Provider Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Medical Provider Name (print)</b>	<b>Medical Provider License Number</b>

# CLINICAL STUDENT RELIGIOUS EXEMPTION FROM COVID-19 VACCINATION

<b>Clinical Student Name</b>	<b>Date of Birth</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
<b>Name of CMS Clinical Facility (if known)</b>		<b>Date of Request</b>

I hereby declare that I decline the COVID-19 vaccination because of a sincerely held religious belief, which may include a sincerely held moral or ethical belief.

<b>Student Signature</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Student Name (print)</b>	

## Clinical Leave of Absence Form

If a student requires a “day off” during a clinical rotation due to unavoidable illness or absence, it is the student’s responsibility to notify the CI and ACCE by 8:30 am on the day of the absence and seek approval. Days are to be made up at the discretion of the CI as per his/her schedule. As per the PTA clinical education handbook, the student will be excused from clinical responsibility if the clinical facility recognizes a holiday. Holidays recognized on the college calendar are not honored for clinical education unless the clinical facility is closed. The student must notify the ACCE and fill out this form if the clinic observes the holiday and is closed. In the event of inclement weather, if the college closes, the students are not permitted to go to the clinical facility. The ACCE will inform the student if this should occur.

### Leave of Absence Request

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Rotation #: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Facility name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CI: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) requesting off: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approve by CI: Yes    No                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CI Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

=====To Be Filled out by the ACCE=====

Student will make up lost time? Yes            No

Make up dates schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by ACCE? YES                      NO                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*The ACCE will inform the student of any time that must be made up\*



## ***Mandatory Patient Safety Education Requirement of 2001 Requirement by Florida Statute***

***Did you know*** about the new education requirement for all health care practitioners licensed under the Department of Health?

Chapter 456.013(7), Florida Statutes, “The boards, or the department when there is no board, shall require the completion of a 2-hour course relating to prevention of medical errors as part of the licensure and renewal process. The 2-hour course shall count towards the total number of continuing education hours required for the profession. The course shall be approved by the board or department, as appropriate, and shall include a study of root-cause analysis, error reduction and prevention, and patient safety. If the course is being offered by a facility licensed pursuant to chapter 395 for its employees, the board may approve up to 1 hour of the 2-hour course to be specifically related to error reduction and prevention methods used in that facility.”

At the May 3, 2002 Board of Physical Therapy Practice meeting, the board adopted the proposed rule language for licensees licensed under Chapter 486, Florida Statutes, to obtain the mandated two-hour course relating to the prevention of medical errors. The new language reads:

### **64B17-8.002 Requirements for Prevention of Medical Errors Education**

- 1) To receive Board approval for biennial renewal, courses on medical error prevention shall be two contact hours and include:
  - a) Medical documentation and communication
  - b) Contraindications and indications for physical therapy management
  - c) Pharmacological components of physical therapy and patient management
- 2) Applications for initial licensure must have completed at least two contact hours of medical error education. The Board shall accept coursework from accredited schools of Physical Therapy provided such coursework was completed after January 1, 2002.
- 3) If the course is being offered by a facility licensed pursuant to chapter 395, the board may apply up to one hour of the two-hour course to be specifically related to error reduction and prevention methods used in that facility.
- 4) The course may be used as part of the home study continuing education hours.



Jeb Bush  
Governor

John O. Agwunobi, M.D., M.B.A.  
Secretary

## MEMORANDUM

TO: Florida Physical Therapy Program Directors and Physical Therapists  
Assistant Program Directors

From: *for Mac* Martha A. Clendenin, PhD, and PT  
Chair, Board of Physical Therapy Practice

Re: Loan Default and Immediate License Suspension

Date: August 5, 2002

The purpose of this memo is to enable you to inform your students of new language in Florida Statute 456.074 that requires an immediate suspension of licensure if a former student has defaulted on a student loan issued or guaranteed by the state of Florida or the Federal Government.

If this occurs, the licensee will be notified by certified mail and will be subject to immediate suspension of their license unless proof of new payment terms is documented within 45 days. Suspension of licensure is disciplinary action and will be so noted as a matter of record.

This new statute language will apply uniformly to all students in health care disciplines licensed under Florida statutes and has already been signed into law. Please be sure your students understand their obligations for repayment of educational loans and the potential impact of default on their ability to maintain licensure.

If you have any questions, please contact our Board office staff or review Chapter 456, F.S.

Department of Health, Medical Quality Assurance  
Board of Physical Therapy Practice  
4052 Bald Cypress Way Bin C05  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-3255  
(850) 245-4373 Telephone (850) 414-6860 FAX  
[http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/physical/pt\\_home.html](http://www.doh.state.fl.us/mqa/physical/pt_home.html)

## **EQUIPMENT SAFETY POLICY**

All electrical equipment will be inspected and calibrated yearly by a professional biomedical technician. Electrical equipment will be marked with a safety inspection label for permitted use.

All therapy equipment will be inspected by PTA faculty before use in laboratory practice. Records of equipment maintenance are located in the PTA Coordinator's Office, HS 302. User manuals for equipment may be located in the top file cabinet in HS 300, or may be accessed through the manufacturer's website via computer in the laboratory.

If a piece of equipment seems to be defective, use of it will be stopped immediately and a visible "out of order" or "do not use" sign will be placed on it. Any repairs to equipment will be made by qualified individuals who, in many instances, will be factory repair service personnel.

The PTA program will budget money for equipment repair, maintenance and replacement as needed.

# Gulf Coast State College










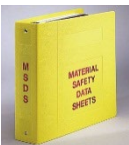
## Floor Level/Floor Leaders:








**First Floor** – Kim Awls

**Second Floor** – Alyssa Evans

**Third Floor** – Melinda Cumbaa

## Location of Emergency Equipment – HEALTH SCIENCES BUILDING

<p>✓ AED</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – Main Lobby (HS 100) and Dental Clinic (HS 137)</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – Right of elevator next to Housekeeping closet (HS 212)</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – in hallway near elevator</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Biohazardous Waste Container</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – in Dental Clinic: every dental operatory (#1-20) &amp; sterilization area</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 208 and HS 211</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – HS 329 &amp; 323 (simulation only; not for use)</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Exposure Control Plan</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – HS 109 &amp; DH Coordinator's (HS203)</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 208</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – HS 329 (Ch. 2; page 11)</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Eye Wash Stations</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – Dental Clinic sterilization area (HS 153) and the old dark room (HS 152); HS 113 (attached to sink)</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 208 and HS 211</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – HS 329 (above sinks X2) and HS 320 (west wall)</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Fire Extinguishers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – North building entrance, Dental clinic entrance (HS 138) and Dental Assisting side (HS 143); HS 113</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 208 and HS 211; wall at end of hallway near west stairwell</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – HS 308, 314, 323, 327, 329 and East and West Hallways</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Fire Blanket</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – Dental Clinic entrance (HS 138)</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 207 (countertop to right of hallway door w/First Aid Kit)</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – none</li> </ul>
<p>✓ First Aid Kits</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – HS 109, 113, 124, 138</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 208 (top shelf) &amp; in HS 207 (countertop to right of hallway door)</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – HS 314 and HS 329 (2nd cabinet on west wall)</li> </ul>
<p>✓ SDS Manuals</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>FIRST FLOOR</b> – HS 109, Dental Clinic sterilization (153), HS 113</li> <li><b>SECOND FLOOR</b> – HS 211</li> <li><b>THIRD FLOOR</b> – HS 329 (1st cabinet west wall) and HS 317</li> </ul>

