

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Manual

**Cecil College
One Seahawk Drive
North East, Maryland 21901**

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CECIL COLLEGE

Administration

President: Dr. Mary Way Bolt, EdD

Vice President of Academic Programs: Dr. Kimberly Batty-Herbert, EdD

Dean of Nursing and Health Professions: Dr. Christy Dryer, DNP, RN, CNE

Mission, Vision and Values

MISSION

Cecil College is an inclusive, open-access community college committed to academic excellence and service to the greater community. A supportive learning environment is offered to our diverse body of students as they build the skills and knowledge to achieve academic success, prepare to transfer, or enter the workforce. Further, Cecil fosters intellectual, professional, and personal development through lifelong learning opportunities, the arts, and community engagement.

VISION

Cecil College, a dynamic and dedicated center of learning that transforms lives and our community.

VALUES

Collaboration: We will foster a cooperative environment that is collegial, seeks consensus, and builds on the strength of each individual.

Compassion: We will show care and concern for our students, our community, and each other.

Diversity Inclusiveness: We will value diversity within the institution, honor shared governance, and encourage tolerance where differences exist.

Excellence: We will pursue excellence in all facets of college operations as we aspire to be the best of the best.

Innovation: We will make bold efforts to provide the most innovative learning environment for our students and our community.

Integrity: We will demonstrate honesty and respect at all times and act in an ethical manner in matters concerning the college and the community.

Stewardship: We will honor public trust to be ethical stewards of the human, fiscal, and physical resources entrusted to the institution.

Non Discrimination Policy

It is the policy of Cecil College not to discriminate against any individual by reason of race, color, sex, marital status, citizenship, national or ethnic origin, age, religion, sexual orientation, or disability (which can be reasonably accommodated without undue hardship) in the admission and treatment of students, educational programs and activities, scholarship and loan programs, recruitment, hiring or promotion of faculty and staff, or with conditions of employment, in accordance with and to the extent required by law.

The Director of Human Resources is available to assist college employees in answering questions or resolving issues related to the non-discrimination, equal opportunity and issues related to access and accommodation for individuals with disabilities. The ADA and Special Services Officer is available to assist students with this information.

PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT (PTA) PROGRAM

Faculty and Staff

PTA Program Director: Melody M. Stanhope, PT, DPT

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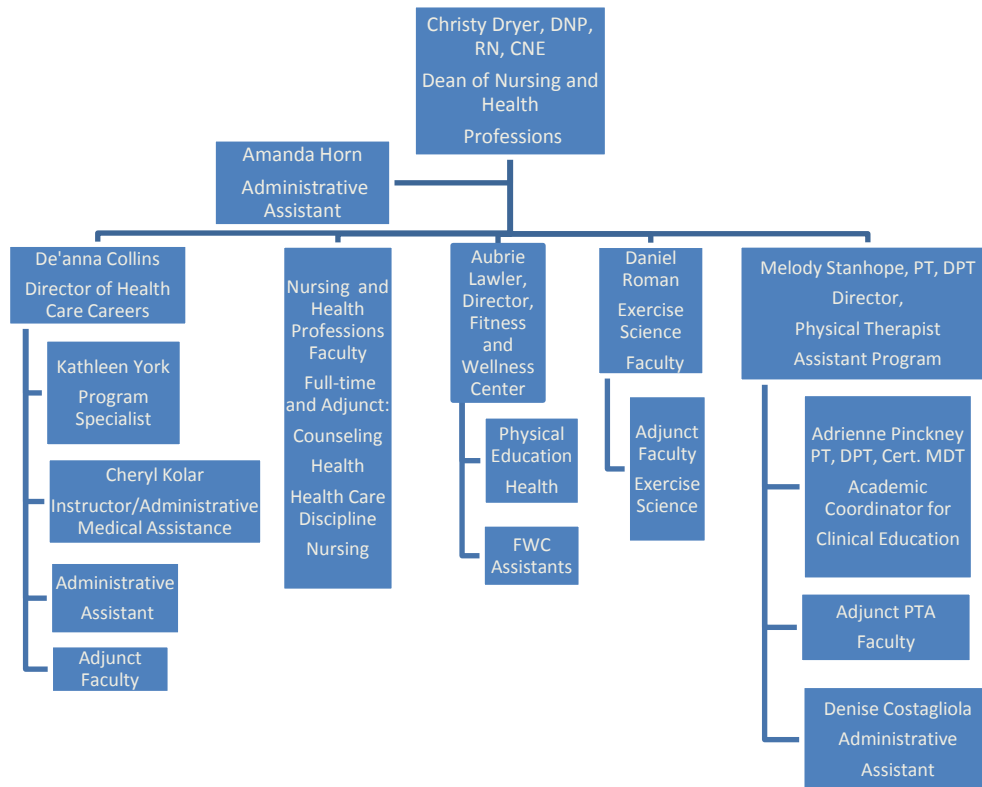
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Advisory Board

The PTA Program Advisory Board is composed of representatives from health care agencies and interested citizens having specific knowledge and expertise in the field of physical therapy. The advisory board will meet a minimum of once a year to provide feedback to faculty on topics related to program development. This assistance is invaluable as the College establishes and develops educational activities that respond to changes in technology and practice, while providing a vital link between the community and the College.

The Program Director shall prepare the agenda, schedule, and conduct meetings unless otherwise delegated. Records of the business transacted at all meetings and distribution of the minutes to faculty and advisory board members will be the responsibility of a member of the staff or faculty as delegated by the Program Director.

Accreditation

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Cecil College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation@apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>.

Right to Due Process

If a student's questions and/or concerns regarding program accreditation are not addressed to the student's satisfaction by the program, the student may contact CAPTE directly and in writing at:

Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education
Attn: PTA Programs
1111 North Fairfax Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
<http://www.capteonline.org/Home.aspx>

Comments

Complaints that fall outside due process involving clinical education sites, employers of graduates or the general public are handled on a one-to-one basis by the PTA Program Director who will attempt to resolve the issues. At the discretion of the Program Director and depending on the issue, it may be relayed to another department or person within the College for resolution. All complaints are documented by the Program Director, kept confidential, and stored in a locked cabinet in a "Comments File" within the program's office as a permanent record. An easily accessible "Comments" link is available online at <http://www.cecil.edu/Programs/Health-Professions/Degrees-and-Certifications/Pages/Physical-Therapist-Assistant.aspx>.

Mission, Vision and Values

MISSION

Consistent with the Cecil College Mission, the mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is to provide an optimal learning experience which fosters academic excellence, critical thinking, clinical performance and high ethical standards. This will be accomplished by providing a supportive learning environment of integrated classroom, laboratory, and clinical education experiences that prepare students to deliver the highest quality of patient care, under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. Ultimately, the outcome will be to graduate well-educated, competent, compassionate physical therapist assistants who strive for excellence, commit to high ethical standards, appreciate diversity, invest in their community and engage in lifelong learning.

VISION

The Cecil College PTA program will provide a premier educational experience grounded in the best practice in adult education and physical therapy curriculum design.

VALUES

- ❖ Collaboration
- ❖ Compassion
- ❖ Diversity
- ❖ Excellence
- ❖ Innovation
- ❖ Integrity
- ❖ Stewardship

Description of the Profession and Professional Roles

Physical therapy is a dynamic profession with an established theoretical and scientific base and widespread clinical applications in the restoration, maintenance, and promotion of optimal physical function. For more than 750,000 people every day in the United States, physical therapists diagnose and manage movement dysfunction and enhance physical and functional abilities; restore, maintain and promote not only optimal physical function but optimal wellness and fitness and optimal quality of life as it relates to movement and health; and prevent the onset, symptoms, and progression of impairments, functional limitations, and disabilities that may result from diseases, disorders, conditions, or injuries (APTA, 2003).

The Physical Therapist

As essential participants in the health care delivery system, physical therapists assume leadership roles in rehabilitation: in prevention, health maintenance, and programs that promote health, wellness, and fitness; and in professional and community organizations. Physical therapists also play important roles both in developing standards for physical therapist practice and in developing health care policy to ensure availability, accessibility, and optimal delivery of physical therapy services. Physical therapy is covered by federal, state, and private insurance plans. The positive

impact of physical therapists' services on health-related quality of life is well accepted (APTA, 2003).

Using their body of knowledge, physical therapists integrate five elements of care in a manner designed to maximize the patient's/client's outcome. This is referred to as the Patient-Client Management Model (PCMM). The five elements are:

- *Examination:* A comprehensive screening and specific testing process leading to diagnostic classification or, as appropriate, to a referral to another practitioner. The examination has three components: 1) the patient/client history 2) the systems review and 3) tests and measures.
- *Evaluation:* A dynamic process in which the physical therapist makes clinical judgments based on data gathered during the examination.
- *Diagnosis:* Both a process and a label. The diagnostic process includes integrating and evaluating the data that are obtained during the examination to describe the patient/client condition in terms that will guide the prognosis, the plan of care, and intervention strategies.
- *Prognosis:* The determination of the predicted optimal level of improvement in function and the amount of time needed to reach that level, and also may include a prediction of levels of improvement that may be reached at various intervals during the course of therapy.
- *Intervention:* The purposeful interaction of the physical therapist with the patient/client and, when appropriate, with the physical therapist assistant and other individuals involved in patient/client care, using various physical therapy procedures and techniques to produce changes in the condition that are consistent with the diagnosis and prognosis (APTA, 2003).

The Physical Therapist Assistant

- Physical Therapist Assistants (PTAs) work as ***an integral part of a team to provide limited physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of the physical therapist*** (APTA 2013).
- PTAs implement selected components of patient/client interventions and obtain data related to interventions; make modifications in interventions either to progress the patient/client as directed by the physical therapist or to ensure patient/client safety and comfort; educate and interact with physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, students, aides, technicians, volunteers, patients'/clients' families, caregivers; and respond to patient/client and environmental emergency situations (APTA, 2013).
- PTAs also demonstrate the ethical and moral conduct (see Appendix 15 for *Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant*) as they contribute to society and the physical therapy profession through the provision of physical therapy services, teaching, and administration. Depending on circumstances, some tasks may be performed cooperatively with other health care personnel or through supervision of aides and volunteers (APTA, 2007).

- The ***scope of work for the PTA is contained in the intervention component of the patient/client management model*** and includes the following, as directed and supervised by a licensed physical therapist:
 - Plan of Care review
 - Provision of selected procedural interventions
 - Patient/Client Instruction
 - Data Collection
 - Patient/Client Progression through the intervention with the plan of care
 - Documentation
 - Emergency Response

- Physical therapist assistants (PTAs) work as part of a team to provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist. PTAs help people of all ages who have medical problems, or other health-related conditions that limit their ability to move and perform functional activities in their daily lives. PTAs work in a variety of settings including hospitals, private practices, outpatient clinics, home health, nursing homes, schools, sports facilities, and more.

- Care provided by a PTA may include teaching patients/clients exercise for mobility, strength and coordination; training for activities such as walking with crutches, canes, or walkers; massage; and the use of physical agents and electrotherapy such as ultrasound and electrical stimulation.

Based on: *A Normative Model of PTA Education*, 2007; and *A Guide to PT Practice*, APTA, 2003.

Goals, Outcomes and Objectives

Program goals are in alignment with and in support of the strategic initiatives of Cecil College. It is the goal of the Cecil College PTA program to provide for the health care needs of Cecil County and the surrounding area by educating and graduating PTAs who are highly skilled, competent, ethical providers prepared to join the health care team.

The PTA program goals, outcomes and objectives are as follows:

1. Drive academic achievement. The Physical Therapist Assistant Program will provide current information to the community and to prospective students regarding the practice of physical therapy and the role of the physical therapist assistant in health care delivery. Information will focus on the pathway from advisement, application, and admission through program progression and completion.

Outcome/Objective 1A

Cecil faculty and staff will provide information to potential students through information sessions, career fairs conducted in the community and feeder high schools, and individual and group advisement opportunities. An orientation for all accepted students will be held prior to program start.

Outcome/Objective 1B

The PTA page on the Cecil College website will be monitored on an ongoing basis to assure that accurate and current information is available to potential and enrolled students.

2. Expand and deepen community alliances to meet the health care needs of Cecil County and the surrounding region.

Outcome/Objective 2A

The PTA Program Director and faculty will meet a minimum of once a year with an Advisory Board selected from the community (composed of area educators, clinicians and other stakeholders) to provide input on program curriculum, design, clinical education, equipment decisions and program assessment indicators.

Outcome/Objective 2B

Clinical affiliation contracts and letters of intent will be established and actively managed in local clinical facilities.

3. Foster a dynamic learning environment providing state-of-the-art classroom, laboratory and learning resources to enhance the student's attainment of the knowledge and skills needed for graduation from the program and licensure.

Outcome/Objective 3A

Equipment and supplies in the classroom and laboratory will provide students the opportunity to practice and demonstrate competence on clinical skills that reflect current clinical practice and the expectations of the profession and the local community.

Outcome/Objective 3B

PTA faculty will reflect content expertise in their area of instruction and use a variety of instructional modalities and approaches to enhance the students' knowledge, participation and skill performance.

4. Provide clinical education experiences which provide the student with the appropriate environment for attainment of competence in the day-to-day practice of physical therapy under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist.

Outcome/Objective 4A

Each student will rotate through a variety of clinical experiences including inpatient and outpatient settings as part of their clinical training.

Outcome/Objective 4B

At least 90% of all graduates will rate their clinical experience as "adequate" ($\geq 3/5$) as determined through information from graduate surveys.

5. Graduate individuals who are well prepared to provide entry-level knowledge, clinical skills and the professional abilities of a physical therapist assistant in a safe and effective manner; who demonstrate the ability to communicate verbally and in writing, in a clear and understandable manner; who conduct themselves in a truthful and ethical manner with both patients and other health professionals; and who seek out avenues in which to broaden and expand their professional roles to more adequately serve the health care field.

Outcome/Objective 5A

All program evaluation items on the graduate survey will be rated as “adequate” ($\geq 3/5$) by at least 80% of respondents.

Outcome/Objective 5B

On the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI), 95% of students will achieve a positive qualitative assessment by the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) and faculty based on the results of the clinical instructors’ narrative responses to each performance criterion and summative comments.

Outcome/Objective 5C

90% of program graduates will pass the national licensure exam as reported by the NPTE, data averaged over 3 years.

Outcome/Objective 5D

All survey items will be scored “adequate” ($\geq 3/5$) by at least 85% of respondents to the employer survey.

6. Achieve and maintain full accreditation by meeting all CAPTE evaluative criteria.

Outcome/Objective 6A

The Program Director will be responsible for attaining and maintaining full CAPTE accreditation status. This will include submitting all required forms, reports and fees in a timely and professional manner.

Student Outcomes

The identified student outcomes are to prepare individuals to function as entry-level Physical Therapist Assistants in a variety of settings including hospitals, schools, outpatient facilities, long-term care facilities and acute rehabilitation centers.

By the completion of the Associate of Applied Science Degree for a Physical Therapist Assistant at Cecil College, graduates are prepared to:

- Demonstrate the Minimal Required Skills of a Physical Therapist Assistant at entry level.
- Be knowledgeable of and practice in accordance with the Standards for Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant.
- Be knowledgeable of and demonstrate the Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant.
- Successfully pass the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE).

Student Learning Outcomes

The specific student learning outcomes are identified to facilitate the student's ability to acquire the necessary knowledge, skills, and behaviors for providing competent physical therapist assistant care under the supervision of a physical therapist in a variety of health care settings. As a provider of health services, PTAs should be self-motivated, creative, critical thinkers who strive for personal and professional growth.

Cecil College faculty will utilize the following student learning outcomes in implementing and evaluating the program's goals.