<p>✓ Job Safety and Health-OSHA Poster</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - Dental Clinic (HS 138)</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - HS 211</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - none</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Sharps Containers</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - in Dental Clinic: every dental operatory (#1-20) and HS 153</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - HS 208 and HS 211</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - HS 315 (1 in storage unit) and 4 in HS 323</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Oxygen Tank</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - Dental Clinic (HS 138 when in use; HS 155 when not in use); Piped in Oxygen to HS 113</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - none</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - HS 315 (1 in storage unit) and 4 in HS 323</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Emergency Cart</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - Dental Clinic (HS 138 when in use; HS 155 when not in use) *for patient use</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - HS 208 (simulation only)</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - none for use (simulation only)</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Telephones</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - every office/classroom</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - every office/classroom</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - every office/classroom</li> </ul>
<p>✓ EXITS</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - north, east, west doors, Dental Clinic main entrance and both clinic doors (HS 138), Dental Clinic Café and back of dental clinic (HS 135), central stairwell (HS 104)</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - one by each stairwell - each wall, west wall, and end of Nursing faculty office corridor</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - one on east wall; one on west wall</li> </ul>
<p>✓ Emergency Evacuation Gathering Point</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>FIRST FLOOR</b> - none; no down staircases</li> <li>• <b>SECOND FLOOR</b> - top left side of elevator doors</li> <li>• <b>THIRD FLOOR</b> - between HS 308-309</li> </ul>



## Division of Health Sciences

### Alcohol / Drug Policy

Gulf Coast State College is a drug free and alcohol free institution. There will be a **ZERO TOLERANCE** policy regarding students reporting to class, lab, or clinic under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Students under the supervision of medical care and taking prescribed drugs must immediately identify themselves to the faculty supervising the class, lab, or clinical assignments. Prescribed medications must not induce an unsafe mental or physical state, or impair the student's ability to meet the course requirements, act with safety, perform competently or to demonstrate appropriate conduct when in class, lab, or clinical settings.

The student shall not knowingly possess, use, transmit, or be under the influence of any narcotic drug, hallucinogenic drug, amphetamine, barbiturate, marijuana, any other controlled or counterfeit substance defined in FS 893.03, or substitute for such, alcoholic beverage, inhalant or intoxicant, on the campus either before, during or after school hours or off the college grounds at a College activity, function or event. Also, a student shall not possess, have under his/her control, sell or deliver any device, or contrivance, instrument or paraphernalia containing the substance or substances described in this paragraph or any residue of such substance or devices intended for use or used in injecting, inhaling/inhalant/huffing, smoking, administering, or using any of the foregoing prescribed drugs, narcotics, or stimulants. Use of a drug authorized by a medical prescription from a registered physician for a specific student shall not be considered a violation of this rule. (GCSC Student Handbook, 2022-2023).

*Medical Marijuana remains an illegal drug under Federal law. It is not protected under the American Disabilities Act (ADA) and is not exempt even if the student presents with a medical marijuana registry card. Positive drug screening results for marijuana may prevent the student from participating in external clinical rotations and other program requirements thus resulting in dismissal from a Health Sciences, Nursing, and/or Public Safety program.*

Situations that could indicate that the student is under the influence include, but are not limited to: odor of ethanol, slurred speech, disturbed gait, problems with balance, and questionable or inappropriate behavior (see Reasonable Suspicion/Drug testing Form). If suspected of being under the influence, the faculty member responsible for the class, lab, or clinical session will evaluate the circumstances and take appropriate action.

In the event that a student is suspected or found to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol, the student will be immediately dismissed from the class, lab, or clinical assignment pending further review. The student will be required to seek an alternative method of transportation to leave the setting. A Reasonable Suspicion/Testing Form should be completed and submitted to the Program Coordinator for review.

If the faculty member suspects and determines that a drug test is indicated, the **student must arrange alternative transportation** and report to the College's designated site (with completed Request Memorandum) to undergo a drug test within 2 hours of the dismissal. The student must agree to release the results of the test to the Chair of Health Sciences and the program Coordinator. Failure to agree to an immediate drug test within 2 hours, failure to obtain the test within the 2 hours, or refusal to release test results will result in immediate dismissal from the Health Science Program.

**The college assumes no responsibility for assisting the student in leaving the above sites or returning home. Security will be called if necessary.**

In the event that the test **results are negative**, the student must meet with the college faculty member and/or the program coordinator to assess the need for remediation or counseling. The decision to return the student to clinical will be based upon the recommendation of the clinical faculty member. Any missed days will be unexcused and subject to the make-up policies of the individual course or program. Failure to attend counseling sessions or to meet the remediation plan objectives within the time designated will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

In the event that the test **results are positive**, the student will be immediately dismissed from the program with a failing grade.



STUDENT MUST  
PRESENT THIS  
FORM TO  
  
DIAGNOSTICS

## Health Sciences Division

# REQUEST MEMORANDUM

To: Quest Diagnostics, 12107 Panama City Beach Parkway, Panama City Beach, F 07

From: \_\_\_\_\_ Program Coordinator / Faculty

Date: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / 202\_\_ Time Sent: \_\_\_\_:\_\_\_\_am/pm CST/EST (circle one)

Re: Request for Drug / Alcohol Screen

\_\_\_\_\_ (student) is presenting themselves on a request from Gulf Coast State College program Coordinator / Faculty for a urine Drug / Alcohol test. Please forward a bill for these services to GCSC to the attention of Laura Justice in Health Sciences. If you have any questions, please feel free to call the Coordinator / Faculty referring the student at (850) \_\_\_\_\_ or Laura Justice, Chair of Health Sciences, at (850) 872-3828.