Program graduates are able to:

- 1. Demonstrate the entry-level knowledge, clinical skills and professional abilities of a physical therapist assistant**
 - a. In the delivery of interventions
 - i. Demonstrate competence and safety in implementing selected components of interventions identified in the plan of care, established by the physical therapist
 1. Functional training
 2. Infection Control Procedures
 3. Manual therapy techniques
 4. Physical agents and mechanical agents
 5. Therapeutic exercise
 6. Wound management
 - ii. Demonstrate competency in performing components of data collection skills essential for carrying out the plan of care. These include:
 1. Aerobic capacity and endurance
 2. Anthropometrical characteristics
 3. Arousal , mentation, and cognition
 4. Assistive, adaptive, orthotic, protective, supportive, and prosthetic devices
 5. Gait, locomotion, and balance

- 6. Integumentary integrity
- 7. Joint integrity and mobility
- 8. Muscle performance
- iii. Review the plan of care established by the PT prior to initiating patient/client intervention
- iv. Recognize when NOT to perform intervention based on patient signs/symptoms and when interventions are beyond the scope of a PTA
- v. Provide legal and ethical interventions as directed in the plan of care and supervised by the PT
- vi. Provide effective instruction to the patient/client and others to achieve the goals and outcomes as described in the plan of care
- vii. Participate in discharge planning
- viii. Collect data to quantify the patient's/client's response to interventions as directed and supervised by the PT
- ix. Progress the patient/client interventions through the plan of care
- b. In all communication
 - i. Complete documentation that follows professional guidelines, health care system, and physical therapy facility policies
 - ii. Complete documentation that is accurate, timely, thorough, logical, concise and legible
 - iii. Communicate an understanding of the plan of care developed by the physical therapist
 - iv. Expressively and receptively communicate in a culturally competent manner with PTs, patients/clients, family members, caregivers, other health care providers, students, interdisciplinary team members, payers, and consumers
 - v. Report changes in patient status to supervising PT and request clarification when needed
 - vi. Express and communicate outcomes
- c. During education activities
 - i. Participate in educating patients and caregivers as directed by the supervising PT to achieve outcomes based on the plan of care
 - ii. Effectively educate others using teaching methods commensurate with the needs of the learners
 - iii. Educate others about the role of the PTA
- d. During resource management activities
 - i. Adhere to federal and state legal practice standards and institutional regulations related to patient/client care and fiscal management
 - ii. Utilize human and material institution-based resources and services to provide high-quality, efficient, and cost-effective PT services

- iii. Comply with facility procedures and payer regulations consistent with the health care delivery system and the practice setting
 - iv. Participate in performance improvement activities
2. **Provide competent patient care under the direction and supervision of a licensed physical therapist, in an ethical, legal, safe and effective manner, in a variety of health care settings**
- a. Select and demonstrate appropriate clinical interventions based on best clinical practice and sound clinical evidence
 - b. Read and understand health care literature
 - c. Respond effectively to patient/client and environmental emergencies in the work setting
 - d. Demonstrate competence in the provision and documentation of interventions identified in the plan of a care established by the physical therapist
3. **Integrate behavioral expectations of altruism, caring and compassion, cultural competence, duty, integrity, PT/PTA collaboration, responsibility and social responsibility into professional practice**
- a. Demonstrate behaviors, conduct, actions, attitudes, and values consistent with the roles, responsibilities, and tasks of the PTA
 - b. Identify, respect, and act with consideration for the patient's/client's differences, values, preferences, and expressed needs in all physical therapy activities
 - c. Act in a manner consistent with the Standards of Ethical Conduct for the PTA, Standards of Practice for the PTA, and Maryland Practice Act for Physical Therapy
 - d. Demonstrate a commitment to meeting the needs of patients and consumers
 - e. Place patient's/client's needs above the PTA's own self interests
 - f. Exhibit compassion, caring, and empathy in providing services to patients/clients
 - g. Demonstrate integrity in all interactions with patients/clients, family members, caregivers, supervising PTs, coworkers, other consumers, employers, and payers
 - h. Promote active involvement of the patient/client in his or her care
 - i. Support and participate in organizations and efforts that promote physical therapy and demonstrate good citizenship
4. **Manage an effective transition from the educational program to a career as a licensed physical therapist assistant**
- a. Develop a plan for continuous professional competence and lifelong learning
 - b. Participate in learning and development activities to ensure continued professional competence
 - c. Participate in and respond to self-assessment activities
 - d. Change behavior in response to understanding the consequences (positive and negative) of the PTA's actions
 - e. Recognize role of PTA as a role model for PTA students
 - f. Pass licensure exam and secure entry-level job

- g. Qualify for state licensure or registry and to take the National Board Examination (NPTE) for the physical therapist assistant
 - i. Meet all qualifications for graduation
 - ii. Investigate and apply for state licensure and NPTE
 - iii. Develop study plan for NPTE, and successfully implement study plan for NPTE
- h. If successful in passing the NPTE, is able to apply for a job as a physical therapist assistant
 - i. Develop job seeking strategy
 - ii. Develop resume and cover letter
 - iii. Practice job interview skills
 - iv. Initiate plan for continued professional competence by citing continuing professional competence requirements of licensure jurisdiction

Section References:

APTA, 2003. Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, 2nd ed. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association, 2003.

APTA, 2007. A Normative Model of Physical Therapist Assistant Education: Version 2007. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association, 2007.

APTA, 2011. Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant. Alexandria, VA: American Physical Therapy Association, 2011.

CAPTE, 2013. Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapist Education Accreditation Handbook, accessed online at www.capteonline.org/AccreditationHandbook/.

Johnson, G.R., Bradford, B.J., Kreig, K.H., & Wehner, P.M. Taxonomy of Physical Therapist Assistant Behaviors. Baton Rouge, LA: Darbonne and Bartolett Publishers, LLC, 2007.

Shepard, K., Jensen, G. Handbook of Teaching for Physical Therapists, 2nd ed. Newton, MA: Butterworth-Heinemann Publishers, 2002.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS and TECHNICAL STANDARDS

Essential and Technical Functions

The PTA program is designed to prepare students with the skills, knowledge, and ability to successfully perform all of the required functions associated with the role of a physical therapist assistant at entry-level. Our goal is that all graduates will be competent in performing the skills listed in the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Minimum Required Skills of the PTA at Entry-Level.

To this end, the PTA program will meet our responsibility to graduate knowledgeable, competent and caring PTAs by requiring that students meet academic standards as well as the non-academic essential and technical functions required in clinical practice. Consistent performance across all of these domains is required to enter into the program, to progress through the curriculum, and to meet the requirements for graduation from the PTA program.

In order to successfully complete the PTA program, certain essential and technical functions must be demonstrated in the classroom, laboratory and in clinical education. PTA students must be able to demonstrate acceptable levels of competency and mastery with or without a reasonable accommodation in the following areas:

Affective Skills include emotional, behavioral, social, professional, and cultural competence.

Cognitive Skills include sufficient intellectual, conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities to make effective judgments about patient/client management.

Motor Skills include all necessary psychomotor clinical skills for patient care.

Sensory Skills include perceptual and observational skills necessary for patient care.

Communication Skills include verbal (oral) and non-verbal (written) abilities.

PTA students must demonstrate the affective, cognitive, motor, sensory and communication skills to enable them to meet program objectives and perform the job duties required by the profession. The following are essential functions required of PTA students.

Affective Skills

Possess the emotional health and stability to cope effectively with the stress of rigorous academic demands and clinical situations. Students must be able to:

- Maintain mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients, students, faculty, staff and other professionals in the academic and clinical environments, including in highly stressful situations.
- Possess the emotional stability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment that may change rapidly without warning and/or in unpredictable ways.

- Understand that his or her values, attitudes, beliefs, emotions, and experiences affect his or her perceptions and relationships with others.
- Possess the ability to reason morally and practice limited physical therapy in an ethical and safe manner.
- Demonstrate willingness to learn and abide by professional standards or practice.
- Possess the values-based behaviors expected of an entry-level PTA that include: altruism, caring and compassion, continuing competence, duty, integrity, PT/PTA collaboration, responsibility and social responsibility.
- Interact effectively with individuals, families, and groups from a variety of social, emotional, cultural and intellectual backgrounds in a variety of settings.
- Acknowledge and respect individual values and opinions in order to foster harmonious working relationships with colleagues, peers, and patients/clients.
- Demonstrate the ability to be self-reflective.
- Maintain general good health, self-care, and hygiene in order not to jeopardize the health and safety of self and individuals with which one interacts.
- Possess adequate endurance to tolerate physically, emotionally and mentally taxing workloads and to function effectively under time constraints, proactively making use of available resources to help maintain both physical and mental health.
- Accept suggestions and constructive criticism and, if appropriate, demonstrate a willingness to modify behavior.
- Adhere to the Cecil College Student Code of Conduct in all academic and clinical settings.

Cognitive Skills

Possess sufficient intellectual-conceptual ability that includes the capacity to use integrative and quantitative abilities to make decisions. These cognitive skills are critical for the PTA to make decisions and maintain a safe environment during intervention activities for patient/client management. Students must be able to:

- Recall and retain information in an efficient manner in order to meet the minimal requirements in the classroom and clinical environments.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, and the ability to prioritize, collect and analyze data.
- Appraise information to determine appropriate tests and measures during patient/client management activities.
- Acknowledge limitations of knowledge and/or performance in order to provide safe, effective patient care, including the necessity of seeking additional supervision and guidance from the licensed physical therapist or referring patients/clients to other health care professionals.

Motor Skills

Possess a variety of gross and fine motor skills. These skills are reflective of the physical capacities required to perform the job of a physical therapist assistant in a variety of settings. Students must be able to:

- Maintain and assume a variety of positions including sitting for up to 4–6 hours continuously, and/or standing for 1–4 hours continuously.
- Competently and safely perform, at a minimum, the following skills: forward bending, squatting, twisting, kneeling, stair climbing, forward and overhead reaching, crawling, pushing, pulling, carrying, and grasping.
- Perform safe handling and manipulation of patients/clients and equipment of varying sizes, weights and shapes. Specific requirements include:
 - Safely lift and transfer up to a 150 pound patient independently.
 - Safely lift and transfer up to a 250 pound patient with assistance.
 - Safely push and pull up to 200 pounds independently.
 - Safely lift and carry up to 50 pounds independently.
 - Safely guard patients during gait training on level surfaces and uneven surfaces/ramps/stairs with and without assistive devices.
- Demonstrate strong bilateral grasp and gross motor control when performing joint mobilization, range of motion, stretching, stabilization, therapeutic massage, and therapeutic exercise.
- Demonstrate the fine motor strength and control to palpate various body structures, take pulse, and manipulate testing instruments, equipment, writing instruments, and other technology.
- Demonstrate sufficient balance to provide support and balance to patients on a variety of surfaces including level and uneven grounds, ramps, curbs, and stairs.
- Demonstrate sufficient endurance to continue performing a variety of physical activities for up to 8–10 hours with occasional rest breaks.
- Respond quickly to emergency situations by lifting/pushing/pulling and transporting patients, applying force to perform CPR, and assist with transporting patients.
- Obtain and maintain CPR certification for Health Care Providers through the American Heart Association.

Sensory Skills

Include the ability to perceive all necessary information for effective patient/client management inclusive of the functional use of vision, hearing, and tactile sensations. During classroom, laboratory, and experiential learning activities the student must be able to perceive the presentation of information through:

- Visual Ability
Possess the visual acuity to:
 - Read and write reports/charts as well as professional literature.
 - Discern patient status via observations of their physical condition and non-verbal behavior.
 - Differentiate colors and numbers as associated with various pieces of equipment.
 - Observe the status/safety of equipment.
 - Observe that the treatment area presents no hazards.
 - Prepare equipment treatment parameters.

- Observe classroom presentations, written materials and laboratory demonstrations.
- **Auditory Ability**
Possess the auditory ability to:
 - Hear and interpret patient's and staff's voices.
 - Hear and respond to environmental cues inclusive but not limited to: equipment timers/alarms, phones, and paging systems.
 - Assess blood pressure, pulse rate, and breath sounds such as with a stethoscope.
- **Tactile Ability**
Possess the tactile ability to:
 - Demonstrate the safe application of gradient pressures during patient/client examination and interventions, including but not limited to: palpation, manual muscle testing, joint mobilizations, percussion and massage.

Communication Skills

Use appropriate verbal, non-verbal and written communication with all individuals and in all settings.

- Communicate effectively and professionally in English (both written and verbal form) with classmates, faculty, staff, patients, families and members of the health care team.
- Demonstrate the appropriate use of medical terminology.
- Express own ideas and feelings clearly and demonstrate a willingness to give and receive feedback.
- Receive and send verbal communication in emergency situations in a timely manner within the accepted norms of clinical settings.
- Analyze and communicate information on a patient's status with accuracy in a timely manner to members of the health care team, including seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.
- Demonstrate effective interpersonal communication skills as needed for productive classroom discussions, respectful interaction with classmates and faculty, and the development of appropriate therapist/patient/client relationships.
- Communicate clearly and audibly during interactions with classmates, faculty, staff, patients, families and members of the health care team.
- Listen attentively and actively in order to receive and interpret oral communications.
- Educate and train patients, caregivers and other stakeholders about treatment interventions, tests and measures, and activities of daily living.
- Demonstrate respectful and sensitive communication regardless of differences in age, gender, sexual orientation, race, religion, disabilities, and ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

A deficiency in the abilities listed above can severely diminish a student's chance of success in school and in the profession. The PTA program faculty will assist a student in meeting these technical standards, but the responsibility rests with the student. If a student cannot demonstrate the ability to meet the essential functions of a PTA student, it is the responsibility of the student to request appropriate accommodations. The College will determine whether it can provide a reasonable accommodation. This includes a review as to whether accommodations are reasonable, taking into account whether accommodations would jeopardize clinician or patient safety, clinical practice, the institution, or the educational process of the student, including all coursework and clinical experiences deemed essential for graduation.

Additional information on this topic may be found at the U.S. Department of Labor: Dictionary of Occupational Titles (see <http://www.occupationalinfo.org>). The Dictionary of Occupational Titles is a publication that classifies all types of jobs by their demands and requirements. Below is the technical description for the Physical Therapist Assistant that may be found at the site. This information is provided to all PTA students at Cecil College and is intended to help the student prepare for the physical, mental, and social aspects of this career.

Technical Skills Description for the Physical Therapist Assistant (Code: 076.224-010 Title: Physical Therapist Assistant)

- Administers physical therapy treatments to patients, working under direction of and as assistant to PHYSICAL THERAPIST.
- Administers active and passive manual therapeutic exercises, therapeutic massage, and heat, light, sound, water, and electrical modality treatments, such as ultrasound, electrical stimulation, ultraviolet, infrared, and hot and cold packs.
- Administers traction to relieve neck and back pain, using intermittent and static traction equipment. Instructs, motivates, and assists patients to learn and improve functional activities, such as pre-ambulation, transfer, ambulation, and daily-living activities.
- Observes patients during treatments and compiles and evaluates data on patients' responses to treatments and progress and reports orally or in writing to PHYSICAL THERAPIST.
- Fits patients for, adjusts, and trains patients in use and care of orthopedic braces, prostheses, and supportive devices, such as crutches, canes, walkers, and wheelchairs.
- Confers with members of physical therapy staff and other health team members, individually and in conference, to exchange, discuss, and evaluate patient information for planning, modifying, and coordinating treatment programs.
- Gives orientation to new PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANTS and directs and gives instructions to PHYSICAL THERAPY AIDES.
- Performs clerical duties, such as taking inventory, ordering supplies, answering telephone, taking messages, and filling out forms.
- May measure patient's range-of-joint motion, length and girth of body parts, and vital signs to determine effects of specific treatments or to assist PHYSICAL THERAPIST to compile data for patient evaluations.
- May monitor treatments administered by PHYSICAL THERAPY AIDES.

In summary, the U.S. Department of Labor classifies the Physical Therapist Assistant as: *GOE: 10.02.02 STRENGTH: M GED: R4 M3 L4 SVP: 6 DLU: 87*. This is a quick reference code utilized by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) to quickly identify characteristics of a job. The components of this code are described below as they relate to the physical therapist assistant:

- *GOE: 10.02.02*—This code describes general occupational exploration categories under which the physical therapist assistant profession will fall.
- *Strength: M*—This code describes the job as one which requires the ability to perform “Medium work” as defined by the U.S. DOL. *M–Medium Work*—Exerting 20 to 50 pounds of force occasionally, and/or 10 to 25 pounds of force frequently, and/or greater than negligible up to 10 pounds of force constantly to move objects. Physical Demand requirements are in excess of those for Light Work.
- *GED: R4 M3 L4*—This code describes the general educational development required of the profession. In the case of the physical therapist assistant, a reasoning level of “4,” a math level of “3,” and a language skill level of “4” are required. The DOL definitions of these terms appear below.
 - *04 LEVEL REASONING DEVELOPMENT*: Apply principles of rational systems to solve practical problems and deal with a variety of concrete variables in situations where only limited standardization exists. Interpret a variety of instructions furnished in written, oral, diagrammatic, or schedule form.
 - *03 MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT*: Compute discount, interest, profit and loss; commission, markup, and selling price; ratio and proportion; and percentage. Calculate surfaces, volumes, weights, and measures. Algebra: Calculate variables and formulas; monomials and polynomials; ratio and proportion variables; and square roots and radicals. Geometry: Calculate plane and solid figures; circumference, area, and volume. Understand kinds of angles and properties of pairs of angles.
 - *04 LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT*: Reading: Read novels, poems, newspapers, periodicals, journals, manuals, dictionaries, thesauruses, and encyclopedias. Writing: Prepare business letters, expositions, summaries, and reports, using prescribed format and conforming to all rules of punctuation, grammar, diction, and style. Speaking: Participate in panel discussions, dramatizations, and debates. Speak extemporaneously on a variety of subjects.
- *SVP: 6*—This code indicates that up to 2 years of specific vocational preparation are required for this field.
- *DLU: 87*—This code indicates that the last time the DOL studied and updated information about this field was 1987.

Students with Disabilities

To be qualified to progress through the PTA curriculum, the student must be able to meet both academic standards and essential and technical functions. The program expectation is that every student will be able to perform the essential functions required for entry-level practice as a physical therapist assistant with or without reasonable accommodations, while practicing safely, ethically, and in a legal manner. To this end, students with a disability seeking accommodations must:

- Self-identify disability status and provide documentation to the college which meets the eligibility guidelines.
- Request necessary accommodations in advance of the need.
- Meet the academic and institutional standards.
- Comply with the College's code of conduct.
- Follow the specific guidelines established for obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations and/or auxiliary aids.
- Notify the college of any concerns or difficulties in the receipt of accommodations.

Disability is defined as a medical, learning, physical or psychological impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities; having a record of such impairment; or be regarded as having such impairment.

- The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 reinforced the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act by requiring all public facilities, services and communications be accessible to persons with disabilities and auxiliary aids and services be provided unless an undue burden would result.
- Disability does not require colleges or universities to lower academic standards or fundamentally alter the nature of programs provided nor are reasonable accommodations intended for success within courses/programs. Adherences to the College's code of conduct as well as adherences to staff/faculty directions and instructions are required.
- Types of accommodations available: Appropriate accommodations must be determined based on the disability of the student and individual needs. Accommodations may include auxiliary aids and modifications to academic requirements as are necessary to ensure **EQUAL** educational opportunities. Examples: alternative text format; course substitution; note takers; sign language interpreters; extended time on quizzes, tests and in class assignments; and usage of a low-distraction testing lab. Others may be available based on the student's disability and need.

The College is not required to:

- Lower or affect substantial modifications to essential program requirements. For example, although your school may be required to provide extended time for testing, it is not required to change the content of the test. It also is not required to provide additional time on clinical care competencies when there would be a negative impact to patient/client care.
- Make modifications that would fundamentally alter the nature of the service, program, or activity or would result in undue financial or administrative burdens.

- Provide personal attendants, individual prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature, such as tutoring or typing. Personal aides and personal devices are the responsibility of the student.

Please visit the OCR website to learn more at

<http://www.2.ed.gov/about/programs/list/ocr/docs/auxaids.html>.

CURRICULUM

Philosophy and Introduction

The curriculum philosophy is concerned with the education of the physical therapist assistant student, the professional role of the physical therapist assistant, clinical modeling and best academic and clinical practice. The curriculum has been developed under the premise that students are adult learners who are responsible for their own actions and who should be free to pursue their educational objectives in an environment that promotes learning, safe and professional practice, and assures the safety of other students, faculty, patients and the community as a whole. The program curriculum is designed to assist students in developing an understanding and appreciation of the profession of physical therapy, their roles and responsibilities in the delivery of health care, as well as their roles and responsibilities in society.

The PTA program at Cecil College believes that curriculum development, implementation and evaluation are the most critical elements in producing competent, skilled and ethical entry-level PTA graduates. It is important therefore that curriculum design rest on a rational and cohesive foundation.

The comprehensive curriculum plan of the PTA program includes a series of organized, sequential and integrated learning experiences. The general education component is designed to prepare students to think independently, to clarify values, to understand fundamental theory, and to develop critical thinking and communication skills. The technical education component includes learning experiences to prepare entry-level physical therapist assistants to work under the direction and supervision of the physical therapist.

Program Curriculum

GENERAL EDUCATION COURSES		TECHNICAL COURSES	
Course	Credits	Course	Credits
BIO 101	3	PTA 101	1
BIO 111-LAB	1	PTA 102	3
BIO 208	3	PTA 103	3
BIO 218-LAB	1	PTA 204	3
BIO 209	3	PTA 206	3
BIO 219-LAB	1	PTA 210	1
EGL 101	3	PTA 212	2
EGL 102	3	PTA 220	4
MAT 123	3	PTA 222	3
PSY 101	3	PTA 224	3
PSY 201	3	PTA 226	2
		PTA 230	3
		PTA 232	6
		PTA 234	6
Total Credits: 27		Total Credits: 43	
TOTAL PROGRAM CREDITS: 70			

Recommended Sequence

FALL 1		
EGL 101	Freshman Composition	3
PSY 101	Introduction to Psychology	3
MAT 123	Finite Math ¹	3
BIO 101	General Biology	3
BIO 111	General Biology Lab	1
BIO 208	Human Anatomy and Physiology I ²	3
BIO 218	Human Anatomy and Physiology I Lab ²	1
		Total: 17
SPRING 1		
EGL 102	Composition and Literature	3
PSY 201	Human Growth and Development	3
BIO 209	Human Anatomy and Physiology II ²	3
BIO 219	Human Anatomy and Physiology II Lab ²	1
PTA 101	Introduction to Physical Therapy	1
PTA 102	Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics	3
PTA 103	Clinical Skills for the PTA	3
		Total: 17
SUMMER 1		
PTA 204	Therapeutic Modalities	3
PTA 210	Seminar I	1
PTA 206	Therapeutic Exercise	3
		Total: 7
FALL 2		
PTA 230	PTA Clinical Practicum I (first 3 weeks)	3
PTA 220	Clinical Orthopedics	4
PTA 222	Clinical Neurosciences	3
PTA 224	Clinical Cardiopulmonary and Integumentary	3
PTA 226	Special Populations (pediatrics, geriatrics, women's health, oncology)	2
		Total: 15
SPRING 2		
PTA 232	PTA Clinical Practicum II (6 weeks)	6
PTA 212	Seminar II	2
PTA 234	PTA Clinical Practicum III (6 weeks)	6
		Total: 14
Total Program Credits: 70		
Total Clinical Hours: 600		
Total Semesters: 5		
¹ Any General Education Mathematics 121 or higher will be accepted. ² Anatomy and Physiology taken more than four years prior to admission to the PTA program must be repeated or a waiver must be signed.		

Course Descriptions

General Education Courses

BIO 101 General Biology – 3 credits

General Biology introduces the student to the basic biological principles common to all living things, with emphasis on evolution, diversity, ecology, physiology and genetics.

Co-requisites: BIO 111; EGL 101; MAT 093

BIO 111 General Biology Lab – 1 credit

General Biology Lab is a general education science laboratory course designed to actively involve the student in the process of science. At the completion of this course, the student will have performed experimental activities that include direct experience with real phenomena, use of technology, and the collection, analysis, interpretation and presentation of data.

Co-requisite: BIO 101

BIO 208 Human Anatomy and Physiology I – 3 credits

Human Anatomy and Physiology I studies the structural and functional organization of the human organism with initial emphasis on the concepts of homeostasis and levels of organization. This is followed by a brief survey of histology and then the study of four organ systems: integumentary, skeletal, muscular and nervous.

Pre-requisite: BIO 101 or BIO 130 / Co-requisite: BIO 218

BIO 218 Human Anatomy and Physiology I Lab – 1 credit

Human Anatomy and Physiology I Lab provides a hands-on experience. Dissections, computer programs, models, wall charts, videos and microscope slides will be used to reinforce memorization of the anatomy and understanding of the functions of the systems of the body.

Co-requisite: BIO 208

BIO 209 Human Anatomy and Physiology II – 3 credits

Human Anatomy and Physiology II completes the sequence of study of the human body by studying the following organ systems: endocrine, cardiovascular, respiratory, digestive, urinary and reproductive. Relevant topics of metabolism, electrolytes balance, and human genetics and development are included.

Pre-requisite: BIO 208 / Co-requisite: BIO 219

BIO 219 Human Anatomy and Physiology II Lab – 1 credit

Human Anatomy and Physiology II Lab uses models, microscopes, dissections, and human observations. Students will reinforce topics in endocrine, cardiovascular, digestive, respiratory, urinary and reproductive systems.

Co-requisite: BIO 209

EGL 101 Freshman Composition – 3 credits

Freshman Composition introduces students to the principles necessary for writing effective expository and argumentative essays. Students have frequent opportunities to write in the essay form, including a brief analytical research paper.

Pre-requisites: EGL 093; COL081 (grade of "C" or higher)

EGL 102 Composition and Literature – 3 credits

Composition and Literature introduces students to the genres of fiction, poetry, and drama in order to gain a fuller understanding and appreciation of these literary forms. Several brief compositions and an analytical research paper are assigned.

Pre-requisite: EGL 101

MAT 123 Finite Math (or any general education math elective, MAT121 or higher) – 3 credits

Finite Math uses problem solving to develop critical thinking skills and illustrate mathematics in daily life. Each student will be exposed to a variety of problem solving methods including but not limited to the following: systems of linear equations, matrices, the Gauss-Jordan method, inequalities and linear programming, sets and counting techniques, probability, difference equations, Markov processes and game theory.

Pre-requisites: EGL 093; MAT 097 or MAT 098 (grade of "C" or higher)

PSY 101 Introduction to Psychology – 3 credits

Introduction to Psychology is both the scientific and philosophical study of behavior and thought. Topics covered include: methods used to study behavior, perspectives on personality, biological basis of behavior, states of consciousness, human development, learning, memory, motivation, emotion, social psychology, and mental health and adjustment.

Pre-requisite: EGL 093

PSY 201 Human Growth and Development – 3 credits

Human Growth and Development studies the developing person through the lifespan, from conception to death. Current research and theories are studied in order to describe and explain physical, cognitive, social, and emotional and personality development in infancy, childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, middle age, and late adulthood. The importance of specific environmental contexts in development and applications of research and theory is emphasized.

Pre-requisite: PSY 101

Technical Courses**PTA 101 Introduction to Physical Therapy: The Role of the PTA – 1 credit**

Course provides an introduction and orientation to the field of physical therapy. Course includes historical background, scope of PTA practice, medical-professional ethics and conduct, the role of physical therapist assistant as part of the health care team, PT/PTA collaboration, documentation, and orientation to psychological and social needs of the ill and disabled.

Prerequisite: None / Co-requisites: PTA 102; PTA 103

PTA 102 Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics – 3 credits

Course will present advanced anatomy of the musculoskeletal system with emphasis on joint mechanics, human movement, and palpation of anatomical landmarks. The student will learn the principles of normal and abnormal posture and gait. In lab, students will practice the identification and palpation of musculoskeletal structures and identify their related function.

Prerequisites: BIO 208; BIO 218 / Co-requisites: BIO 209; BIO 219; PTA 101; PTA 103

PTA 103 Clinical Skills for the PTA – 3 credits

This course is an introduction to the technical and professional skills needed to care for patients in varied settings. This course introduces documentation and examination of physiological measures, range of motion, strength and balance. In addition, it covers positioning and draping, body mechanics, and functional activity training. Common diseases and conditions encountered in the field of physical therapy are introduced. In lab, students will practice: goniometry, manual muscle testing, vital sign measurement, posture, balance and exertion scales, pain scales, functional mobility training and documentation.

Pre-requisites: BIO 208; BIO 218 / Co-requisites: BIO 209; BIO 219; PTA 101; PTA 102

PTA 204 Therapeutic Modalities – 3 credits

Course provides instruction in the theory and application of therapeutic modalities used by physical therapist assistants. Modalities covered include the therapeutic use of heat and cold, massage, hydrotherapy, traction, intermittent pressure pumps, and use of electrical currents. Common conditions requiring the use of these treatment modalities will be presented, and contraindications and special precautions for their use will be discussed. In addition, this course will include the appropriate test and measures necessary for the safe application of the modalities utilized by the physical therapist assistant.

Pre-requisites: BIO 209; BIO 219; PTA 102; PTA 103 / Co-requisites: PTA 206; PTA 210

PTA 206 Therapeutic Exercise – 3 credits

Course presents the principles of exercise physiology, the concepts and purposes of therapeutic exercise, a variety of exercise treatment strategies, injury prevention and the appropriate tests and measures necessary for the safe application of therapeutic exercise. Common equipment and exercise interventions to improve flexibility, strength and motor control will be covered. In addition, physiological responses to exercise for specific populations will include patients with chronic illness, children, geriatrics and pregnancy.

Pre-requisites: BIO 209; BIO 219; PTA 102; PTA 103 / Co-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 210

PTA 210 Seminar I – 1 credit

This course is the first of two seminars addressing the themes of professional issues, core values and the development of an entry-level professional candidate. These seminars will challenge the student to apply professional theme content during patient scenarios as introduced through a variety of case studies. This first seminar will focus on: interpersonal and professional communication, duty, and integrity (ethical, legal, and safe clinical practice), cultural competence and professional and legal standards for clinical documentation.

Pre-requisites: PTA 101; PTA 102; PTA 103 / Co-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 206

PTA 212 Seminar II – 2 credits

This course is the second of two seminars addressing the themes of professional issues, core values and the development of an entry-level professional candidate. Seminar II will be taken between PTA 232 and PTA 234 and will challenge students to apply professional theme content during patient scenarios as introduced through a variety of case studies. This seminar will cover career development, communication and continuing professional competence. Activities will include national board exam review preparation, job search strategies, resume development and professional interview skills.

Pre-requisites: PTA 210; PTA 230; PTA 232 / Co-requisite: PTA 234

PTA 220 Clinical Orthopedics – 4 credits

Course entails the study of structural anatomy, orthopedic conditions and their underlying pathologies. The student will learn to assess the musculoskeletal and nervous systems as they relate to the orthopedic clinical setting. Course content will focus on common cervical spine, thoracolumbar spine, upper extremity and lower extremity non-operative diagnoses and post-operative conditions, physical therapy interventions, post-operative and injury care protocols and treatment techniques.

Pre-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 206 / Co-requisites: PTA 222; PTA 224; PTA 226; PTA 230

PTA 222 Clinical Neurosciences – 3 credits

Course focuses on the study of neurological physiology, anatomy, and pathology and an introduction to motor control and motor learning throughout the lifespan. Course content will focus on developing foundational knowledge to work with the neurological pathologies most commonly encountered in the practice of physical therapy.

Pre-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 206 / Co-requisites: PTA 220; PTA 224; PTA 226; PTA 230

PTA 224 Clinical Cardiopulmonary and Integumentary – 3 credits

The course covers the pathologies associated with peripheral vascular disease, cardiovascular disease and integumentary disorders. Wound care treatments and techniques will be covered in lab.

Pre-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 206 / Co-requisites: PTA 220; PTA 222; PTA 226; PTA 230

PTA 226 Special Populations – 2 credits

The course will be presented in 4 distinct units covering the typical development and pathologies associated with the pediatric client (special attention to ages 0–12), the geriatric client, the women's health client (with attention to post mastectomy, lymphedema management, prenatal/post natal exercise) and the oncology patient.

Pre-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 206 / Co-requisites: PTA 220; PTA 222; PTA 224; PTA 230

PTA 230 PTA Clinical Practicum I – 3 credits (120 practicum hours)

Course provides students with supervised application of newly learned skills and reinforcement for previously learned skills in a selected physical therapy setting. A journal will be required documenting course experience and clinical objectives assigned.

Pre-requisites: PTA 204; PTA 206; PTA 210 / Co-requisites: PTA 220; PTA 222; PTA 224; PTA 226

PTA 232 PTA Clinical Practicum II – 6 credits (240 practicum hours)

Course provides students with supervised application of newly learned skills and reinforcement for previously learned skills in a selected physical therapy setting. A verbal presentation will be presented to the staff of the host facility as approved by the Clinical Instructor.

Pre-requisites: PTA 220; PTA 222; PTA 224; PTA 226; PTA 230 / Co-requisites: PTA 212; PTA 234

PTA 234 PTA Clinical Practicum III – 6 credits (240 practicum hours)

Course provides students with supervised application of newly learned skills and reinforcement for previously learned skills in a selected physical therapy setting. A capstone verbal presentation will be presented to the staff of the host facility after approval by the Clinical Instructor and program Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education.

Pre-requisites: PTA 220; PTA 222; PTA 224; PTA 226; PTA 230 / Co-requisites: PTA 212; PTA 232

PROGRESSION THROUGH THE PROGRAM

Drug and Alcohol Testing and Background Checks

- Upon application to the College, the student signs a form agreeing to abide by the drug and alcohol policy of the College. In addition, PTA students are subject to the drug and alcohol policies of the clinical institutions/facilities where they provide care. Failure to follow guidelines of the College and/or facility may result in a failure of the clinical course and/or dismissal from the PTA program.
- In accordance with the policies of our clinical facilities, Cecil College's PTA program requires all PTA students to submit to criminal background checks and drug screenings. A background check and drug screening will be completed **prior** to final admission to the program and may be repeated randomly throughout the student's enrollment in the PTA program.
- Background checks and drug screening, at the student's expense, are required prior to the student beginning the technical portion of the PTA curriculum (spring semester following notification of conditional acceptance).
- All students must successfully be cleared via a background check and drug screening to be eligible to participate in clinical education. Positive results will be shared with clinical facilities, as required by clinical affiliation agreements. If a student is denied entrance into a clinical facility and/or background and drug screening clearances are not completed, the student is ineligible to complete the required clinical education hours that lead to successful PTA program completion, and will not be admitted to Cecil College's PTA program.
- If the student refuses to submit to a background check and/or drug screening during any point in their enrollment in the PTA program, the student will become ineligible for clinical education and therefore subject to dismissal from the program.
- Students who do not pass a background check and/or drug screening during any point in their enrollment in the PTA program will become ineligible for clinical education and therefore subject to dismissal from the program.
- Appeal Process: A student who wishes to appeal the outcome of a background check and/or drug screening decision may do so in writing, addressed to the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions, within 7 days of receiving notice of the outcome. The written documentation and any supporting documentation will be shared with the clinical facilities and reviewed by them. **The final decision related to admittance to a clinical facility rests with the clinical facility. All decisions of the clinical facilities are final.** If a clinical facility determines that a student is ineligible to enter the clinical setting at their facility, the student may request a meeting with the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions to discuss this result; however, all decisions by the clinical facilities are final. Students who have not successfully passed a background check and/or drug screen are not permitted in the clinical setting and will not be able to continue in the PTA program.

Note: Students have access to their individual drug screening and background check information through a confidential website provided when they complete their screening.

Health Requirements (also see “Progression into the Clinical Experience”)

- In accordance with the policies of our clinical facilities, Cecil College’s PTA program requires all PTA students to submit documentation of a complete physical and all required immunizations **prior** to final admission to the program and the student beginning the technical portion of the PTA curriculum (spring semester following notification of conditional acceptance).
- By enrolling in the PTA program, students agree to meet and maintain all health requirements/records necessary to meet clinical facility requirements throughout the PTA program. The student must further be aware that health requirements may change during program enrollment and it is the student’s responsibility to meet and maintain the requirements of the clinical education facility to which they are assigned. Failure to meet and/or maintain health requirements may result in dismissal from the PTA program.
- If the student refuses to submit health work and/or complete required immunizations at any point in their enrollment in the PTA program, the student will become ineligible for clinical education and therefore subject to dismissal from the program.
- Students who do not comply with health requirements at any point in their enrollment in the PTA program will become ineligible for clinical education and therefore subject to dismissal from the program.
- Students whose behavior, physical health, or mental health places a client or clients in physical or emotional jeopardy may be dismissed or required to withdraw from the PTA program.
- Students will be responsible for any expenses that result from injuries and/or illnesses that occur during a clinical education experience.
- Students are required to have medical insurance upon entry into the program and to maintain it throughout the PTA program.
- Appeal Process: A student dismissed for noncompliance with the program health requirements who wishes to appeal the decision may do so in writing, addressed to the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions, within 7 days of receiving notice of the outcome. The written documentation and any supporting documentation will be shared with the clinical facilities and reviewed by them. The final decision related to admittance to a clinical facility rests with the clinical facility. All decisions of the clinical facilities are final. If a clinical facility determines that a student is ineligible to enter the clinical setting at their facility, the student may request a meeting with the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions to discuss this result; however, all decisions by the clinical facilities are final. Students who have not successfully complied with ALL of the program’s health requirements are not permitted in the clinical setting and will not be able to continue in the PTA program.