**Authorization to Release Information:** By signature, the student agrees to provide a urine sample within the specified time limit, and authorizes Quest Diagnostics to release the results of the drug / alcohol test to Laura Justice, Chair of Health Sciences, Gulf Coast State College, 5230 West Highway 98, Panama City, Florida 32401. ***Please fax the results to: Attention Laura Justice; Gulf Coast State College at (850) 747-3246.***

Student Signature

Date

Original: Student to present to Quest Diagnostics  
Cc: Program Coordinator

rev. 7.16.2021





**Division of Health Sciences**  
**Drug / Alcohol Policy**  
**Reasonable Suspicion / Testing Form**

***Reasonable suspicion testing will be based on observations concerning the student's appearance, behavior, speech or body odor.***

Name of Student \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Observer \_\_\_\_\_ Date Observed \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_

Second Observer (if available) \_\_\_\_\_

Setting: \_\_\_\_\_ Clinical \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom \_\_\_\_\_ Campus Lab

**Put a check mark by the behavior observed:**

**Appearance:** Confused/Disoriented \_\_\_\_\_ Hair/Clothing \_\_\_\_\_ Disheveled/Unkempt \_\_\_\_\_ Wearing sunglasses \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Movement:** Difficulty Walking \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty grasping/holding objects \_\_\_\_\_ Difficulty sitting down/standing \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Motor Skills:** Trembling/Shaking \_\_\_\_\_ Restless/Agitated \_\_\_\_\_ Slow or exaggerated moves \_\_\_\_\_ Inattentive/Drowsy \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Odor on Breath/Body/Clothing:** Alcohol \_\_\_\_\_ Marijuana \_\_\_\_\_ Just used mouthwash/mints/gum/etc. \_\_\_\_\_

**Facial Appearance:** Red/Flushed \_\_\_\_\_ Sweaty \_\_\_\_\_ Puffy \_\_\_\_\_ Pale \_\_\_\_\_ Runny nose/Sores on nostrils \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Eyes:** Red/Watery \_\_\_\_\_ Pupils Large/Small \_\_\_\_\_ Inability to focus \_\_\_\_\_ Gaze is glassy/blank/horizontal \_\_\_\_\_

**Speech:** Loud \_\_\_\_\_ Profane \_\_\_\_\_ Threatening/Hostile \_\_\_\_\_ Slow/Slurred \_\_\_\_\_ Rambling \_\_\_\_\_ Incoherent \_\_\_\_\_

**Actions/Performance:** Inappropriate responses to questions \_\_\_\_\_ improper job performance/Insubordination \_\_\_\_\_

Other Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Based on the above, I have determined that reasonable suspicion exists to send \_\_\_\_\_  
to designated site, \_\_\_\_\_, for Drug/Alcohol urine, blood and/or Breathalyzer test.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_



**Division of Health Sciences  
Drug / Alcohol Policy  
STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received, read, and understand  
*Print Name*

the Gulf Coast State College Health Science Division's Drug and Alcohol Policy, and agree to comply with all aspects of this policy. Furthermore, I understand that any infraction of the stated policy could result in immediate dismissal from the Health Sciences program in which I am enrolled.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

***This document will be placed in your program file for reference in the event of any  
Drug / Alcohol Policy violation.***

## **SMOKING POLICY**

In accordance with GCSC's policy smoking is prohibited on campus beginning January 1, 2012. Violation of this policy may result in probation/suspension from the program.

## INFORMATION RESPONSIBILITY

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received, read and understand all of the information contained within the Physical Therapist Assistant Handbook.

I realize that I am responsible for the information as it pertains to my participation in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Gulf Coast State College.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signed

# Gulf Coast State College

## Health Sciences and Nursing Divisions

### ***Acknowledgment of Background Check Information***

Gulf Coast State College (GCSC) students that are granted conditional acceptance into a Health Sciences program must receive a satisfactory criminal background check prior to final acceptance into the program. The background check will be scheduled and performed at the discretion of the Division to which the student has applied. Information and instructions on how to complete the background check will be sent by the applicable program coordinator.

**Please Note:** Criminal background checks performed through other agencies will not be accepted. Also, be aware that clinical agencies may require an additional background check prior to clinical access. Although background checks are required before program entry, it is possible to graduate from a program at GCSC and be denied the opportunity for licensure because of an unfavorable background check. Even if the student has been accepted into and completed a program at GCSC, this does not guarantee authorization for licensure or eligibility to take the licensure exam. Those authorizations are granted by the Health Sciences governing professional licensure boards. This is a notification to the applicant that Gulf Coast State College has no authority over any state-level medical licensure board and cannot be held responsible if the student is accepted into or completes a Health Sciences program and subsequently is denied authorization to take the program-specific licensure exam due to criminal background information.

An applicant must consider how his/her personal history may affect the ability to meet clinical requirements, sit for various licensure exams, and ultimately gain employment. Most healthcare boards in the State of Florida make decisions about licensure on an individual basis. You may visit the Florida Department of Health website at <https://www.floridahealth.gov/> for more information regarding licensure. We offer this information so that you can make an informed decision regarding your future.

**Please read the following information carefully:** Any student who has been found guilty of, regardless of adjudication, or entered a plea of nolo contendere, or guilty to, any offense under the provision of 456.0635 (see below) may be **disqualified** from admission to any Health Sciences program. In addition to these specific convictions, there are other crimes which may disqualify applicants from entering into the Health Sciences programs and/or clinical rotations. The statute listed below can also be found online: [http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App\\_mode=Display\\_Statute&Search\\_String=&URL=0400-0499/0456/Sections/0456.0635.html](http://www.leg.state.fl.us/Statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&Search_String=&URL=0400-0499/0456/Sections/0456.0635.html)

#### **456.0635 Health care fraud; disqualification for license, certificate, or registration.-**

- (1) Healthcare fraud in the practice of a healthcare professional is prohibited.
- (2) Each board within the jurisdiction of the department, or the department if there is no board, shall refuse to admit a candidate to any examination and refuse to issue a license, certificate, or registration to any applicant if the candidate or applicant or any principal, officer, agent, managing employee, or affiliated person of the applicant:
  - (a) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under chapter 409, chapter 817, or chapter 893, or a similar felony offense committed in another state or jurisdiction, unless the candidate or applicant has successfully completed a drug court program for that felony and provides proof that the plea has been withdrawn or the charges have been dismissed. Any such conviction or plea shall exclude the applicant or candidate from licensure, examination, certification, or registration unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended:
    1. For felonies of the first or second degree, more than 15 years before the date of application.
    2. For felonies of the third degree, more than 10 years before the date of application, except for felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a).
    3. For felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a), more than 5 years before the date of application;

- (b) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under 21 U.S.C. ss. 801-970, or 42 U.S.C. ss. 1395-1396, unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended more than 15 years before the date of the application;
- (c) Has been terminated for cause from the Florida Medicaid program pursuant to s. 409.913, unless the candidate or applicant has been in good standing with the Florida Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years;
- (d) Has been terminated for cause, pursuant to the appeals procedures established by the state, from any other state Medicaid program, unless the candidate or applicant has been in good standing with a state Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years and the termination occurred at least 20 years before the date of the application; or
- (e) Is currently listed on the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General's List of Excluded Individuals and Entities, except when such applicant is listed solely based on a default or delinquency on a student loan as provided in s. 120.82.

This subsection does not apply to an applicant for initial licensure, certification, or registration who was arrested or charged with a felony specified in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) before July 1, 2009.

(3) The department shall refuse to renew a license, certificate, or registration of any applicant if the applicant or any principal, officer, agent, managing employee, or affiliated person of the applicant:

(a) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under chapter 409, chapter 817, or chapter 893, or a similar felony offense committed in another state or jurisdiction, unless the applicant is currently enrolled in a pretrial diversion or drug court program that allows the withdrawal of the plea for that felony upon successful completion of that program. Any such conviction or plea excludes the applicant from licensure renewal unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended:

1. For felonies of the first or second degree, more than 15 years before the date of application.
2. For felonies of the third degree, more than 10 years before the date of application, except for felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a).
3. For felonies of the third degree under s. 893.13(6)(a), more than 5 years before the date of application.

(b) Has been convicted of, or entered a plea of guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, a felony under 21 U.S.C. ss. 801-970, or 42 U.S.C. ss. 1395-1396 since July 1, 2009, unless the sentence and any subsequent period of probation for such conviction or plea ended more than 15 years before the date of the application.

(c) Has been terminated for cause from the Florida Medicaid program pursuant to s. 409.913, unless the applicant has been in good standing with the Florida Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years.

(d) Has been terminated for cause, pursuant to the appeals procedures established by the state, from any other state Medicaid program, unless the applicant has been in good standing with a state Medicaid program for the most recent 5 years and the termination occurred at least 20 years before the date of the application.

(e) Is currently listed on the United States Department of Health and Human Services Office of Inspector General's List of Excluded Individuals and Entities, except when such applicant is listed solely based on a default or delinquency on a student loan as provided in s. 120.82.

This subsection does not apply to an applicant for renewal of licensure, certification, or registration who was arrested or charged with a felony specified in paragraph (a) or paragraph (b) before July 1, 2009.

(4) Licensed health care practitioners shall report allegations of health care fraud to the department, regardless of the practice setting in which the alleged health care fraud occurred.

(5) The acceptance by a licensing authority of a licensee's relinquishment of a license which is offered in response to or anticipation of the filing of administrative charges alleging health care fraud or similar charges constitutes the permanent revocation of the license.

**Important Note: After acceptance and during enrollment in this program, the student is responsible for notifying the program coordinator of any arrest, regardless of adjudication, that occurs after acceptance through graduation. Failure to promptly notify the program coordinator shall be grounds for dismissal from the program.**

**With my signature below, I acknowledge that Gulf Coast State College, the Health Sciences, or Nursing Division has informed me about the need for a satisfactory background check for licensing boards/exams. In signing this form, I further acknowledge that Gulf Coast State College nor the Health Sciences or Nursing Divisions are liable if I am denied licensure or authorization to take a licensure exam following program completion due to criminal background findings.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed name of student

A-\_\_\_\_\_  
GCSC Student ID Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of student

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Faculty or Program Coordinator Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Health Sciences or Nursing Program



## Confidentiality Statement

We are required by applicable federal and state laws to maintain the privacy of all health information of all patients seen during clinical observations and clinical rotations. This means that all information in the patient's record is personal and confidential. Discussion of confidential information, including patients' name, should only take place during clinical hours, at work stations, with those persons directly involved and having a defined need or legal right to know. Computerized medical records are governed by this policy the same as information in written medical records. You may NOT remove records from the clinic area or discuss any patient with your friends and family. Health information should NOT be shared with family members of the patient unless the patient has authorized you to do so in writing. The exception to this would be a minor child (under 18 years of age). In this case permission for treatment must be obtained from parent or legal guardian prior to the start of the treatment.

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have received a copy of this confidentiality statement for the Gulf Coast State College PTA program and agree to abide by the rules and regulations stated herein.

Student's Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Today's Date \_\_\_\_\_

***This document will be placed in your program file for reference in the event of any Confidentiality violation.***





## Learning Contract

The learning environment is the second teacher in the classroom; and is a positive attitude toward maintaining this environment that will help you to be successful. This contract includes the student behaviors that the program considers important to achieve the goal of demonstrating positive behaviors and attitudes in the classroom, clinic and community which will contribute to lifelong learning.

- Reading assignments are clearly designated in the course syllabus or through assignments given during class. I agree to prepare myself for class by reading assignments and completing assigned projects on time.
- Missed classes are time that is lost. There is no way to recreate the discussion and there is no guarantee that there will be opportunities to revisit topics covered during class. I understand that I have a responsibility for obtaining any material missed. I also understand that I have a responsibility to contact the instructor of that course for needed clarification or remediation for missed material.
- Tardiness and missed class time affects all students and interruptions of any kind disrupt the learning process. I agree to arrive on time for class and clinicals and remain until the session is over.
- I will make an effort to learn about my classmates and be sensitive to cultural values and diversity, especially with regard to expression of ideas and feelings that may differ from mine.
- I will display a positive and respectful attitude toward my peers, professors and the learning environment.
- I understand my work will be evaluated constructively and that specific suggestions will be made by the instructor to assist my learning to become a competent professional. I will welcome new ideas and approaches to learning and demonstrate flexibility and willingness to consider them.
- Disruptive behavior of any type affects the learning environment. If I demonstrate such behavior, I understand that I will be dismissed from class and will receive a written warning. A written warning will result in a reduction from my class and/or lab grade. Subsequent behavior may result in further reprimand including probation and possible dismissal from the program.

---

Student Name (Print)

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Student Signature

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## PTA PROGRAM COUNSELING RECORD

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Time Session Begins: \_\_\_\_\_ Ends: \_\_\_\_\_ Conference Location: \_\_\_\_\_ Course: \_\_\_\_\_

### Opportunity for Improvement/Reasons for Conference:

- ☐ Excessive Absences \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Excessive Tardiness \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Academic Deficiency \_\_\_\_\_ Homework \_\_\_\_\_ Clinical \_\_\_\_\_ Lab Skills \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Objectives not being met or /regulations/policies not followed: Clinical \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom \_\_\_\_\_ Lab \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Required competencies lacking/Safety violations: \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Unprofessional conduct exhibit: Clinic \_\_\_\_\_ Classroom \_\_\_\_\_ Lab \_\_\_\_\_ External/Rotation Site \_\_\_\_\_

Values defining professionalism in PTA education

*(Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant, APTA, 2021)*

- |   |  |                                     |                                    |  |
|---|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Accountability | <input type="checkbox"/> Collaboration       | <input type="checkbox"/> Duty       | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrity | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Responsibility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Altruism       | <input type="checkbox"/> Caring & Compassion | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellence | <input type="checkbox"/> Inclusion |  |

#### CHECK CONDUCT:

- ☐ Inappropriate attire
- ☐ Excessive Talking
- ☐ Use of cell phone in class/clinic/lab/external or rotation
- ☐ Inappropriate
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Consumption of \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Failure to consider patient's welfare

### Description of deficiency/event (Include supporting documentation – if applicable):

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### Type of Disciplinary Action Taken:

- ☐ Verbal counseling regarding deficiencies
- ☐ Probationary status (date begun \_\_\_\_\_)
- ☐ Withdrawal/Dismissal from program – Instructor initiated
- ☐ Withdrawal from program – Student initiated
- ☐ Written warning of deficiencies
- ☐ Interruption of training (pending review)
- ☐ Student may reapply to program
- ☐ Student ineligible to reapply – Reason: \_\_\_\_\_