Academic Performance

Students are responsible for reading and understanding course requirements. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that he or she meets the requirements for progression through the PTA program. In addition, students need to have access to and be familiar with search engines, Microsoft® Word, PowerPoint®, and Blackboard.

Progression within the PTA curriculum requires that the student is able to pass both the didactic and laboratory portions of each class. If a student does not satisfactorily meet the course objectives as outlined in the course syllabus, he/she will be unable to pass the course and thereby progress in the curriculum. Course syllabi and the program manual describe the expected levels of academic and professional development required in PTA courses. Students who consistently demonstrate unprofessional, illegal, unethical, and/or unsafe behaviors during lecture or lab time will earn a failing grade for the course and may be dismissed from the PTA program.

Progression within the PTA program requires the student to demonstrate satisfactory academic and professional development. Students must maintain a grade of “C” in all PTA courses and maintain an overall grade point average of 2.0 to be considered in good standing in the program and eligible to advance to the next semester.

1. All PTA courses must be taken in proper sequence; first-year PTA courses must be passed with a “C” (76%) or better before proceeding to second-semester PTA courses. The following grading scale will apply for **all** PTA courses:

A	91-100%
B	81-90%
C	76-80%
F	75% or below

2. All general education courses must be successfully completed before a student may become eligible for clinical education coursework (beginning with PTA 230). A grade of “C” or better must be earned in the following general education courses:

EGL 101	Freshman Composition
BIO 208/218	Human Anatomy and Physiology I
BIO 209/219	Human Anatomy and Physiology II
PSY 101	Introduction to Psychology
PSY 201	Human Growth and Development

3. Students must have a minimum GPA of 2.5 in their pre-requisite coursework to enter, and maintain a 2.0 to continue in or return to the PTA program.
4. A student who withdraws from or fails any PTA course must repeat the entire course. If the student withdraws failing, this is counted as a course failure for the PTA program.
5. Students who fail or withdraw failing from two PTA courses are ineligible to re-apply to the PTA program.
6. Any exceptions to the above policies will be made by majority decision of the Director of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program and PTA faculty.
7. Procedures for student misconduct and/or academic restrictions follow the institutional policies found in the College Catalog.

Withdrawal

A student who wishes to withdraw from the PTA program should schedule an exit interview with the Program Director. It is recommended that the student attempt to withdraw from the program on good terms as this may facilitate readmission at a later time.

If a student wishes to withdraw from a specific course, the student must abide by the dates given for that particular semester printed in the Schedule of Classes. Students are cautioned that PTA courses are only offered in the semesters identified in the plan of study, and Technical courses are linked such that withdrawal from one course may require withdrawal from all technical PTA coursework in a given semester.

Due to the nature of the program, a student will not be allowed to advance to the next semester unless all required coursework is completed. The student can request re-enrollment into the PTA program when the course is offered again.

Dismissal

Students who do not demonstrate satisfactory academic, clinical and/or professional performance may be dismissed from the PTA program.

Professional behavior is formally and informally assessed by the faculty and is based on the student's adherence to the Cecil College Code of Student Conduct, and the professionally recognized Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant and Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant. The Cecil College Code of Student Conduct can be found on the College website or in the College Catalog. The remaining documents are included in this manual and found at apta.org.

If a student's behavior or performance is considered unprofessional by faculty, the student may be given a verbal or written warning and referred to the Program Director for advisement and counseling. If the behavior continues, the student may be dismissed from the PTA program and is not eligible for readmission.

If a student's behavior or performance is illegal, unethical or blatantly unsafe, they may be dismissed from the program immediately. If the student is removed for illegal, unethical or unsafe performance, they are not eligible for readmission.

A student's positive background check, positive drug screen or failure to comply with all required health work during PTA program enrollment may result in immediate dismissal from the program.

Re-enrollment/Re-instatement

If a student leaves the PTA program related to academic, health or personal reasons and is eligible for re-enrollment or re-instatement, the following applies:

1. PTA courses successfully completed by students will be valid for a period of two years. All attempts will be made to re-enroll students who withdrew from the program in good standing in the semester following re-enrollment application. Note: PTA courses are offered in sequence only once a year.
2. A student whose academic work has been interrupted for one or more semesters must submit a formal written request for readmission to the Program Director. The student must also make an appointment with the Program Director to discuss eligibility and placement availability in the program.
3. Students earning two failing grades in PTA courses will not be re-admitted to the program.
4. Students earning grade point averages below 2.0 will not be considered for re-entry.
5. PTA courses may be repeated only once. If a student does not successfully complete a PTA course on the second attempt, he/she will not be considered for re-entry to the program.
6. Students applying for reinstatement are responsible for reading all documents received and abiding by all deadlines. Failure to do so forfeits the student's reinstatement.
7. A student who fails or withdraws from the PTA program may be reinstated according to the following criteria:
 - a. Indicate a desire to be readmitted through a letter of intent to the Director of the PTA program addressing plans for success. This letter, with the student's signature, must be received in the PTA program office within 90 days of exiting the PTA program. The letter requesting reinstatement must address the following:
 - i. Identification of specific reasons that contributed to the lack of success in the PTA course/program.
 - ii. Identification of specific strategies that will be utilized to remediate (if applicable) until the time the student returns to the PTA program.
 - iii. Identification of specific strategies and resources the student will utilize once he or she returns to the PTA program to facilitate success.
8. A student applying for re-entry to the program will be re-admitted subject to space availability in the class. There is no guarantee that a student will be readmitted.
9. After the appropriate course/level for re-entry is determined, the student will be required to complete all courses remaining in the PTA program.
10. If two or more years have lapsed since the student has been enrolled in the PTA program at Cecil College, then the student will be required to re-apply as a first time student.
11. A student may re-enter the PTA program only one time within the three-year period.
12. If a student withdraws or is withdrawn from a PTA course or courses, it will be noted in the academic record whether the student is passing or failing the course(s) at the time of withdrawal. If the student is failing at the time of withdrawal, it will be considered a course failure by the PTA program.

PROGRAM POLICIES

Program Policies and Standards

Professional Values/Behaviors

Professional Values/Behaviors Policy: Because the physical therapy profession mandates ethical behavior, students are required to adhere to the eight professional values as defined by the American Physical Therapy Association's *Values-Based Behaviors* of a physical therapist assistant. The APTA advisory panel developed the 8 values-based behaviors from existing APTA documents and reflection on the contemporary work of the PTA. The *Values-Based Behaviors* listed below are in alphabetical order with no preference or ranking given. They are considered to be of sufficient breadth and depth to incorporate the many values and attributes that PTAs demonstrate. The demonstration of professional *Values-Based Behaviors* is critical and must be satisfactorily met throughout the program in order to progress.

Definition of a Professional: *Values-Based Behaviors* are critical behaviors recognized by the PTA faculty. The following values/behaviors are considered essential for the professional PTA:

Altruism: Altruism is the primary regard for or devotion to the interests of the patient/client, assuming responsibility of placing the needs of the patient/client ahead of the PTA's self-interest.

Caring and Compassion: Compassion is the desire to identify with or sense something of another's experience; a precursor of caring. Caring is the concern, empathy, and consideration for the needs and values of others.

Continuing Competence: Continuing competence is the lifelong process of maintaining and documenting competence through ongoing self-assessment, development, and implementation of a personal learning plan, and subsequent reassessment.

Duty: Duty is the commitment to meeting one's obligations to provide effective physical therapy services to individual patients/clients, to serve the profession, and to positively influence the health of society.

Integrity: Integrity is the steadfast adherence to high ethical principles or standards; truthfulness, fairness, doing what you say you will do, and "speaking forth" about why you do what you do.

PT/PTA Collaboration: The PT/PTA team works together, within each partner's respective role, to achieve optimal patient/client care and to enhance the overall delivery of physical therapy services.

Responsibility: Responsibility is the active acceptance of the roles, obligations, and actions of the PTA, including behaviors that positively influence patient/client outcomes, the profession, and the health needs of society.

Social Responsibility: Social responsibility is the promotion of a mutual trust between the PTA, as a member of the profession, and the larger public that necessitates responding to societal needs for health and wellness.

American Physical Therapy Association. Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant.

[HOD S06-09-20-18] American Physical Therapy Association, 2009. Alexandria, VA.

American Physical Therapy Association. Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant. American Physical Therapy Association, January 2011. Alexandria, VA.

Academic Honesty

The PTA faculty follow the academic integrity policy as described in the Cecil College Catalog. A faculty member who detects a violation of academic integrity will confront the student when the alleged violation is discovered. Responses to a first offense can range from an informal verbal warning to dismissal from the College. Students are referred to the College Catalog for a more complete description.

A major form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. Plagiarism is the use of another's words and/or ideas without clearly stating the source of that information. Each occurrence will be formally documented in the student's permanent PTA record. Disciplinary action will be at the discretion of the full PTA faculty in keeping with the Cecil College policy. If the student is not sure what specific events constitute plagiarism, the student is responsible for consulting PTA faculty, referring to information given in required English courses, and/or consulting the Writing Lab.

Group work is a common occurrence in the PTA program. Collaboration is allowed, with instructor permission. Collaboration means you may work with another person(s); it does NOT mean you may copy each other's work. Each student must be the sole author of the work submitted, unless otherwise indicated.

Academic Standards and Restrictions

A minimum cumulative GPA of 2.5 is required for application to the PTA program.

Referral for Academic Assistance

Students who desire tutoring or remediation in academic areas may seek assistance in the Math and Reading/Writing Labs. In addition, tutoring may be available through the Department of Academic Programs and Student Support Services. Students who are referred for remediation are strongly encouraged to seek assistance in the appropriate lab.

Attendance

The College guidelines on classroom attendance are in effect for the PTA program. This policy is found in the Academic Standards section of the College Catalog and is also available online.

It is the policy of the PTA program that students are expected to attend all scheduled classes, laboratory sessions, off-campus field trips, and clinical internships **on time**. If a student is ill, or must be absent for other legitimate reasons, the student must notify the instructor within one hour of the scheduled arrival time. Children are not allowed to attend classes with parents or their caregivers.

Faculty will identify on the course syllabus if a pattern of absences or late arrivals will decrease the student's final course grade. If a test or practical exam was scheduled for the class in which the student was absent, the student may receive a grade of "0" or "Fail" and will only be allowed to make up the test or practical exam at the discretion of the faculty.

An absence may be excused if the student can adequately document an emergency (see Appendix 3: Non-Emergency Absence form). For example, an illness requiring urgent care can be documented

with a note from the health care provider on the provider's stationery. Other types of absences or offered documentation will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis by the individual faculty member.

If the student should become injured, ill, pregnant, or require medical care which will cause a period of absence, this should be discussed with the Program Director. While concern for the student's well-being is paramount, the impact on the student's plan of study will be determined on an individual basis depending on the course, amount of time missed relative to the semester schedule, and the student's academic performance and abilities.

Inclement Weather

In the event of inclement weather, the student is expected to follow the Nursing and Health Professions off-site Inclement Weather Policy (Appendix 9).

Classroom and Lab Expectations

Students are expected to behave in ways which promote a positive teaching and learning atmosphere. Students have the right to learn; however, they do not have the right to interfere with the freedom of the faculty to teach or the rights of other students to learn by introducing to the classroom elements of violence, intimidation, and harassment. Please refer to the CC Student Code of Conduct for the general expectations of student behavior in the classroom. It must be noted that students in all of the health professions programs must also demonstrate behaviors that will be expected and appreciated in the clinical health care setting. The expected behaviors are called "professionalism."

All class discussions will be carried out in a way that maintains a classroom environment respectful of the rights of others. This means that, for example, students should not interrupt someone else who is talking regardless of whether that person is the instructor or another student. Monopolizing the classroom with disruptive behaviors such as talking while others are speaking, using cellular telephones or text messaging, arriving late or leaving early, argumentative approaches in dialogue, framing questions in a manner which hinders the learning process of others, and any other behavior that is deemed inappropriate, unprofessional, or negative will have consequences. Continued noncompliance with these standards may lead to the dismissal from class for the day or from the program if the behavior is not modified.

Program faculty will model appropriate, professional behavior and will provide consistent feedback to improve student behavior in the learning environment.

Attendance and punctuality are expected for all learning experiences. Food or drink in the classroom may not be permitted by some program faculty. Food is NOT permitted in any of the laboratories, and liquids are allowed only in covered containers. Students will not be permitted to have food or open beverages when using classroom or resource center computers. During clinical internships and during field trips, students will be allowed food or beverages only in designated areas.

All book bags and personal items, including electronic devices, are stored away from student's access during exams and during laboratory sessions. Students will request permission to leave a lab session. Students will not be allowed to leave the room once a written exam has begun. Doing so

may result in the student's exam work graded only up to the time at which the student exited the room.

Students are expected to practice laboratory skills on one another during classroom and lab activities and during open lab hours. See the Clinical Policies and Procedures section for more detailed information. (Clinical education expectations appear in the next section of this document.) Students need to understand that they will be working with licensed physical therapists and physical therapist assistants, clinic staff, and actual patients.

Dress Code: Classroom and Lab

- Students are encouraged to dress comfortably and appropriately for classroom and laboratory activities. Students are expected to wear clinical attire (see "Personal Appearance and Uniforms" section) to the classroom during all practical examinations, student presentations, and upon lecture/lab sessions where a special visitor or guest lecturer will be present. Faculty reserves the right to ask a student to leave the classroom if they are inappropriately attired.
- Specific laboratory attire is identified in the course syllabus. Because lab sessions are essential to student learning, students are encouraged to be prepared and to always have lab clothes available. In general, appropriate lab clothes include sneakers, a T-shirt and shorts or athletic slacks, and women wearing bathing suit tops or sports bras in addition to the T-shirt and shorts.
- Faculty reserve the right to ask a student to don a patient gown or disposable shorts if the student's own lab clothing is inappropriate for the lab activity. Frequent problems with lab or classroom attire may result in reduction of a course grade.

Exam Policies and Online Testing Policies/Procedures

Assessment and evaluation are an integral part of the teaching/learning process throughout the PTA program. Exams in the PTA program are designed in both content and style to prepare students for the national PTA licensing exam. In light of this, many exams are computer based and students are expected to comply with secure testing center practices. This would include: showing proof of identity, securing all belongings in the back of the room prior to testing (including phones, iPads and laptops), and not bringing anything to the computer station (including, though not limited to, food, drink, and paper).

Students are not to discuss exams or exam questions with classmates prior to exam grades being posted (approximately one week after exam is administered). This includes, but is not limited to: discussing questions in the hallway after an exam, emailing questions about the exam content, and asking classmates about exam content. These are all potential forms of academic dishonesty and could be considered violations of the Cecil College Academic Honesty Policy.

Specific time allotments are set for quizzes/exams. Time allotments will vary based on the exam content and the number of questions per quiz or exam. Exam and quiz time allotments will be published to notify students ahead of time. Students who exceed allotted time on a quiz or an exam may receive a zero for that quiz or exam.

Due Process

The student has the right to due process in all decisions made by the faculty concerning his/her education at Cecil College. This most often takes the form of appeals regarding an exam grade, a course grade, or dismissals from clinical education, classroom, or laboratory settings. The faculty supports the student's right to due process and feels that problem identification and resolution ought to begin at the faculty level before activating the Cecil College Appeal policy.

When in doubt about what to do in a particular situation, the student is advised to speak directly to a PTA faculty member or to a college advisor. Students are also directed to the Code of Conduct and Academic Regulations found on the Cecil College Web page, as well as in all College publications.

The student has the opportunity to respond to the circumstances resulting in suspension or dismissal by submitting any relevant data pertaining to the incident(s) and seeking appropriate recourse through channels described in the Student Code of Conduct and those described in the PTA program policies. However, if asked to leave a clinical facility, the student will first do so and then begin the academic grievance procedures.

Students that have a grievance with the CI, CCCE or clinic site during a clinical affiliation are expected to handle the situation with discretion, respect, courtesy and professionalism towards all parties involved. The Cecil College PTA program expects that students will communicate any grievances to the ACCE immediately upon identifying any issues or problems. The ACCE will evaluate the situation and communicate with the CCCE and CI in an effort to quickly resolve any conflicts that may affect the student, Clinical Faculty or clinical site. If the ACCE determines that the situation may adversely affect the student's ability to successfully complete the clinical affiliation, the ACCE may work with the CCCE to assign a different CI to the student where appropriate and possible, or transfer the student to a different clinical facility if necessary for completion of the clinical affiliation. Student placement at clinical facilities are challenging due to variability in the availability of clinical sites. As such, every effort will be made to quickly resolve any conflicts within the clinical site prior to utilizing the option to transfer a student to a different clinical site.

Students that have a grievance with the ACCE are expected to discuss their concerns with the Program Director. The Program Director will assess the situation and attempt to resolve the issue with the student and ACCE. If the situation warrants, the Program Director may seek the counsel of the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions.