**Improvement Plan/Student Outcome Expected** *(Recommendations are provided to make the student aware of their deficiencies and to provide an opportunity for the student to correct those deficiencies):*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Improve the academic standing in recommended class to at least a 2.0 GPA |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mandatory attendance in all classes                                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Being on time and prepared for each class             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Following appropriate rules/guidelines/policies                          | <input type="checkbox"/> Meet objectives as outlined in course                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conduct oneself professionally and responsibly                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Correct safety violations                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Referral to _____ Student Services/Counseling                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Financial Aid Assistance                              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____   | <input type="checkbox"/> Plan Complete/Outcome to be achieved by (Date): _____ |

***Failure to correct deficiencies may result in withdrawal from the program***

**Comments/Discussion:**

**Signatures of Those Present:**

Student \_\_\_\_\_ Course Faculty \_\_\_\_\_  
Asst. Coord./Programs Coord. \_\_\_\_\_ Other Witness \_\_\_\_\_

**VERIFICATION OUTCOME/GOALS MET:**

Date of Conference: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Student corrected deficiencies and now meets program/course objectives  
☐ Student did not correct deficiencies and does not meet program/course objectives Student will/has withdrawn from program – Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Course Faculty Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Asst. Coord./Programs Coord. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

## RISK AGREEMENT – PTA STUDENTS CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN SUPERVISED TRAINING EXPERIENCES

I \_\_\_\_\_, hereby consent to my participation in classroom demonstrations, laboratory, and clinical practice of skills and techniques, which are a necessary part of my education as a physical therapist assistant. After having instruction in the theory, procedures, and risks of each technique, I will assume the responsibility to inform the instructor of any condition from which I suffer which (1) may be contraindicated for the application of a specific technique and from which I may be excused from acting as the subject, or (2) may prevent me from safely administering a procedure and from which I may be excused from acting as the therapist. This agreement is signed by me with the following expectations:

1. I may withdraw by consent to participate as a subject or therapist for a specific procedure (1) in writing and (b) by providing evidence to the instructor of a condition, which constitutes a contraindication for the procedure.
2. Any information about myself, such as that provided in #1 above, will remain a confidential part of my record.
3. The instructor will be appropriately supervising all practice or clinical sessions to minimize any risk of injury to me or my subject from the procedure being performed.
4. It is not the policy of Gulf Coast State College to compensate students in the event that a demonstration or laboratory or clinical procedure results in physical or psychological injury. Gulf Coast State College will, however, make its best efforts to refer me to appropriate services, upon request, if injury does occur.

---

Signature

---

Date

Should I be injured and be unable to care for myself, please contact:

---

Name

Home Phone and Work Phone

Relationship



## HEALTH SCIENCES DIVISION

### **Authorization for Release of Personal Information, including the last four digits of Social Security Number**

This form allows GCSC Health Sciences to release to clinical affiliates (as requested) confirmation of an acceptable Level II background screening, 10-panel drug screening, physical examination, immunization compliance and satisfactory TB results.

The student should read the statements below concerning release of the last four digits of Social Security Number, then initial his/her statement of choice and complete the student information at the bottom portion of the page.

\_\_\_\_\_ **I authorize** Gulf Coast State College and the Health Sciences Division to release the last four digits of my social security number and any other personally identifiable information required to enter any Health Sciences program, participate in educational or clinical training experiences, graduate or complete my application for licensure or certification. This release includes, but is not limited to, the following agencies: any affiliate utilized for clinical training, Florida Department of Health, state licensing agencies and the Florida Community College Risk Management Consortium. Revocation of this release may be requested in writing to the Health Sciences Division.

### **OR**

\_\_\_\_\_ **I refuse** the release of the last four digits of my social security number. I understand that without the release of the last four numbers of my social security number, I will not be able to apply for authorization into required clinical training areas, nor will I be able to apply for licensure or certification as a graduate of the Health Sciences Program.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Student

A# \_\_\_\_\_  
GCSC Student Identification Number

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Coordinator/Faculty Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Health Sciences Program

CC: Original to Enrollment Services/student's permanent record

Copy to Health Sciences program/student's record

Rev. 813.2021



## GCSC MODEL RELEASE

I hereby grant to the Gulf Coast State College, acting for and on behalf of the Gulf Coast State College Board of Trustees, its legal representatives and assigns, and those acting with its authority and permission ("GCSC") the unrestricted right and permission to copyright and use, re-use, publish, and republish pictures and/or likenesses of me or those in which I may be included, in whole or in part, in any and all media for any lawful purpose, including the right to:

- Record my participation and appearance on video tape, audio tape, film, photograph or any other medium.
- Use my name, likeness, voice and biographical material in connection with these recordings.
- Exhibit or distribute such recording in whole or in part without restrictions or limitation for any educational or promotional purpose which GCSC, and those acting pursuant to its authority, deem appropriate.

I hereby waive any right that I may have to inspect or approve the finished product or products, as well as the advertising copy or other matter that may be used in conjunction therewith or the use to which it may be applied.

I hereby release, discharge, and agree to save harmless the photographer(s) and/or their legal representatives and assigns, as well as Gulf Coast State College, its legal representatives and assigns, and those acting with its authority and permission from any liability that may occur or be produced in the taking of said pictures or in any subsequent processing thereof, as well as any publication thereof, including without limitation any claims arising from any actual or alleged violation or infringement of any trademark, trade name, contract, agreement, copyright (common law or statutory), patent, libel, invasion of privacy, defamation, or any other cause of action arising out of the production, distribution and exhibition of the photographs and images.

I hereby warrant that I am of legal age and have the right to contract in my own name. I have read the above authorization, release, and agreement, and I am fully familiar with the contents thereof. This release shall be binding upon me and my heirs, legal representatives, and assigns.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone Number and/or E-mail Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Program of Study

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Witness



**Health Sciences Division  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Appendix P

## **Physical Therapist Assistant Program Release Form**

In order to maintain the accreditation status of a PTA program, the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education requires programs to gather information about their graduates. This information includes, but is not necessarily limited to, licensing exam scores, employer and/or patient satisfaction, academic preparedness, salaries and promotions. We will not request your employment evaluations, just general information through surveys that the program will mail out to employers. We hope you will sign below and give us permission to gather this program-relevant data.

Melinda Cumbaa, PT, MS, DPT, Coordinator  
Physical Therapist Assistant Program

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### **Release Form**

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Please Print Name

---

A#

My signature below indicates that I give the Gulf Coast State College, Physical Therapist Assistant Program permission to gather licensing and employment information about myself for the purpose of program evaluation and curriculum revision. All information will remain confidential and only statistics indicating trends and not identifying individuals, will be used in program analysis.

---

Signed

---

Date

# **GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE HEALTH SCIENCES PROGRAMS**

## **Responsible Use of Social Media**

### **Introduction**

Social media tools, which facilitate both one-to-many communications and presumably private communications, have grown to become a significant part of how people interact via Internet. Because social media are widely used as promotional tools, personal postings on public media sites can sometimes blur the line between the individual and the institutional voice. Gulf Coast State College Health Sciences Programs offers guidance for students, staff, and faculty to protect both their personal reputations and the public image of the GCSC Health Sciences Programs. These guidelines are not intended to regulate how individuals conduct themselves in their personal social media actions and interactions.

There are substantial differences between individuals representing themselves on public social media sites, individuals representing the GCSC Health Sciences Programs on public social media sites, and individuals using College-hosted social media. It is clear that even a single instance of improper or ill-considered use can do long-term damage to one's reputation, have potential consequences for a successful Health Sciences career, and could jeopardize public trust in the Health Sciences profession.

Furthermore, although not intended, never forget as student, staff, or faculty, you may always be perceived as a representative of the GCSC Health Sciences Programs. It is therefore in the best interest of the Health Sciences Programs, and all the members of the GSCS community, to provide its employees and students with a roadmap for safe, responsible use of social media.

While this document will provide more specific guidelines to help navigate particular interactions, all these spring from a set of basic principles:

1. Be respectful.
2. Assume anything you post is public, regardless of privacy settings.
3. Assume anything you post is permanent.

### **INSTRUCTIONAL USE OF SOCIAL MEDIA**

A social media site can be used for instructional purposes that foster a sense of community and motivation for students. Instruction, however, should be relegated to the college supported course management system (currently CANVAS). Private instructional pages that are utilized by invitation only are preferred in order to provide a greater measure of protection for the student.



Faculty should not use their own personal social networking pages for instructional use, nor shall faculty link to their personal social networking pages from their private instructional pages.

Student content created and/or posted to fulfill course assignment using social media does not violate students' privacy rights. Posting materials submitted directly to the faculty member may be a violation of FERPA policy. It is important to exercise extreme attention to student information and err on the side of caution in these situations.

## Intellectual Property

Intellectual property rights must be respected when utilizing social media networks for either personal or professional purposes. Some social networking applications stipulate that content posted on their sites becomes their property. When posting materials owned by others, an individual bears the responsibility of compliance with licensing and copyright requirements. When in doubt, one should request permission from the publisher, content creator, or owner of the materials. These same considerations should be applied to institutional materials and your colleagues' materials.

## FERPA/HIPAA

All legal privacy laws and policies regarding student and patient records must be followed without exception.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) ensures the privacy of "Educational records" of students. At no time should information that is considered part of the student's educational record be submitted, posted, or referenced through a social media network.

The following information should NEVER be communicated via a social networking tool:

Grades or test scores	Social security or school ID number	Disability status	Marital status
GPA	E-mail address	Academic standing	Birth date
Disciplinary actions	Attendance record/habits	Telephone number	Financial aid status
Time/day/location/course names of student's current classes	PIN number	Financial obligations owed	

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA; Pub.L. 104-191, 110 Stat. 1936, enacted August 21, 1996) that is intended to provide the portability of health records, must be adhered to at all times. This contains a Privacy Rule which establishes a provision for the use and disclosure of Protected Health Information (PHI). Under no circumstances should patient privacy be violated through the use of social media.

# GULF COAST STATE COLLEGE HEALTH SCIENCES PROGRAMS

## Responsible Use of Social Media - Guidelines

Gulf Coast State College Health Sciences Program's students, staff and faculty are personally responsible for any content they post on Social Media platforms.

<b>Be aware of liability</b> You are legally responsible for what you post. Take care not to infringe on copyright, defame or libel others, or otherwise violate the law when posting.	<b>Appropriate use of College logos and branding</b> College logos and branding should only be used on pages maintained by GCSC.
<b>Respect copyright</b> The GCSC Health Sciences Programs supports and respects the intellectual property rights of copyright holders. Content posted on the internet must conform to copyright law. Contact the GCSC Library for help posting copyright-compliant content.	<b>Be respectful of others</b> Keep a cool head when discussing and debating online. Be passionate on matters about which you are passionate, but always be constructive, exercise discretion, and be respectful to those with whom you disagree.
<b>Respect confidentiality</b> Any number of laws and policies (such as HIPAA and FERPA) may affect the confidentiality of information. Be aware of and conform to these laws, as well as broader institutional policies regarding confidentiality of information and good ethical judgment, when posting to social media sites.	<b>No stalking, flaming, or bullying</b> Abusive language, behavior, and content is not appropriate in any context. Do not insult, attack, threaten, or otherwise harass others. Remember that how a message is intended is less important than how it is perceived. If another individual indicates they find behavior threatening, cease this behavior immediately.
<b>Respect privacy</b> Do not discuss situations involving named or identifiable individuals without their consent. Do not post images, audio, or video of individuals without their consent.	<b>Think before posting</b> Privacy settings are not absolute. Anything put online can easily be shared and re-shared, and archiving systems preserve even content that has been deleted. As a result, content posted privately now may appear in search results for many years to come. Post only content you are comfortable sharing with the general public, including current and future employers.
<b>Do no harm</b> Postings, both in content and in substance, must not harm either the college network or the social networks themselves. Do not overload these networks with content that is repetitive, promotional, or will otherwise devalue the service for the rest of the community.	<b>Identify Management</b> When a site or page provides space for the community to interact, usually through comments or other feedback systems, it is important to keep these spaces free of spam and abusive content. Postings in these spaces should be edited to ensure there are no liability issues (i.e. removing links to content that violates copyright or breaks confidentiality rules), but should not be edited because their content is disagreeable.
<b>Be transparent</b> GCSC Health Sciences Program's students and employees should feel free to identify themselves as such when posting to social media sites. The association of a college email address with a social media account does not imply College endorsement of content. An individual must make it clear when they are expressing the opinions of the institution. Add a disclaimer if comments may appear to be coming from the College. Employees should be in coordination with their supervisor prior to initiating a social media account on behalf of their origination (department/college).	<b>Be a valued member of the community</b> When participating in an online community, content of postings should benefit the community as a whole. Consider the nature of the community and the expectations of its members when contributing. Do not use membership purely as a means of promoting yourself or your organization. Do not use the name of the GCSC Health Sciences Programs to endorse products, causes, political parties, or candidates.

## Representing the GCSC Health Sciences Programs

When acting as a GCSC Health Sciences Programs representative on social media networks, conduct yourself in a professional manner and follow the general guidelines outlined in this document. Use data and information that is accurate and not misleading. This is a responsibility that should not be taken lightly.

To maintain appropriate professional boundaries, one should consider separating personal and professional content online. Should there be student-faculty-patient interaction via social media platforms, appropriate boundaries and professional ethical guidelines should be maintained as they would in any other context. Should colleagues (student, faculty and/or staff) see posted content that appears unprofessional, they are responsible for bringing it to the attention of their colleague, so that he or she may take appropriate action regarding identity management.

## Violations, Concerns, and Dispute Resolution

Student, staff, or faculty actions which violate responsible use of social media as outlined by the GCSC Health Sciences Programs are subject to complaints, program counseling, and/or grievance processes. Failure to follow Health Sciences Programs policies and the terms of service of social media platforms could expose you to personal legal liability and/or legal action from third parties.

## References

University of Detroit Mercy. (2012). *University of Detroit Mercy Social Media Policy*.

Used with permission obtained from Pam Zarkowski, JD, MPH - ADEA Director's Conference June 2012.