Grievance Procedures

Students who wish to file a complaint about the PTA program are advised that the first step in this process is to submit a written statement of the complaint to the Director of the PTA Program. The complaint will be reviewed by the Director and if not resolved, by the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions. If the complaint is not resolved at this time, the student is advised to consult the grievance policy located in the College Catalog for further guidance.

Social Media

Think before you post. Social Media is a public venue and there is no such thing as a "private" social media site. Search engines may pick up posts and pictures years after the publication date. ALL

communication on social networking sites should be kept in accordance with standard professional and ethical practices. As a PTA student, you are held to the standard of a health care professional in the posting of information on social media sites. Do not post any confidential or proprietary information, including but not limited to: pictures, video, audio or text about Cecil College or any affiliated health care agency, faculty, client, patient or fellow student. Students and PTA program graduates are not permitted to post PowerPoints, recordings, or any classroom materials on any social media site without written permission from the PTA program and the PTA faculty member who created the material. Material created for classes are the intellectual property of Cecil College and the PTA faculty and may not be posted or used in any other manner, without the express permission of the PTA program.

All information shared on Blackboard discussions and the Cecil College PTA program Facebook page are for professional purposes only and should also comply with the above guidelines. Failure to comply with the Social Media Policy will be viewed as unprofessional and unethical behavior, and as such, may result in the immediate removal of the student from the PTA program. Guidelines on the appropriate posting of information to the Cecil College Facebook page are available on MyCecil.edu (Marketing).

Video or Audio Recording

PTA students may be video recorded during repeat practical examinations or other times in the classroom or learning lab for instructional purposes only. Video recordings will be archived then destroyed according to the College's records destruction policies. Students have the right to refuse to be video or audio recorded for any purpose of a non-instructional nature. The College utilizes an informed consent form for students appearing in promotional, informational, or advertising materials.

For reasons of privacy and confidentiality, students are prohibited from posting or sharing pictures, video or audio recordings of faculty, staff or fellow students on social media sites (see Social Media policy).

Transportation

PTA students are responsible for providing their own transportation to campus and all facilities used for their educational experiences.

College Policies

Accidents or Injuries while on Campus

Should an accident or injury happen on campus, the student will be attended to by campus staff that has basic first aid training. An ambulance will be called, if necessary, for transport to an emergency care facility. College policy permits only campus public safety personnel to administer first aid. Refer to the Off-Site Clinical Experience section for policies and procedures pertaining to accidents or injuries occurring while the student is off campus or at clinical education facilities.

Drug and Alcohol Use

Please refer to the Cecil College *Drug Use and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Policy* found at <http://www.cecil.edu/Catalog/Pages/Policies-and-Procedures.aspx#Prevention>. The PTA program strictly adheres to the Cecil College Policy. Furthermore, if it is suspected that a student is impaired or under the influence of drugs or alcohol while involved in **ANY** PTA class, lab, club, activity or clinical assignment, the student will be immediately asked to leave the activity and report to the PTA Program Director, Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education, or Dean of Nursing and Health Professions to address the concern. Determination that a student is using drugs or alcohol during program participation is grounds for termination from the PTA program. Refer to the Dismissal and Due Process sections of this manual for additional information.

Smoking

The PTA program adheres to the Cecil College *Smoking Policy* (Cecil College Catalog, Policies and Procedures): “Cecil College is dedicated to promoting a healthy and productive environment for students, faculty, staff, visitors, contractors, and guests. The Tobacco-Free Campus Policy is intended to reduce the health risks associated with smoking and secondhand smoke, demonstrate best healthcare practices, and promote a campus culture of wellness. Smoking and all uses of tobacco products shall be prohibited from all Cecil College owned and leased properties and facilities, including but not limited to parking lots, courtyards, entrance and exit ways, vehicles, sidewalks, common areas, grounds, and athletic facilities. Use of any tobacco product in College owned or leased vehicles is also prohibited. For purpose of this policy, tobacco use is defined as any lighted or unlighted cigarette, cigar, pipe, or smoking product (including smokeless tobacco and electronic cigarettes) in any form.”

Fragrance Free Campus

The PTA program adheres to the Cecil College *Fragrance Free Statement*. Found under Campus Information and Services in the College Catalog (<http://www.cecil.edu/Catalog/Pages/General-Information-and-Services-to-Students.aspx>), the policy reads: “Cecil College strives to maintain an environment comfortable for all. As a courtesy to College employees and fellow students who express sensitivity to fragrances, the College requests that students and staff please refrain from wearing scented products on campus. The College deeply appreciates student and staff cooperation and support.”

Safety

Campus Safety

Public Safety Officers are on duty at all times when College facilities are open. Parking lot blue phones and hallway mounted red phones all are direct dial to the Cecil County “911” system. To contact Public Safety, call the College Operator. The Director of Public Safety will issue notification via email should a crime occur on campus that could be construed to threaten the security of the campus population. For more detailed information on Campus Safety, refer to the College website’s Public Safety page found at <http://www.cecil.edu/Student-Services/Campus-Services/Safety-and-Security/Pages/default.aspx>. To contact Public Safety, call the Operator by dialing “0” from any campus phone, ext. 1601 from any campus phone, or 410-287-1601 from your cell phone.

Cecil College prepares an annual Safety Report to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Public Safety Policy and Crime Statistics Act. The full text of the report can be located on the College website at: <http://www.cecil.edu/Student-Services/Campus-Services/Safety-and-Security/Pages/default.aspx>.

Each year an email notification is sent to all enrolled students that provides the website to access this report. Notices are also posted in classrooms and available in the Public Safety Office or by calling 410-287-6060, ext. 606.

Classroom and Lab Safety

All physical space and equipment is maintained in optimal condition. Electrical equipment is inspected annually. Students are instructed in equipment and lab surface cleansing, along with other practices that keep both patients and practitioners safe.

Equipment in the FWC is maintained daily by the FWC staff. Annual preventative maintenance is provided by EnerG Wellness Solutions, LLC. Any concerns regarding equipment safety in the FWC should be directed to the FWC Director, A. Lawler, at 443-674-1559.

Federal law requires that all individuals must be informed about potentially hazardous chemicals present in the workplace. Proper procedures for the use and storage of chemicals, such as equipment and sanitizing agents, are observed. Material safety data sheets (MSDS) are posted in the modalities lab and are also available on file in the Program Director’s office.

Reasonable Accommodations

The PTA program affirms the importance of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA); provides reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities; assists the College and community to understand the effects of disabilities; and works to eliminate the physical, technical, and attitudinal barriers that limit the range of opportunities for students with disabilities.

In order to identify accommodations for the PTA program, students must consult with the Cecil College Officer of ADA and Special Services. The Officer of ADA and Special Services will notify the PTA Program Director of the necessary academic adjustments and/or accommodations needed to develop a program of assistance. The student is responsible for the cost of obtaining professional

verification and documentation. (See Essential Functions and Technical Standards for further guidance.)

The Officer of ADA and Special Services will inform the faculty at the beginning of each course of the need for and the nature of a student's accommodations. The student is advised by the Officer of ADA and Special Services to have a discussion with the faculty at the **beginning of the course**, regarding their accommodations and how they are to be executed. If the identified need is related to test taking, the student may take exams in a situation appropriate for his/her individual learning as documented by Disability and Support Services, such as test taking in a quiet room or permitting additional time for completion of the exam. Student needs will be balanced with the instructor's schedule, and if necessary, the exam will be taken in advance of the scheduled exam and under supervision. It is the student's responsibility to arrange for a classmate to act as note taker if additional time causes the student to miss part of a scheduled lecture on the day of the exam.

Students with disabilities are reminded to inform all program and clinical faculty of the need for any accommodations. The Program Director can assist the student in adjusting or communicating accommodations to clinical, classroom, and laboratory situations.

It should be noted that accommodations may only be applied to written and oral coursework, written exams, or presentations. Accommodations are not always practical or safe in the simulated clinical environment, during skills labs, or during clinical internships. For example, an accommodation for extra time on written exams will not be applied to practical exams during which the delayed emergency response or the slow application of guarding techniques may cause harm to classmates, faculty, or future patients.

Short-Term Disability

The intent of this policy is to promote open communication between student and faculty to determine if the safety of the student can be ensured without jeopardizing program participation and compliance with program objectives and goals. If a student develops or has a short-term disability that would adversely impact them, their classmates or clinic clients, he/she is advised to notify the Program Director as soon as possible. Although short-term disabilities are not subject to ADA regulations, students are advised to consult with the Officer of ADA and Special Services for guidance about their situation, determine what accommodations may be indicated, and to assist in the documentation of accommodations. All modifications must be documented by the student's health care provider in order to be implemented by classroom and clinical faculty. The student's privacy will be respected; however, a dialogue about clinical interventions, situations, and environmental conditions that pose a potential hazard to the student need to be initiated.

If the student chooses to continue in the program, he/she will be advised about safety precautions and this discussion will be documented and signed by the faculty and student. Every effort will be made by the faculty to keep the student informed about potential risks for optimal health and safety. For example, the student may be advised that he/she should not serve as the patient for the application of certain modalities, treatments or techniques.

If a student chooses to take a leave of absence from the PTA program, he/she will be subject to the re-enrollment policies outlined in this manual.

Student Privacy (FERPA)

When enrolled in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program as a student at Cecil College, your education record information is protected by FERPA. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 is a federal law that requires Cecil College to treat your education records in a legally specified manner. As a student, under FERPA you have the following rights:

1. The right to inspect and review your own education records within 45 days of the day the College receives a request for access.
2. The right to request to amend your education records if you believe they are inaccurate or misleading.
3. The right to limit the disclosure of personally identifiable information designated by the College as “directory information.”
4. The right to file a complaint with the U.S. Department of Education concerning an alleged failure by the College to comply with the requirements of FERPA. The name and address of the office that administers FERPA is:

Family Policy Compliance Office

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.

Washington, D.C. 20202-8520

<http://www.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>

CLINICAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Philosophy of the College Laboratory Experience

Education in the practice of physical therapy skills requires practical application, practice, feedback and assessment. The College laboratory and clinical laboratories are focal points of the learning process. Learning is defined as the acquisition of new knowledge and skills that result in mental activity and behavior change. Learning is enhanced by an educational climate that promotes creativity, exploration, and freedom for discovery. The faculty acts as facilitators who lead and guide the student through the educational experience and are resources who provide additional information to students where it is needed.

Within the College laboratory setting, the student learns psychomotor skills and how to care for a client within a simulated setting. The clinical setting provides the opportunity for the transference of knowledge and psychomotor skills into clinical practice. This facet of experience enhances competency and self-sufficiency, and provides opportunities to interact with clients.

At designated points in time, the assessment/evaluation process is essential to determine if the expected behavioral outcomes have been successfully achieved. This process requires the instructor to gather and analyze data for the purpose of assessment/evaluation. Formative assessment occurs throughout the College laboratory and/or clinical experience, providing feedback for improvement. Summative evaluation occurs at the end of each rotation/semester to summarize student progress.

PTA Laboratory Experience

Clinical Readiness

Clinical experiences are essential to the student's development as a PTA and include clinical practice experience within a student skills lab as well as at clinical sites. Student skills lab provides the student the opportunity to practice skills and apply knowledge in a structured setting under the supervision of faculty. In the student skill lab, it is mandatory that the students practice on each other, participating as both the "patient" and as the "clinician." This requires frequent tactile contact between participants. Refusal or inability to participate within the student lab may limit the development of clinical experience and adversely impact achieving program objectives and outcomes. It is the student's responsibility to notify the Program Director immediately if he/she has objection to working with a particular partner or on a particular skill due to religious or cultural convictions, prior injury to an anatomical area, health-related condition, or discomfort due to fear or issues of sexual harassment. The student will discuss his/her concerns confidentially with the faculty, so that they may collaborate in ensuring the student's concerns are respected while also ensuring that essential skills are practiced. This policy is intended to introduce the student to appropriate, mature, culturally sensitive, and professional behavior. It is not intended to excuse a student from practicing essential skills or from experiencing clinical interventions.

Student Interaction

Students enrolled in the Cecil College PTA program are expected to demonstrate respectful and professional behavior toward faculty, staff, and each other at all times. Cecil College is committed to providing an optimal learning environment for students both in the classroom and in the laboratory. Safety of all parties involved is the foundation of the Cecil College PTA clinical education program. Inappropriate language and/or touching, including verbal or physical harassment, as well as “horse play,” will not be tolerated at any time during the PTA laboratory experience. Incidents of the sort will be cause for immediate dismissal from the PTA laboratory and may result in failure of the course. The PTA clinical education program adheres to the Student Code of Conduct policies outlined in the Cecil College Catalog, including policies regarding Sexual Harassment and Sexual Assault.

Goals of the Lab Experience

In lab, each student is expected to:

1. Provide safe and competent care that acknowledges and encompasses the uniqueness, dignity, diversity, freedom and holistic well-being of each individual within their community.
2. Communicate professionally, effectively, and appropriately in patient simulation activities.
3. Demonstrate the appropriate application of procedures and techniques, integration of evidence, critical thinking, clinical judgment, and clinical decision making as they relate to the role of the physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist within the conceptual framework of practice.

Objectives of the Lab Experience

1. To provide safe and productive learning experiences for the student, reaffirming clinical procedures and practices as they relate to the work of a PTA.
2. To measure student achievement of newly learned skills through assessment and summative evaluations. Performance behaviors are learned and evaluated within the College laboratory. Assessment of critical behaviors and performance behaviors provide the framework to determine whether the student has sufficient knowledge and skill for that specific level within the program.

Lab Equipment

All equipment in the PTA laboratory will be calibrated annually. A list of all department equipment and pertinent manuals will be housed in the office of the ACCE and accessible to PTA faculty and students. Any equipment found to be faulty by students or faculty will be immediately removed from the lab area until it is repaired.

Clinical Skills

Clinical Skills Accountability

Students are held accountable for all skills previously learned in all prior courses in the curriculum. All skills will be needed in the clinical practice environment. PTA skills labs are open at specified hours or by appointment throughout each semester and during the summer months. A faculty member must be available on site to provide guidance and supervision to students practicing in the lab.

Clinical Skills Evaluation

Clinical Skills assessments will include an objective competency-based evaluation of the student's performance of the technique or skill. Student performance is evaluated in comparison to stated criteria for safe, ethical, legal and professional practice. Both scheduled and open lab time provide students with ample opportunity for guidance and assistance in support of student skill development and mastery. When requested, students can obtain performance feedback from faculty during posted office hours or at other mutually convenient times.

All students are provided with a list of the skills to be mastered in each lab course. The skills have been divided into necessary components needed for competency and safety as described in various PTA textbooks and laboratory manuals as appropriate and safe. The skills are described in lectures, demonstrated by faculty, and practiced in structured and open lab settings. Skills are assessed via clinical skill checklists during scheduled laboratory class sessions and during scheduled laboratory practical exams.

Clinical Skill Checklists

Clinical skill checklists require assessment and feedback of student's performance of each clinical skill by both a peer (fellow classmate) and course instructor. Students must have designated clinical skill checklist sheets completed with both a peer rating and instructor rating of either "Min A" or "I", as designated on the *Criteria for Skill Check Assessment* (Appendix 17), in order to proceed to each practical examination. Students who miss (due to absence) or defer completion of clinical skill checklists conducted during laboratory class sessions are required to make up the assessment during designated open lab times or other mutually convenient times between student and instructors. Students who miss clinical skill checklists during laboratory class sessions due to absence or who defer participation of clinical skill checklists when present during laboratory class sessions forfeit the right to a peer review and must proceed directly to assessment by course instructors/faculty members only. Students who achieve a rating of less than "Min A" on any criteria of the clinical skill checklist must repeat the clinical skill in order to achieve at least a "Min A" rating and qualify to take the practical examination. Students will have two opportunities to achieve a "Min A" or "I" rating by instructors/faculty members on the clinical skill checklist. The second attempt shall be performed in the presence of two instructors/faculty members. After an inadequate second attempt, the student will be in remediation of the clinical skill. Remediation of any clinical skill checklist shall require that the student independently research a video demonstrating proper performance of the clinical skill (if a video cannot be found, the student may opt to develop their own video per the approval of the course instructor). The student must then

cite the source of the video and write out, step-by-step, the technique for proper performance of the clinical skill. The student must then submit the written report and video to the course instructor(s). Upon submission of the report, the student will have one final attempt to properly perform the clinical skill checklist in the presence of two instructors/faculty members. The inability to achieve a rating of “Min A” or “I” will result in the inability to proceed to practical examination and subsequently failure of the course.

Practical Examinations

Practical examinations are assessed and graded by the course instructor(s) and program faculty. Practical exam performance may be video recorded at the discretion of the faculty for the purpose of accurate grading of performance and to support student learning. The student will receive a score or a grade of Pass (P) or Fail (F), depending on the PTA course, after attempting to demonstrate the skills or techniques to the course instructor(s). A laboratory practical grading rubric/score sheet will reflect the scale for a passing vs. failing grade, as well as criteria for adequate skill performance.

All Critical Indicators on a Practical Examination, with the exception of “Safety,” must be assessed by the instructor at a score of “Acceptable” or greater to pass. The “Safety Critical Indicators” are those elements that if not performed, or performed incorrectly, have the potential to result in injury to the therapist, injury to the patient, or an environmental hazard. **“Safety Critical Indicators”** must be assessed by the instructor at a score of **“Commendable” or greater** to pass the Practical Examination (see Appendix 18: PTA Master Practical Examination Grading Rubric).