AMA Policy: *Professionalism in the Use of Social Media*. Retrieved 8/6/2012, from [http://www.asa-assn.org/ama/pub/meeting/professionalism-social-media\\_print.html](http://www.asa-assn.org/ama/pub/meeting/professionalism-social-media_print.html)

Weinberg, T. (2008). *The ultimate social media etiquette handbook*. Retrieved 9/11/2012, from <http://www.technipedia.com/2008/social-media-etiquette-handbook/>

# Gulf Coast State College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

## Professional Activity Portfolio

The Professional Activity Portfolio (PAP) is a product that contains documentation of your professional growth throughout PTA program. The intent is to help identify personal strengths to achieve goals and weakness for areas of potential growth. In multiple courses throughout the program, there are meetings that require periodic grading and review of portfolio materials. The final PAP will be submitted for a grade as part of the coursework for Seminar, PHT 2931. This is one of the courses in the last semester in the program. The student is responsible for obtaining and maintaining all requirements throughout the program in an appropriate size (1") binder. Pages 1,2,6-9, should also be included in the final portfolio for PHT 2931.

### First Semester: \*PHT 1000 –

1. Complete the learning style assessment tool to identify three strengths and weaknesses. Fill out Strengths & Weaknesses Form and include in portfolio.
2. Complete the PTA Values-Based Behaviors Questionnaire, insert in portfolio.
3. Print out a Degree Audit through My Student Dashboard in Lighthouse for the PTA Program, include in portfolio. (Must have all general education requirements met by end of summer term in order to be eligible for Clinical Experience I.)
4. Start an initial resume, include in portfolio
5. Start a Professional Activity Log for tracking community service (need at least 40 hours)
6. Track your own professionalism - keep a record of any professionalism warnings received per course each semester. (If more than three write-ups, this will require additional community service hours.) If none, tally zero for that semester on the form.
7. Once all of these items are completed, contact a faculty advisor for your first review.(This can also be completed during the second semester)!

### Second Semester: \*PHT 1124 or PHT 1124L –

1. Make an appointment with a faculty advisor for review. **This must be completed & signed off by an advisor prior to registration for summer term.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, am beginning to exhibit conduct, which reflects a commitment to meet expectations of the community and other members of the healthcare profession, reflective of the APTA Core Values and Ethical Conduct for the PTA, as evidenced by participation in class, campus, and off-campus activities.

Student Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Third Semester: PHT 2211L-

1. Attend Clinical Inservice with DCE & Program Coordinator
2. Complete all requirements for Clinical Experience I Placement
3. Print out a Degree Audit through My Student Dashboard in Lighthouse – Are all general education requirements & HSC 1531 met? **(This is required for clinicals!)**
4. Update PTA Values-Based Behaviors
5. Include a copy of the letter sent to Clinical Experience I
6. Update Resume
7. Update Professional Activity Logs with community service hours
8. Update Professionalism Logs for each semester and indicate additional hours if required.

### Fourth Semester: PHT 2225L or PHT 2226L-

1. Print out an updated degree audit
2. Update the PTA Values-Based Behaviors
3. Review CPI Assessment from Clinical I and summarize/highlight activities needed to perform in clinical II/III.
4. Update Strengths & Weaknesses following clinical experience I
5. Update Professional Activity Log
6. Update Professionalism Log
7. Include a copy of clinical letters II/III
8. Schedule an appointment with a faculty advisor and review above material. **This must be completed and signed-off by an advisor prior to registration for final spring term.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, consistently exhibit conduct which reflects a commitment to meet or exceed expectations of the community and other members of the healthcare profession, reflective of the APTA Core Values for the PTA, as evidenced by participation in lab, campus, and off-campus activities.

Student Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Faculty Signature & Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Fifth Semester: PHT 2931-Time to turn in Final Portfolio!**

Your final professional activity portfolio binder should include all of the documents from the previous semesters (Pages 1, 2, 6-9 of this document) in addition to the requirements listed below. This purpose of this portfolio is to demonstrating your professional growth throughout the program and help you seek employment in the field of physical therapy upon graduation. Congratulations in making it this far, you are almost there!

This semester, the final portfolio will also need to include the following:

1. A cover letter for your resume, which includes personal experience in the program. The cover letter should contain your experience in the program, including a summary of clinical experiences, with a focus on the type of clinical setting you would like to work in after graduation. (This should be no more that 1-2 paragraphs, 300 word maximum.)
2. Updated Final Resume'
3. Updated Professional Activity Log (with proof that you attended the activity). Make sure all your hours are logged on the form below, and that you have at least 40 hours. You can add the documentation about hours behind the form. The more hours you list the better your portfolio demonstrates your commitment to service!
4. Quality Assurance Project -You will need to keep a copy quality assurance to present during clinical discussions and submit the original in your portfolio.
5. PTA Value-Based Behaviors (3 Self-Assessments: 1<sup>st</sup> semester, 3/4<sup>th</sup> semester, 5<sup>th</sup> semester)
6. Professionalism Summary- Strengths/Weakness, Professional Goals

For the professionalism summary reflect on the APTA's core professionalism values:

- Accountability
- Altruism
- Collaboration
- Compassion and Caring
- Duty
- Excellence
- Inclusion
- Integrity
- Social Responsibility

Reflect back through the program and your clinicals and summarize your growth in these areas. Identify which areas you still need continued improvement. Also identify three career goals.

# Professional Activity Expectations

Your participation in professional development activities is important now and once you embark on your career. Professional development goes hand in hand with behaving as a professional and succeeding in a career as a healthcare provider. In the PTA program you will be required to participate in at least 40 hours of approved activities throughout the curriculum. There are two categories that must be met within the total number of hours, 20 hours must fall under the General/Community category and the other 20 hours must fall under the Healthcare category. This participation will be graded as part of PHT 2931 in your final spring semester. The hours may be completed at any time during the course of the program.

- All activities must be approved prior to the day the activity is scheduled
  - o 20 Hours in General Category – This category would include general community events and activities.
    - The requirement can include many types of activities, but must include at least three different areas: interprofessional collaboration, advocacy, and leadership. (The student may not complete all 20 hours at one activity; there is a limit of five hours that can be recorded per activity, unless prior permission is granted from core faculty.)
  - o 20 Hours in Healthcare Category – This category must relate to PTA program outcomes with respect to volunteering experience, which will likely require supervision by program/clinical faculty.
- All students are required to attend the PTA program pinning ceremony during their freshmen year.
- The student must provide proof of participation to the instructor. (activity log, agenda, flyer)
- Any required service learning activity may or may not count toward your required hours and is at the discretion of the instructor.
- If three write-ups are accrued in any PHT class, an additional 5 hours of service will be required.
- For each unexcused absence, an additional 10 hours of service will be required.
- The student is responsible for maintaining all documented hours. The hours must be presented in a portfolio during PHT 2931.
- Failure to present required hours during PHT 2931 will result in an incomplete for the course and will impact graduation.

Professional Activity Log (All activities must be pre-approved by a faculty member.)

### **Examples of Professional Activities for the General Category:**

1. Serving on SGA at GCSC (being an officer for the PTA Club)
2. Heart Walk/Buddy Walk
3. Triathlon Event
4. College Night
5. Health Fairs
6. GCSC Events
7. Attending activities associated with the APTA or the FPTA (no more than 3 hours used for meetings)

### **Examples of unapproved activities for the general category:**

1. Activities attended during clinical rotations or as part of class assignments (observing surgeries, participating with in-services held at the facility)
2. Activities attended as part of your employment
3. Observations as required in any PHT course
4. \*Activities as part of a formal PTA course (\*At the discretion of the instructor)

IPE = Interprofessional Education (Working together with other professions for the benefit of the mock patient or patient. This requires communication with other disciplines and teamwork!)

Advocacy = Participating in an activity where one promotes the profession. This can be achieved by contacting your state representative or senator about an issue that faces the profession, it can be achieved by promoting the field of physical therapy to others during college events.

Leadership = This can include any volunteer activity where you took the lead to organize or speak for the group. There are many events that occur on campus, with leadership opportunities.



## Identify Personal Strengths/Weaknesses and Professional Goals

Identify three strengths:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Identify three weaknesses:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

For each weakness listed, identify a strategy that might help you overcome this weakness with respect to your education/future employment:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

### **Career Plan:**

Where do you see yourself in five years? Please list at least three professional goals.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Professionalism Tally: Record of any written warnings received for professionalism. [The student is responsible for keeping track of all write-ups and filling out this form.]**

List Specific Course & Date(s)	Type (late, missing assignments, etc.)	Tally (Excused vs. Unex.)
PHT 1000		
PHT 1102		
PHT 1102L		
PHT 1200		
PHT 1200L		
	<b>Fall I - Total</b>	
PHT 1124		
PHT 1124L		
PHT 1220		
PHT 1220L		
PHT 1131		
PHT 1131L		
	<b>Spring I - Total</b>	
	<b>Additional Hours Required?</b>	Yes, # _____ -Or -No extra hours needed.
PHT 2224		
PHT 2224L		
PHT 2211		
PHT 2211L		
	<b>Summer I - Total</b>	
PHT 2801		
PHT 2225		
PHT 2225L		
PHT 2226		
PHT 2226L		
	<b>Fall II - Total</b>	
	<b>Additional Hours Required?</b>	Yes, # _____ -Or -No extra hours needed.
PHT 2820		
PHT 2931		
	<b>Spring II - Total</b>	
	<b>Overall Total</b>	
	<b>Additional Hours Required?</b>	Yes, # _____ -Or -No extra hours needed.

**Gulf Coast State College**  
**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

***Note: No more than five hours per activity permitted without instructor approval. Must have at least one of each category (Leadership, Advocacy, or IPE)***

[illegible]

**Gulf Coast State College**  
**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**  
**Professional Activity Log – Healthcare Category (20 Hours)**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Activity</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Location of activity (List Clinical Site)</b>	<b>Signature</b>

Official

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

- ☐ Tardiness to lab/class:  
*Excused* \_\_\_\_\_ (No deduction)
- ☐ Absence from class/lab/clinic:  
*Excused* \_\_\_\_\_ (No deduction)

---

**\*Every 3 infractions accrued in the program will require an additional 5 hours of community service for the portfolio submitted in PHT 2931. Bolded items could result in immediate dismissal or probation depending on the situation. Any written warning will result in a professionalism grade deduction in the amount of 5 or 10 points. (See syllabus or program handbook for details.)**

- ☐ Tardiness to lab/class:  
***Unexcused* \_\_\_\_\_ (5 pt. deduction)**
- ☐ Absence from class/lab/clinic:  
***Unexcused* \_\_\_\_\_ (10 pt deduction)**
- ☐ Failure to complete assigned work in a timely manner
- ☐ Failure to follow directions
- ☐ Cell phone interruptions/texting/not class related computer use
- ☐ Inappropriate class/lab or clinical attire
- ☐ Lack of participation or preparation of class – text/supplies
- ☐ Use of inappropriate resources online to complete written work
- ☐ Failure to participate or complete group assignments (class/lab)
- ☐ Behavioral outburst
- ☐ **Inappropriate use of social networks (e.g. Facebook, Twitter; refer to social network policies for examples)**
- ☐ **Late to clinical site (clinical observation or rotation)**
- ☐ **Excessive absences - This may include a combination of excused and unexcused absences. Total number of excused & unexcused absences: \_\_\_\_\_**
- ☐ **Rude behavior (Lewd/inappropriate comments, gestures, cursing)**
- ☐ **Safety Issues (e.g. Failure to seek assistance when unsure of correct procedure or equipment use, blatant misuse of PTA program equipment, using equipment without proper supervision.)**
- ☐ **Cheating (including using another person's help to complete any type of homework, test, quiz, etc., online or in class)**
- ☐ **Plagiarism**
- ☐ **Discussing a practical examination before all examinations have been completed**
- ☐ **Giving others content, questions or answers for any quiz or examination**
- ☐ **Stealing**
- ☐ **Blatant violation of Fl. State laws, HIPAA, APTA standards of ethical conduct for the PTA, Gulf Coast State College Student Policies and Procedures**
- ☐ **Failure to report any arrests and/or convictions**
- ☐ **Any other behavior deemed unprofessional by academic instructor or clinical instructor**

Student Comments/Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Instructor Comments/Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## Leave of Absence Request During Clinical Rotation

If a student requires a "day off" during a clinical rotation due to unavoidable illness or absence, it is the student's responsibility to notify the CI and ACCE by 8:30 am on the day of the absence and seek approval. Days are to be made up at the discretion of the CI as per his/her schedule. As per the PTA clinical education handbook, the student will be excused from clinical responsibility if the clinical facility recognizes a holiday. Holidays recognized on the college calendar are not honored for clinical education unless the clinical facility is closed. The student must notify the ACCE and fill out this form if the clinic observes the holiday and is closed. In the event of inclement weather, if the college closes, the students are not permitted to go to the clinical facility. The ACCE will inform the student if this should occur.

### Leave of Absence Request

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Rotation #: \_\_\_\_\_

Clinical Facility name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of CI: \_\_\_\_\_

Date(s) requesting off: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Request: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Approve by CI: Yes    No                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CI Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Student Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

=====To Be Filled out by the ACCE=====

Student will make up lost time? Yes            No

Make up dates schedule: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by ACCE? Yes            No                      Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\*The ACCE will inform the student of any time that must be made up\*

HEALTH SCIENCES DIVISION  
PTA Program

Date

Dr. \_\_\_\_\_/Organization

Street Address

City, State, Zip

Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,

I have been asked to provide a recommendation for \_\_\_\_\_ regarding an employment position with your facility. I can validate for you that this individual attended the Physical Therapist Assistant program at Gulf Coast State College and graduated in good standing. The PTA program maintains a rigorous curriculum with high expectations and I am confident that all graduates are adequately prepared to enter the workforce with clinical competence and skills.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or need further information regarding the expected outcomes of GCSC PTA program graduates. As a member of the medical community, you are always invited to share with us any perceived need or accolade that you experience as a result of employing a GCSC graduate!

Sincerely,

Faculty Name / Credentials

CC: PTA Program Coordinator