A student is allowed **two** attempts to pass each Practical Examination. In the event that student performance is not sufficient to earn a passing grade, the student will be allowed to retake the practical exam only one time. Remediation of a failed practical exam will require that the student attend additional review and practice sessions with the course instructor(s) and fellow classmates. These remediation sessions will be scheduled at the discretion of the course instructor(s). Students in remediation are also expected to attend all regularly scheduled course lecture and lab sessions within the remediation period. Failure to attend regularly scheduled lecture, lab, and remediation sessions will result in forfeit of the right to a second practical examination attempt and subsequently failure of the course. The repeat practical exam may be video recorded. If the student does not pass the practical examination after the second attempt, the student fails the course and is no longer able to advance to clinical courses or to continue in the plan of study. If the student passes the practical exam on their second attempt, and the examination is scored for points, the student will receive the minimum passing grade of 76%.

Students will be issued a specific scheduled date and time for practical examination. Prompt attendance is required at all practical examinations. Students who arrive late to scheduled practical examination times will be deducted 2 points from the total practical examination grade for each minute late after the scheduled start time of the practical examination.

All students enrolled must demonstrate proficiency on the clinical skill checklists and/or practical examinations for the classes listed in the following table prior to being cleared for participation in each clinical affiliation.

Clinical Practicum I PTA 230	Clinical Practicum II PTA 232	Clinical Practicum III PTA 234
Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics PTA 102	Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics PTA 102	Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics PTA 102
Clinical Skills for the PTA PTA 103	Clinical Skills for the PTA PTA 103	Clinical Skills for the PTA PTA 103
Therapeutic Modalities PTA 204	Therapeutic Modalities PTA 204	Therapeutic Modalities PTA 204
Therapeutic Exercise PTA 206	Therapeutic Exercise PTA 206	Therapeutic Exercise PTA 206
	Clinical Orthopedics PTA 220	Clinical Orthopedics PTA 220
	Clinical Cardiopulmonary and Integumentary PTA 224	Clinical Cardiopulmonary and Integumentary PTA 224

OFF-SITE CLINICAL EXPERIENCE (Practicums I, II, III)

The clinical education component of the curriculum is different from traditional classroom instruction or laboratory simulation to which the student has been accustomed. Clinical education experiences involve the care of real patients and the use of equipment and professional interventions, which could be dangerous if used improperly. Since many factors together constitute a very different situation than a classroom education, a much more structured set of rules and regulations are necessary to ensure student success.

Progression into the Clinical Experience

Progression into the clinical education classes, Practicums I, II and III, occurs **ONLY** under the conditions listed below. Students **MUST** meet health, academic and professional requirements prior to progression into the clinical experience.

Based on the scheduling of the clinical education experiences and specific clinical facility policies, new health physicals, renewal of the TB (PPD or T-SPOT) test, and renewal of drug testing and background checks may or may not be required. Students need to be prepared to revise and/or repeat health physical documents, drug testing, and background checks if asked to do so.

Health Requirements, Drug Screening and Background Checks

1. **Current Physical Examination:** The Cecil College Nursing and Health Professions Health Record/Physical Form provided includes all recommendations for health care workers developed by the CDC and OSHA, and includes a physical examination that states the student is free of communicable disease. No student will be assigned to a clinical affiliation without completed health work.
2. **TB test (PPD or T-SPOT) annually:** A chest X-ray may be required in the event of a positive test.
3. **MMR:** A record of all immunizations and/or titers for measles, mumps, and rubella are required.
4. **Rubeola and Varicella:** A record of all immunizations and/or titers for rubeola and varicella are required.
5. **DPT or T-DAP:** Polio, tetanus, pertussis (DPT vaccination) and a tetanus booster every 10 years is recommended, and we anticipate that the CDC may require the T-DAP vaccine in the future.
6. The **Hepatitis B vaccine** is **STRONGLY RECOMMENDED** since exposure to this virus is very common in all health care settings. If a student elects not to receive Hepatitis B immunization, a statement declining the vaccine must be on file. A student must be aware though that declining the Hepatitis immunization may prohibit their acceptance at some clinical facilities. It is at the discretion of a clinical facility to accept or decline a student without documentation of Hepatitis B immunization. Students are expected to comply with all health requirements of each clinical facility they are assigned to. Failure to comply may prohibit completion of clinical education and therefore completion of the PTA program.
7. **Annual Influenza Vaccinations:** The majority of the health care facilities with which Cecil College affiliates require annual influenza (flu) vaccination. If a student elects not to receive

the flu vaccine, a statement declining the vaccine and the reason for declining must be on file. Acceptable reasons for declining the influenza vaccination are: physician-documented sensitivity or documented religious reasons. A student must be aware though that declining the flu immunization may prohibit their acceptance at some clinical facilities, particularly during the fall and winter months. It is at the discretion of a clinical facility to accept or decline a student without documentation of the flu immunization. Students are expected to comply with all health requirements of each clinical facility they are assigned to. Failure to comply may prohibit completion of clinical education and therefore completion of the PTA program.

8. **CPR Requirement:** Health care provider (or first responder) CPR cards are renewed every 2 years. Students are required to maintain current certification in CPR, with a copy of the CPR card on file in the PTA program office. Certification through the **American Heart Association** is required; the certification level must be for **Basic Life Support (BLS)** for health care providers acting as first responders and must include automated electric defibrillator (AED) training.
9. **Health and Accident Insurance Coverage:** Proof of coverage is filed in the PTA program office. The student will be financially responsible for his/her treatment, thus, if the student does not have adequate insurance coverage, any financial responsibility for treatment will be the student's.
10. **Liability (Malpractice) Insurance Coverage:** The student is covered by liability insurance through Cecil College during clinical hours published in the Schedule of Classes.
11. **Drug Screening:** All students must complete drug screening prior to the start of the first semester. Additional testing may be required based on facility requirements. Students are notified of this requirement prior to their assignment to the facility. Students demonstrating use of illegal substances may not be eligible to participate in the clinical education component of the program, therefore preventing them from completing the program or sitting for PTA licensure.
12. **Criminal Background Checks:** All enrolled PTA students must complete a criminal background check. A student who does not successfully pass a background check may not be eligible to participate in the clinical education component of the program, therefore preventing them from completing the program or sitting for PTA licensure. Additional testing, at the student's expense, may be required based on facility requirements.

Failure to comply with, submit and/or maintain required documentation as listed above will result in dismissal from the program. With the exception of Liability (Malpractice) Insurance Coverage (#10), all requirements/documents are the student's responsibility.

NOTE: *Drug Screening and Criminal Background Check Appeal Process*

A student who wishes to appeal the outcome of a background check and/or drug screening decision may do so in writing, addressed to the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions, within 7 days of receiving notice of the outcome. The written documentation and any supporting documentation will be shared with the clinical facilities and reviewed by them. The final decision related to admittance to a clinical facility rests with the clinical facility. All decisions of the clinical facilities are final. If a

clinical facility determines that a student is ineligible to enter the clinical setting at their facility, the student may request a meeting with the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions to discuss this result; however, all decisions by the clinical facilities are final. Students who have not successfully passed a background check and/or drug screen are not permitted in the clinical setting and will not be able to continue in the PTA program.

In addition to health requirements, students MUST successfully:

1. Complete all general education courses and the following clinical and technical PTA courses (PTA 101, PTA 102, PTA 103, PTA 204, PTA 206, and PTA 210) prior to being eligible for Clinical Practicum I (PTA 230).
2. Complete all SOAP note assignments required throughout the PTA technical courses. Failure to complete and submit assigned documentation activities will render a student ineligible for clinical education assignment.
3. Demonstrate acceptable levels of personal and professional comportment as seen in the consistent demonstration of legal, ethical and safe behavior, and sound clinical reasoning.
4. Pass each clinical experience within each semester in order to progress through any successive clinical experience or to pass the course. See course information sheet for Clinical Practicums I, II and III for appropriate grading rubric and requirements for a passing grade.
5. Make up any missed clinical days at the discretion of the CI and ACCE. The student may be assessed a fee for each clinical makeup day. The fee must be paid to the cashier before grades will be released. If a student misses more than two (2) clinical days in a rotation, he or she is at risk for failing that clinical rotation (see Clinical Site Attendance and Behavior Expectations). The faculty will meet to decide if the student can adequately meet the course outcomes. If it is determined by the PTA faculty that the clinical outcomes cannot be met, the student will be required to withdraw from the PTA program.

Confidentiality and Documentation

Prior to participating in clinical education experiences, students are oriented to HIPAA regulations and professional, ethical and legal requirements regarding patient/client confidentiality and rules surrounding medical documentation. They are also informed of the corresponding penalties for disregarding patient confidentiality. All facility and patient records are confidential. Requests for information concerning a patient from any source should be referred to the student's Clinical Instructor (CI).

Documentation examples extracted from the medical record for educational purposes must have all identifying information removed, including facility name, patient identification numbers, birthdates, provider names, and dates of service. Students sign an agreement which includes affirmation of patient confidentiality at new student orientation and are expected to uphold this agreement throughout their time in the PTA program.

Students will follow all facility requirements for the format and process of medical record documentation. Unless otherwise required by the facility, students will sign any entry made in the patient's medical record with their full first and last names followed by the letters "SPTA." All student entries into the medical record must be co-signed by the CI.

HIPAA: The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996

The PTA program recognizes and adheres to the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). HIPAA regulations, concepts and definitions are introduced, discussed and reinforced throughout the program. Students are required to abide by HIPAA guidelines for progression in the clinical education component of the program. The program refers to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services document for instruction and discussion: <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/index.html>.

Social Media and Networking

The use of social media/networking by students during clinical experiences should be done with EXTREME consideration. In order to avoid any potential biases, students are STRONGLY discouraged from initiating or accepting friend requests from ANYONE associated with a clinical experience. This includes but is not limited to: clinical staff, fellow students, CIs, patients, and/or patient family members. This practice allows students to be evaluated solely on clinical performance during the clinical experience, and not on personal information from social networking sites.

As professional, ethical and legal requirements, students are expected to maintain patient confidentiality at all times. Due to the public nature of social networking sites, privacy and professionalism may be unintentionally compromised. **Students may not post anything that in any way compromises patient confidentiality.** This includes, but is not limited to: names; diagnoses; reference to the clinical site or clinical staff; pictures of the facility, staff, patients or any part of the patient's body; or any information that may identify a patient. Students should also refrain from posting any negative comments about their clinical experience, CI, patients, or any other staff member on their personal social networking profile or news feed.

Failure to comply with the Social Media Policy will be viewed as unprofessional and unethical behavior, and as such, may result in the immediate removal of the student from the PTA program.

Telephone, Internet and Photocopying

Electronic communication devices (cell phones, pagers, etc.) are not allowed in the clinical setting without expressed consent of the CI. Personal telephone calls or text messages are not allowed during clinical education hours. Cellular telephones or personal communication devices should be turned off or set to vibrate or privacy setting while the student is participating in clinical education. CIs and patients will consider answering personal telephone calls or responding to personal text messages as unprofessional behavior. As stated earlier, unprofessional behavior in the clinical setting may result in dismissal. In the event of an emergency call or message, the student will notify his/her CI, will ensure that the patient is safe, and will seek a private location in which to respond. Any other actions will be considered unprofessional behavior.

Photocopying materials for personal use is not allowed. Photocopying proprietary documents may be considered a copyright violation for which the student may be held responsible. Students are not allowed to access the facility's Internet or intranet for personal uses or any

non-clinical data gathering. Accessing patient information or Protected Health Information (PHI) of patients not on the PTA student's caseload is a violation of confidentiality and will be dealt with as such.

Clinical Site Assignment

Clinical education experiences are integrated within the technical coursework of the program in a full-time, 3-week assignment and culminate in two terminal full-time 6-week experiences at the end of the program. Clinical experiences are structured learning activities with objectives and assessment criteria. Experiences include observation as well as skills performance. Students are assigned to clinical facilities based on available facilities and student learning needs. The goal of clinical education is to provide a student with a range of clinical experience to allow for integration of didactic knowledge, and clinical practice and site assignments are selected to ensure a generalized exposure to a variety of physical therapy settings.

If the student has an interest in a particular facility for a future rotation, the sooner in the curriculum that the student identifies that clinical site to the ACCE, the better. This will allow faculty to make contact and begin the contractual process. Students are prohibited from contacting clinical sites directly to set up their own clinical affiliations. All student requests must be presented to the ACCE for consideration and address.

Clinical rotations are an integral part of the PTA program. Students must have experiences within approved and accepting clinical facilities in order to successfully complete their program of study. Students must complete **at least one inpatient and one outpatient clinical education experience** in order to successfully complete the PTA program. Clinical assignments are non-negotiable and faculty will not allow students to exchange site assignments with their classmates. While the faculty recognizes that students may be assigned to sites that are distant from their jobs or homes, students must be prepared to make adjustments to get to their assigned sites on time and for the entire period of the clinical practicum. Students working in their clinical facilities during practicums are not necessarily held to all of the same standards and rules as their employees and at no time are students considered employees of the facilities. Students are held to the standards and rules as outlined at the discretion of the clinical facilities and per the clinical affiliation agreement between the clinical facility and the Cecil College PTA program.

In order for an experience to be considered as "full time," the student is required to be at the clinic for a total of forty (40) hours per week, for the number of days per week stated in each course syllabus or designated by the clinical site (if different from course syllabus). Weekly schedules designated by the clinical site may entail workdays greater than and/or less than eight (8) hours; however, student's weekly clinical schedule will not exceed forty (40) hours total. Students are not expected to work more than forty (40) hours in any one week. The clinical faculty may allow schedule adjustments; however, all assigned clinical hours must be completed within the assigned semester. Isolated half-day experiences or one day field trips are considered "part time."

Students must meet the requirements of the clinical facility in order to be placed. Cecil College places students in clinical facilities with the highest clinical standards. These clinical partners are an

integral part of our program and are required to sustain the program's clinical education component. Clinical facility eligibility requirements will include, at the minimum, successful completion of the semester's course requirements and complete and current required paperwork and health work on file with the PTA program.

The facility has the right to decline a referred student, add to the list of eligibility requirements and/or bar the student from working with the facility's patients. Students who are asked to leave a clinical site by the facility or to separate from the clinical site for some other reason cannot be guaranteed placement to another site within the same semester. This may result in the student having to delay progress in the program of study for up to one academic year or until a new clinical facility can be assigned.

Any student having interpersonal difficulty with a Clinical Instructor (CI), supervisor, or other professional may ask for a conference, and the ACCE will be informed. A conference date may then be arranged with the student, ACCE, and/or appropriate clinical personnel.

Assignment at Place of Employment

Students are not allowed to work as PTAs prior to graduation. If a student is employed in any capacity at a health care facility used for clinical internship (i.e., as a PT aide, nursing aide or technician), the student must inform the ACCE and request clinical placement at a different facility. This provides a broader learning experience for the student and prevents role conflict with facility staff.

Financial Compensation

Under no circumstances are students paid for their services during the clinical practicum experiences. Monetary gifts from grateful patients or families cannot be accepted. Students will discuss the situation with their CIs if the need arises. Students are not permitted to work in any capacity in the same facility to which he/she has been assigned as a student. Serious liability issues will result if this is permitted to occur.

Clinical Site Selection Process

Cecil College makes every effort to secure clinical facilities within a 1-hour drive radius from North East, Maryland. **All students enrolled in the PTA program are expected to plan for the possibility of attending at least one clinical facility located up to a 1 hour and 15 minute drive from the North East, Maryland campus.**

Clinical Site Selection Considerations

1. In the spring semester of each year, first-year PTA students complete a "Clinical Experience Preference Form" and submit it to the ACCE prior to clinical assignment. The ACCE will utilize this form to make efforts to ensure students are placed in a variety of clinical settings while taking individual interests and experiences into consideration. Placement in the clinical facilities listed on the "Clinical Experience Preference Form" is not guaranteed.

2. As the student progresses through the PTA program, it is necessary to be aware of his/her previous experiences in order to assign the student to a facility that will offer a challenge and a variety of new experiences. This information is determined by:
 - Meeting with the student.
 - Observing the student during his/her practicum.
 - Reading the evaluation of the student by the clinical instructors and academic faculty.
3. If the student refuses to attend an assigned site, the achievement of program objectives and outcomes may be limited. This may result in failure of the Clinical Practicum course, and therefore impact successful completion of the PTA program.
4. If a facility refuses to accept an assigned student (due to student non-compliance with clinical facility requirements, conflict of interest issues, or any other reason in which the facility deems the student assignment as inappropriate or detrimental to facility operations), the ACCE will make a second attempt to place the student in a different facility. If the second facility rejects the student placement request, the student may no longer be eligible for the clinical education experience and must withdraw from the PTA program.

Procedure for Selection of Clinical Practicums

1. Students will be provided with a list of clinical sites available for each of the three full-time clinical experiences (Clinical Practicums I, II and III). Students will plan their first, second, and third choices for each clinical practicum on the "Clinical Experience Preference Form." Information about the clinical sites can be found on the CSIF Web and in the clinical site binder located in the PTA program lab. All forms will be submitted to the ACCE by a specified date and time.
2. The ACCE will assign students to sites based on student learning objectives, assessment of student skills, site availability and order of preference, taking into consideration prior clinical experiences.
3. The ACCE has the discretion to revise clinical assignments to ensure the student meets the educational objectives. Any clinical assignment revisions will be made at the discretion of the ACCE.

Students can express preference for a specific clinical site; however, their learning needs, as assessed by PTA faculty, are paramount in the assignment of a clinical site. The ACCE will determine what clinical site(s) can best provide the learning experience each student needs. The ACCE may choose to review affiliation assignments with students prior to final confirmation with the facility's CCCE. The ACCE makes the final decision regarding student placement.

4. Once student placements have been determined, the ACCE will notify/confirm specific student placement with facility CCCEs by the following deadlines:
 - Clinical Practicum I: designated date in late Spring semester of first year
 - Clinical Practicum II & III: designated date in Fall semester of second year

Clinical Education Calendar

The process of obtaining and assigning clinical affiliation slots to students occurs throughout the year. The following outlines the clinical education process:

	January	March	Mid-Late Spring	Fall
Beginning	Formal requests for clinical affiliation slots for Clinical Practicums I, II and III of the following year are sent to the clinical facilities with which the Cecil College PTA program has a formal clinical affiliation agreement.		<p>First-year students are given a list of available clinical affiliation slots and are allowed to submit their top three choices to the ACCE for placement for each clinical affiliation.</p> <p>Choices are taken into consideration when assigning clinical affiliation slots, however, are not guaranteed. Clinical affiliation placements for Clinical Practicum I (PTA 230—September) are confirmed with the clinical site.</p>	PTA students attending Clinical Practicum I (PTA 230).
Mid	Second-year PTA students attending Clinical Practicum II (PTA 232).	<p>Second-year PTA students attending Clinical Practicum III (PTA 234).</p> <p>Completed request for clinical affiliation slot forms are due to the Cecil College PTA program from the clinical facilities.</p>		Clinical affiliation placements for Clinical Practicum II (PTA 232—January of the following year) and Clinical Practicum III (PTA 234—March of the following year) are confirmed with the clinical site.

Clinical Site Attendance and Behavior Expectations

Attendance is recorded at each clinical affiliation and verified by the CI. Students are required to behave in a manner that will reflect positively on themselves, the school and the profession for which they are being prepared to enter. The Cecil College Catalog, Student Code of Conduct, PTA program policies and procedures found in this manual and professional guidelines, such as the APTA Code of Ethics, professional abilities, Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant, and Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant, contain the standards of professional behavior to which the student is held. The student should become familiar with the following expectations.

1. If a student is not present at his/her assigned area, then the student is considered absent for the day.
2. All lost time must be made up. Exceptions to this rule will be made on a case-by-case basis at the discretion of the ACCE and/or Program Director.
3. Emergency or serious situations happen, but the time must be made up. The following situations may be considered emergency or serious: personal illness, court appearances, death in the immediate family (e.g., parent, grandparent, or sibling).
4. Proof of the reason for an absence may be required. As an example, a facility may require a physician's return to work release if the student was absent for more than 2 days.
5. Any time missed due to medical or dental appointments must be made up. Note that CIs and program faculty take a negative view of time missed due to appointments which could and should have been scheduled outside of clinical hours.
6. Any lost clinical time must be communicated—in advance, whenever possible—with both the ACCE and the student's CI.
7. Students work the same hours and schedule as their CI. This includes holidays, evenings, and/or weekends. If college classes are cancelled for any reason, the student is expected to attend scheduled clinical hours unless told not to. In the event of inclement weather, the student is expected to follow the Nursing and Health Professions off-site Inclement Weather Policy (Appendix 9).
8. It is expected that students will be on time and prepared for their clinical duties and responsibilities. Habitual tardiness, absenteeism, and being unprepared will result in a reduction in the final grade and possible administrative withdrawal from the clinical practicum course.
9. Students may be allowed thirty (30) minutes for lunch. This is left to the discretion of each CI at each institution. It is preferred that students do not go off facility premises for lunch, but this may be left to the CI to decide as well. If the student goes off the premises, he/she is still expected to return to his/her department by the appropriate time.
10. Clinical paperwork requirements may change at any time and with little advance notice. If a student is required to, for example, complete a second drug screen, it is expected that the student will make every effort to complete the new and unexpected requirement as soon as possible. Delays due to procrastination may have a negative effect on the outcome of the experience.
11. Clinical schedules which conflict with religious observances must be discussed with both the ACCE and the CI. Clinical time missed due to religious observances is still missed clinical time.
12. All students are required to attend the clinical affiliation at the regularly scheduled time as identified in the published Schedule of Classes. If a need arises to request a minor change in scheduled time, the student must meet with the ACCE and provide in writing the request for a change and the justification. The requested change must not interfere with the student's education. The request must not interfere with the normal operation of the clinical facility or the PTA educational program. All clinical hours must be completed within the scheduled semester.

13. Reduction of commute time, unreliable personal transportation, or unreliable child care is not generally considered undue hardship. Requests for adjustments to clinical hours for these reasons will generally be denied.
14. Scheduled dates and work times may vary due to clinical site or CI availability. Students will be notified of any changes to their assignments as soon as this is known by the ACCE.
15. Each clinical facility reserves the right to terminate a student's educational experience at the site for what the site deems to be unprofessional behavior. Students are warned that frequent absence, tardiness, or behaviors that indicate disinterest or lack of preparation will invariably be interpreted as unprofessional.
16. The program and clinical faculty expect that students will orient themselves to and abide by the clinical facility's policies on conduct. A student will be subject to disciplinary action if violations of any kind occur.

Personal Appearance and Uniforms

The personal appearance of PTA students reflects the standards of the profession, the College, and the program. As such, personal appearance is seen as indicative of the students' interest and pride in their chosen profession. Any student reporting to the clinical site in improper uniform or in soiled or untidy clothes will be sent home. The student's CI will evaluate student appearance and this determination is not subject to appeal.

Clinical facilities may have a dress code and if so, the student will follow it. If the facility does not have a dress code, the following guidelines are provided.

Uniform clothing: Students must wear the Cecil College PTA polo shirt, or a white lab coat over a business appropriate short or long-sleeved shirt, with dark or khaki slacks of ankle length. Shorts are prohibited; skirts and capri-length slacks may be prohibited, per facility discretion. Men may be required to wear neckties, per facility discretion. If so, these will be conservatively designed and appropriately tied and secured. Color coded scrub tops over color coded scrub pants with or without lab jackets may be an acceptable variation for either men or women in the clinical setting if approved by the clinical facility. It is expected that all clothing is clean, in good repair, and without excessive wrinkles. No gauze tops, tank tops, sleeveless shirts or T-shirts (unless used as undershirts) are permitted. Sleeve length must not impede proper hand washing.

Underclothes: Underclothes at no times will be visible under uniform clothing. Females must wear a bra at all times. White undershirts must be worn if outer shirt is of thin material.

Hair: Hair must be neat, clean and of a naturally occurring color. Alternative colors and colored streaks are not permitted. Hair dyed in non-traditional, vibrant colors or items such as feathers woven into hair can serve as a distraction, and therefore are not appropriate for the professional workplace. Clinical faculty may exercise discretion to determine appropriateness of appearance. Hair must be styled or contained such that it does not fall into the student's face, onto the patient, or onto equipment. Neatly trimmed and groomed beards and/or mustaches are acceptable for men. The purpose of hair guidelines is to avoid contamination of client and client areas and to present a professional appearance.

Shoes: Low-heeled and closed-toe shoes with skid-proof soles are appropriate for all clinical settings. Shoes must be clean and in good repair. Check with the individual facility whether athletic shoes or sneakers (trainers) are allowed. If they are permitted, they must be clean, in good repair, and securely tied. Laces, if present, must be clean. Shoes must fully encase the heel and toes; sandals are not permitted. Neutral color socks or hosiery must be worn at all times. Slouch socks are not permitted.

Accessories: The use of cosmetics should be discrete and kept to a minimum. Odors from perfumes, cosmetics, or other toiletries may be offensive or irritating to patients with respiratory conditions. Watches, wedding and/or engagement rings, school rings or pins, and small earrings are generally acceptable. Students are reminded that large, sharp, and/or pointy jewelry or belt buckles can scratch or tear fragile skin, and necklaces, bracelets, or earrings can get caught in clinical equipment or pulled on by confused or agitated patients.

Nails: Fingernails should be kept short (not extending past the tips of the fingers), clean, and neatly trimmed to facilitate manual dexterity. Polish, if worn, must be pale or colorless. Note that some clinical facilities do not allow nail polish due to infection control issues. Acrylic nail or artificial nail tips are not permitted due to infection control issues.

Personal Hygiene: High standards of personal hygiene are expected of all health care workers. Strong body or breath odors, colognes, perfumes, or cooking smells which cling to hair or clothing may be offensive or irritating to patients and co-workers. Ill clients can be very sensitive to scents and odors. Students may expect feedback on their personal hygiene and should be prepared to deal with this in a constructive and professional manner.

Identification: Unless otherwise indicated by the clinical facility, the student must wear their Cecil College student photo identification badge at all times on uniforms, lab coats and jackets. In addition, many clinical facilities require students to wear a facility ID badge. Students are responsible for wearing the required ID badges at all times in the clinical setting. Facility ID badges must be turned in to the facility CI or CCCE on the last day of the student rotation. A fee will be assessed for any lost clinical facility ID badge. Students must be clearly identified and introduced as students.

Students are required to introduce themselves to patients and their family members, facility staff, and other health care workers as a “STUDENT” or “STUDENT PTA.” It is both unethical and illegal for a student to fail to accurately identify himself/herself during a clinical education experience. Failure to do so is a violation of informed consent. Students are reminded that patients, their family members, or other caregivers are permitted to refuse treatment from a student PTA.

Piercings and tattoos: All reasonable effort must be made to cover tattoos and other body markings. All jewelry in body piercings must be removed with the exception of earrings. Body piercing in the form of stretching (i.e., earlobe stretching or “gauging”) is **not** acceptable. Ear gauges must be removed and skin tone plugs inserted in order for a student to attend clinical practicums. Students may expect feedback on their personal choices and should be prepared to address issues in a constructive and professional manner.

Facilities have the right to require a stricter dress code than specified in this document. Check with your CI for facility requirements.

Additional Clinical Site Policies

Eating and Drinking: Students shall not eat or drink while on duty unless during a designated break in an appropriately designated area.

Latex Allergy: Students diagnosed with an allergic contact dermatitis to latex or an actual latex allergy must avoid contact with latex gloves and other latex containing products, and avoid situations where there is a likelihood of inhaling the powder from latex gloves worn by other workers.

Students must wear either plastic, vinyl, or other non-latex gloves when the possibility exists that they may come in contact with latex products in the simulation lab or during the course of patient care. Hypoallergenic latex gloves are not acceptable.

It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that all necessary precautions are taken to minimize and prevent exposure to latex products. Students will be responsible for the cost of any emergency care needed due to latex exposure.

Personal Property: Students are asked not to bring personal property of value, such as credit cards, excess cash, and personal electronics to clinical facilities. The student is solely responsible for their possessions. The clinical facility cannot be responsible for lost or missing personal property. Consult with your CI to inquire whether the facility has arrangements for securing student belongings.

Smoking: It is the belief of the PTA program faculty that PTAs serve as role models for healthy living and that the odor and/or sight of tobacco products may be offensive to clients/patients, especially when ill. Therefore, the following guidelines have been established:

1. No tobacco products will be carried on one's person while providing patient care.
2. Smoking is permitted only in areas designated for smoking by the facility and only if allowed by the facility and the facility CI/CCCE. Many facility campuses are entirely smoke free, and students must comply with their policies.
3. Tobacco products must be completely extinguished and discarded in appropriate receptacles.
4. Students who smoke should pay particular attention to oral hygiene after smoking and should take steps to avoid the odor of smoke on clothing.
5. Breaks are permitted only at the individual CI's discretion and must not compromise patient care. In consideration for those covering patient care during breaks, one's breaks must not exceed allotted numbers or time.
6. Students who violate the above guidelines may be dismissed from the clinical setting and/or required to make up the day.

Time Management: Clinical practicums are time intensive. Even when there are no patient care assignments to be completed, students are encouraged to practice clinical skills, ask questions, read

professional literature, or access material in the professional library with the permission of the CI. Students are expected to participate in the routine stocking, cleaning, and organizing in the clinic. Students are not to use clinical time to study for other courses, socialize, or text or message on phone or the Internet. Misuse of time will be considered unprofessional behavior.

Transportation and Parking: PTA students are responsible for providing their own transportation to all facilities used for education experiences, including clinical affiliation sites. At the clinical sites, the parking facilities and regulations will vary. The student is responsible for becoming familiar with the institution's guidelines and is responsible for any fees or fines.

Student Health and Safety during Clinical Experiences

1. During student experiences in the clinical setting, the student may come in contact with diseases, equipment, and treatments that could be hazardous to the student or an unborn baby. It is expected that the student will utilize common sense and sound patient care procedures endorsed by OSHA and taught by the PTA program related to pathogens, environmental hazards, and infectious diseases. Related health and safety policies are discussed in prior sections of this manual. It is expected that the student will be familiar with all health and safety guidelines. Students are reminded that their personal health also impacts the health of their patients and fellow health care workers. **Moreover, students are required to obtain a copy of the facility's risk management and safety policies and procedures. Upon review of these policies and procedures, students are required to acknowledge receipt of these documents by signing the *Clinical Site Safety Policy & Procedures Acknowledgement form (Appendix 8)*.** The original signed document will be stored in each respective student's file, located in a locked cabinet in the PTA program office. A copy of the signed document may be furnished to the facility at the request of the facility.
2. According to the clinical education affiliation agreement, both the College and the clinical sites agree that students are responsible for payment of any charges for health care associated with their clinical education. This includes, but is not limited to, health physical examinations, PPD tests, current immunization records, and health care services for accidental injury or required following exposure to biohazard materials.
3. As part of the required paperwork, the student is **required to complete a health physical examination.** This documentation must provide a complete record of required immunizations, PPD test (or acceptable alternatives), and documents that the student is free of communicable diseases and able to perform the duties and responsibilities of a PTA student as outlined in the Essential Functions and Technical Standards section of this manual. All immunizations and communicable disease testing are based upon the most recent OSHA regulations for health care workers and will be updated as needed.

4. Students with known latex sensitivity or allergy should be aware that the College cannot guarantee that he/she will not be exposed to latex during clinical experience. Students with latex sensitivity should make this information known to the Program Director, ACCE, and any of their CIs so that appropriate protection and/or supplies can be arranged.
5. Students with known communicable diseases will need to follow the clinical facility's protocols. The College has no jurisdiction over these protocols and cannot intervene on the student's behalf.
6. A student may also be exposed to a communicable disease while on a clinical rotation. In these instances, the facility's protocols may, for example, require that the student leave all patient care areas until incubation periods have expired. In cases of exposure to certain diseases or conditions, the student may require medications, inoculations, or special tests. The costs of these measures are the student's responsibility. In addition, any missed clinical education time must be made up.
7. Unprotected contact with blood, blood products, or other body fluids may occur from needle sticks, urine splashes, or exposure to patients prior to the initiation of isolation procedures. In these instances, the student is required to follow the clinical facility's protocols and exposure control policies and procedures. It is the student's responsibility to follow these measures and to be responsible for any financial fees related to these services. Any lost clinical education time must be made up.
8. If a student comes into contact with communicable diseases outside of the clinical experience, is injured, or contracts a disease which in turn may be hazardous to classmates, patients with compromised immune systems, family members, young children, or other health care workers, it must be reported to the Program Director immediately. The Program Director, in consultation with the individual student and the Dean of Nursing and Health Professions, will develop an individualized action plan for managing the issue. Depending on circumstances, the student may have temporary or permanent limitations which may in turn affect his/her continued participation in the program.

Universal Precautions

Because of the risk of exposure to infectious diseases, students are required to utilize Universal Precautions at all times during patient care. The student is referred to the content in their reference text and clinical skills book for detailed guidelines for Universal precautions. Universal precautions guidelines can also be found in the procedure handbook of any clinical setting and at the Occupational Safety and Health Association website:

<http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/etools/hospital/hazards/univprec/univ.html>

Clinical Supervision

Students are NOT ALLOWED in clinical areas without the supervision of a CI, facility supervisor, clinical faculty member, or designated physical therapist. Students are not under any circumstances permitted to treat a patient without the clinical supervision of a physical therapist in accordance with the *State of Maryland Practice Act* for physical therapy and *APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant*. Students are permitted to access only those areas of the clinical facility that support direct patient care of only those patients on the student's schedule.

Leaving the Premises or Visiting Family, Patients or Staff

Students shall not leave their assigned clinical area without the permission of the CI, supervising PT or Clinical Department Director. Any student doing so will have to make up the time lost. Students are not allowed to visit patients or other persons such as family or staff to which they are not assigned, unless approved by the CI. The student will follow the visiting hours designated by the clinical institution if they wish to visit persons who are not physical therapy patients.

Patient Safety

The faculty believes that the physical and emotional welfare of patients and their families has the highest priority during clinical educational experiences. Prior to initiating the clinical affiliation component of the PTA program, students are required to demonstrate competency of each item on the safety skills checklist during practical examination. Students will not be allowed to pass courses involving practical examination or proceed to a clinical site for the clinical affiliation component of the program without proper demonstration of proficiency with all safety skills.

A student who demonstrates clinically unsafe practice or a pattern of behavior which jeopardizes patient safety may be dismissed from the clinical facility for a specified amount of time, or the clinical affiliation may be terminated.

Unsafe clinical practice is defined as any behavior determined by the student's CI to be actually or potentially detrimental to the patient, their families, or to the health care facility. This behavior may be related to many factors, e.g., physical or mental health problems, knowledge deficits, problem solving skills deficits, anxiety, drug abuse, etc. The clinical facility, therefore, maintains the right to refuse a student from working with the patients and staff.

Patients' Informed Consent and Right to Refuse Student Treatment

The Cecil College PTA program recognizes the importance of developing a relationship of mutual trust between the patient, the student and the clinical faculty as physical therapy providers.

- The patient has the right to be informed that a student may participate in the delivery of the physical therapy plan of care. The patient also has the right to be given a clear and understandable explanation of the treatment recommended sufficient to obtain an informed consent including alternatives to treatment, benefits and risks (if any) of recommended and alternative treatment, and the consequences of refusing treatment.
- The patient has the right to receive treatment from students, clinical faculty and staff that is considerate of the patient's physical therapy needs, respectful of their dignity, and mindful of the confidentiality that rightfully exists between the patient, clinical facility and Cecil College PTA program.

- The patient has the right to expect reasonable continuity of care and completion of treatment in a timely manner upon acceptance of and assignment to a student.
- The patient has the right to refuse treatment administered by a Cecil College PTA student.
- The patient has the right to know the clinical education policies of the Cecil College PTA program and the regulations that apply to his or her conduct as a patient.
- The patient has the right to receive treatment that always meets or exceeds the profession's standard of care.

Clinical Performance Assessment

Clinical affiliations are scheduled with CIs at established clinical affiliation sites, based on availability. Evaluation of the student's clinical performance is based upon specified levels of technical and professional competence and in comparison with stated criteria in the clinical assessment tools utilized by the Cecil College PTA program for each respective clinical affiliation.

All evaluations are discussed with the CI and signed by both student and CI. The student will receive either a grade of Pass (P)/Fail (F) or a letter grade for clinical courses (as designated by college course requirements). Final course grade is determined by the ACCE. The ACCE determines final clinical course grades based on the associated clinical course rubric and feedback provided from the clinical faculty who worked with the student during the clinical affiliation.

If a student requires additional clinical education time to successfully complete clinical course objectives, this may be granted if the student demonstrates an appropriate professional affect and progress. Additional clinical education time will not exceed two weeks.

Cecil College PTA Clinical Practicum I Assessment Tool

The Cecil College PTA program utilizes the Clinical Practicum I Assessment Tool (Appendices 22 and 23) for assessment of student clinical performance during Clinical Practicum I. The assessment tool is meant to evaluate the PTA student's performance over a relatively brief duration of time (3 weeks). Associated with the Clinical Practicum I Assessment Tool are General Weekly Summary Progression guidelines that help both the CI and student determine whether or not the student meets adequate performance criteria during each week of the clinical practicum. All students are graded on their performance during Clinical Practicum I by the Cecil College ACCE using the grading rubric and information provided by the CI on the Clinical Practicum I Assessment Tool.

Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) for the PTA Student

The Cecil College PTA program utilizes the APTA's Web-based CPI for the Physical Therapist Assistant for assessment of student clinical performance during Clinical Practicums II and III. According to the APTA, the tool was designed to standardize valid instruments that assess student performance during clinical education experiences. The PTA CPI, which was initially paper-based, was first published by the APTA for use with physical therapist assistant students in 1999. After much use, the tool was revised in 2008 and became available in Web-based form in 2010. The Web-based CPI for the PTA allows for easy access by all users, including the PTA student, CI, CCCE and ACCE. The Web-based CPI for the PTA also enables users to view and compare completed midterm and final reports online, access a PDF version of the PTA CPI, retrieve data, and communicate

information through smart email and the design of the system. Training for the student, CI, CCCE and ACCE regarding the appropriate use of the PTA CPI is provided online through the APTA Learning Center.

All students are graded on their performance during Clinical Practicums II and III by the Cecil College ACCE using the information provided by the CI on the CPI. If a student's CPI evaluation falls below criteria deemed satisfactory for each respective Clinical Practicum as designated on the Cecil College PTA grading rubrics (Appendix 24) or the student demonstrates unsafe behaviors, the "Significant Concerns" section of the CPI is checked and the CI will notify both the CCCE at the clinical site and the ACCE at Cecil College. Determination of the appropriate course of action to remediate identified problem(s) in student performance will be discussed and implemented by the collaboration of the ACCE, CCCE and CI. If continued participation in the clinical affiliation is deemed appropriate by the Clinical Faculty, remediation terms will be discussed with the student and implemented. A learning contract may be established to ensure that all necessary terms are met by the student prior to receiving a passing grade for the clinical affiliation.

Clinical Practicum Grading Policy

The grading policy and procedures for Clinical Practicums I, II and III are as follows:

Clinical Practicum I (PTA 230)

Content	Possible Points
Timely Completion of Midterm Clinical I Assessment	5
Timely Completion of Final Clinical I Assessment	5
Weekly Journal Entries	30
Communication with ACCE (verbal and written)	10
Meeting Cecil College PTA Clinical I Assessment Grading Rubric	76*
Total	126

Clinical Practicum II (PTA 232) and Clinical Practicum III (PTA 234)

Content	Possible Points
Timely Completion of Midterm CPI	5
Timely Completion of Final CPI	5
In-Service Presentation	45
Communication with ACCE (verbal and written)	10
Meeting Cecil College PTA CPI Grading Rubric	75*
Total	140

The total number of points earned by the student will be converted into a percentage of the total possible points. The percentage is then converted into a letter grade as follows:

A	91-100%
B	81-90%
C	76-80%
F	75% or below

***Students must achieve the minimum raw score of the available total points, as designated by each Clinical Assessment or CPI grading rubric, to pass clinical practicums. Failure to meet the requirement for all Critical Item or “Red Flag Items” may result in failing the clinical practicum. Students who do not complete associated clinical practicum assignments (weekly journal entries, in-service presentations) are also at risk of failing the clinical practicum.**

Students must achieve a minimum grade of “C” or higher in order to continue in sequence in the PTA program. Please refer to the Appendix for grading rubrics for the Clinical I Assessment tool and CPI.

Dismissal from a Clinical Facility

The clinical facility may request that a student be removed from the clinic. Upon this request, the ACCE or Program Director will require the student to leave the facility. The student will not be re-assigned to a clinical site until the behaviors leading to the dismissal are understood and addressed. An individualized plan to address student behavior will be developed, implemented, and assessed by the ACCE before the student is allowed to continue in the plan of study. The Program Director, CI, student, and/or Dean of Nursing and Health Professions may assist in the development, implementation, and/or assessment.

The faculty believes that the physical and emotional welfare of patients and their families has the highest priority during clinical educational experiences. A student who demonstrates clinically unsafe practice or a pattern of behavior which jeopardizes patient safety may be dismissed from the clinical facility for a specified amount of time, or the clinical affiliation may be terminated.

Unsafe clinical practice is defined as any behavior determined by the student’s CI to be actually or potentially detrimental to the patient, their families, or to the health care facility. This behavior may be related to many factors, e.g., physical or mental health problems, knowledge deficits, problem solving skills deficits, anxiety, drug abuse, etc. The clinical facility, therefore, maintains the right to refuse a student from working with the patients and staff.

The CI will identify and document unsafe behaviors. This will be provided to the program ACCE. The decision about whether to permit the student to continue in the clinical practicum and under what conditions this will be permitted is reached by the program ACCE in consultation with the student and CI. The Program Director and/or Dean of Nursing and Health Professions may assist in this process, as needed.

CLINICAL SITES

Minimum Requirements for Clinical Education Sites

The Cecil College Physical Therapist Assistant program maintains a current, working relationship with regional rehabilitation facilities/providers that serve as clinical education sites for the Cecil College PTA students. The program utilizes the APTA's statements regarding appropriate clinical education sites:

Guidelines:

1. The philosophy of the clinical education site and provider of physical therapy for patient/client care and clinical education is compatible with that of the academic program.
2. Clinical education experiences for students are planned to meet specific objectives of the academic program, the provider of physical therapy and the individual student.
3. Physical therapy personnel provide services in an ethical and legal manner.
4. The clinical education site is committed to the principle of equal opportunity and affirmative action as required by federal legislation.
5. The clinical education site demonstrates administrative support to physical therapy clinical education.
6. The clinical education site has a variety of learning experiences available to students.
7. The clinical education site provides an active, stimulating environment appropriate to the learning needs of students.
8. Selected support services are available to students.
9. Roles and responsibilities of physical therapy personnel are clearly defined.
10. The physical therapy personnel are adequate in number to provide an educational program for students.
11. A center coordinator of clinical education is selected based on specific criteria.
12. Physical therapy CIs are selected based on specific criteria.
13. Special expertise of the clinical education site personnel is available to students.
14. The clinical education site encourages clinical educator (CI and CCCE) training and development.
15. The clinical education site supports active career development for personnel.
16. Physical therapy personnel are active in professional activities.
17. The provider of physical therapy has an active and viable process of internal evaluation of its affairs and is receptive to procedures of review and audit approved by appropriate external agencies and consumers.

Reference: www.apta.org: *Guidelines: Clinical Education Sites HOD G06-93-27-52 [Guideline]*
(See also www.apta.org: *Guidelines: Clinical Education Sites BOD G03-04-22-55*)

Clinical Education Affiliation Agreement

Cecil College has a uniform written agreement in effect with all affiliated hospitals and clinical sites. Close cooperation between the College, PTA academic faculty and the clinical faculty is vital to the success of the program. Copies of executed written agreements are on file in the PTA program office and can be reviewed upon request to the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE). The student's part in ensuring the effectiveness of the clinical portion of the program is to have a thorough understanding of the educational philosophy of "hands on" clinical training, a thorough understanding and commitment to the rules governing clinical education, and a commitment to quality patient care and patient safety (see Appendix 25).

Clinical Faculty

Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE)

General Description: The Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program is responsible for the coordination and administration of the clinical component of the PTA program and is the student's 'point of contact' for anything pertaining to the clinical education experience. Responsibilities include, but are not limited to, assessing and evaluating PTA students; maintaining documentation related to student clinical performance; developing, monitoring, and revising clinical education curriculum; selecting clinical education sites; maintaining and monitoring all clinical site agreements; serving as a liaison between Cecil College and clinical sites; and determining student clinical site assignment. The ACCE also determines the final grade for each clinical education experience (PTA 230, PTA 232, and PTA 234) based on objective assessment and feedback submitted by the site-based CI and CCCE.

Center Coordinator of Clinical Education (CCCE)

General Description: The Center Coordinator of Clinical Education (CCCE) of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program is responsible for coordinating student clinical affiliations as representative of the clinical facility. The CCCE corresponds with the ACCE to schedule and confirm student placement in the clinical facility. The CCCE is responsible for identifying and choosing an appropriate clinician within their respective rehab department to serve as Clinical Instructor for the PTA student during the clinical affiliation. The CCCE also provides the Cecil College PTA program with information regarding the clinical facility that is pertinent for students in preparing for the clinical affiliation, including clinical site location, CI contact information, and any requirements of students designated by the clinical facility prior to the start of the clinical affiliation. The CCCE is also responsible for communicating with both the ACCE and CI regarding student clinical performance and problem remediation as necessary.

Clinical Instructor (CI)

General Description: The Clinical Instructor (CI) of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program serves as mentor and teacher to the PTA student during the clinical affiliation component of the program. The PTA student works under the direct supervision of the CI while at the assigned clinical facility. The CI observes, critiques and assesses the student as they participate in the delivery of physical therapy care. The CI subsequently gives verbal and written feedback to the CCCE and ACCE regarding the student's performance of the delivery of physical therapy care while in the clinical setting. The CI **does not** administer a grade regarding student performance in the clinical affiliation. The final grade of the clinical affiliation is assigned by the ACCE based on the feedback provided by the CI and the CCCE.

Information regarding the qualifications of a CI is acquired through the Clinical Center Information Form (CCIF) and through verbal and email communication with the clinical site. The program utilizes the APTA's statements regarding CI attributes:

Quality: Physical therapists and physical therapist assistants willing to be involved in the education and supervision of individuals pursuing a career in the physical therapy profession.

Guidelines:

1. Possess a current physical therapy license or physical therapy assistant license/registration/certification as required by the physical therapy practice act in the state in which they are practicing.
2. Practice for a minimum of one year in the setting where clinical instruction will occur.
3. Show interest in developing knowledge and skills to provide clinical teaching.
4. Possess the ability to plan, conduct and evaluate a clinical education experience based on sound educational principles.
5. Possess the ability to develop written objectives for a variety of learning experiences, organize activities to accomplish these objectives, and effectively supervise students to facilitate learning and clinical reasoning.
6. Demonstrate professional skills, acting as a role model for students.
7. Demonstrate effective communication skills.
8. Demonstrate effective interpersonal relationship skills.
9. Communicate with the CCCE and ACCE/director of clinical education (DCE) in a timely manner as needed.
10. Seek assistance/resources as needed to manage issues of clinical education that is in the best interest of students.
11. Participate in a multifaceted evaluation process of the clinical education program.
12. Work collaboratively with the physical therapist to supervise physical therapist students (in the case of the physical therapist assistant).

Minimum Requirements for Clinical Faculty

Clinical faculty in the Cecil College PTA program shall meet the following minimum requirements:

1. Physical Therapists must possess a Clinical Doctorate, Master's or Bachelor's degree in physical therapy from an accredited institution.
2. Physical Therapist Assistants must possess an Associate degree from an accredited physical therapist assistant program and institution.
3. Physical Therapists must hold a current license as a Physical Therapist in the state in which they work and be in good standing with the state board of physical therapy.
4. Physical Therapist Assistants must hold a current license as a Physical Therapist Assistant in the state in which they work and be in good standing with the state board of physical therapy.
5. Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants that serve as CCCE and/or CI must possess at least 1 year of clinical experience prior to serving as clinical faculty.
6. APTA CI Credentialing and APTA Advanced CI Credentialing are strongly recommended for clinical faculty.

Rights and Privileges of Clinical Faculty

The Cecil College PTA program recognizes the critical role that clinical instructors serve in providing quality clinical education experiences for students. As such, Cecil College is committed to the continued facilitation of a strong relationship with clinical faculty. The following outlines the rights and privileges of clinical faculty in the Cecil College Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

Continuing Education

Cecil College will provide state board approved continuing education programs applicable to the field of physical therapy on an annual basis that are accessible to all clinical faculty members. The continuing education programs may occur in the form of a seminar, course, study group, lecture, meeting or Web-based course. Continuing education program topics and format will be determined based on survey responses of clinical faculty. This is an effort to ensure that clinical instructors have access to clinical education programs that they deem clinically relevant and worth attending.

College Facilities

Clinical faculty have full library privileges at the North East campus library. Moreover, clinical instructors have access to the College's Fitness and Wellness Center during the term in which they are supervising a Cecil College PTA student. Access to library and Fitness and Wellness Center services and hours can be found at www.cecil.edu.

STUDENT RESOURCES

Bookstore

The College bookstore is operated by Barnes and Noble and is located at College Crossing Shopping Center, 3135 Joseph Biggs Memorial Highway, North East. In addition to textbooks, the Bookstore offers classroom and computer supplies. You can contact the Bookstore at 410-287-4740.

Additional bookstore and textbook information can be found online at www.cecil.bncollege.com.

Counseling Services

Upper Bay Counseling and Support Services, Inc. provides confidential counseling to all Cecil College students. Upper Bay addresses wellness concerns to include anxiety, stress, depression, ADHD, drug and alcohol dependency, anger management, crisis intervention, bereavement, grief/loss and post-traumatic stress disorders. Call 410-996-3450 or 800-467-0304 to schedule an appointment with a licensed social worker. Your health insurance information will be required.

In addition, the College has a full-time Officer for Special Services and ADA who is available to assist students seeking assessment and counseling.

Financial Aid

Financial aid programs are designed to assist qualified students in meeting their college-related expenses. Need-based scholarships, grants, work-study and loans are types of financial assistance that require completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) to determine eligibility. In addition, some Maryland State Scholarships have specific application and award criteria. The Cecil College Foundation Scholarship application can be found online at www.cecil.edu/Foundation/Foundation-Scholarships/Pages/How-to-Apply.aspx.

The goal of Cecil College is to make the financial aid application process understandable and easy to follow. The financial aid staff maintains a strong commitment to students and encourages responsible participation in the process. The staff is available to assist students in filling out the FAFSA and/or seeking aid from other sources. The staff offers individual appointments on campus and hosts evening events throughout the year to assist students in seeking and applying for financial aid. The following are a few basic guidelines to ensure that students receive comprehensive consideration for all types of financial assistance:

- Apply early to be considered for all types of aid: federal, state, and college aid.
- March 1 is the priority deadline for most Maryland state scholarships; April 30 is the Cecil College Foundation Scholarship deadline.
- Promptly provide all documents that are requested by the Financial Aid Office.
- When in doubt, ask questions. (The Financial Aid Office can be reached at: 410-287-1003; 410-287-1001 (fax); or finaid@cecil.edu.)

Fitness and Wellness Center

The Fitness and Wellness Center is designed to accommodate students, faculty and staff of Cecil College of all ages, fitness levels and interests toward achieving their fitness and wellness goals comfortably and safely. Services offered include: orientations on proper, safe and sanitary use of equipment; assistance with developing a customized exercise plan; guidance on nutritious eating; programs throughout the year; credit and continuing education physical education and health courses; and tips on long-term and effective behavior change.

All equipment in the Fitness and Wellness Center (FWC) will be maintained daily by FWC staff. Annual preventative maintenance is provided by a contract with EnerG Wellness Solutions, LLC. Any concerns regarding FWC equipment should be directed to the FWC Director, A. Lawler, at ext. 1559.

Learning Center

The Learning Center assesses all students for writing, reading, and math placement. These assessments are a requirement for all students. For assistance in math, reading, or writing, students of all levels and in all disciplines may refer to one of the following skill centers.

Math Lab

The Math Lab provides free one-on-one tutoring for all currently enrolled students experiencing difficulties in mathematics.

Reading and Writing Lab

The Reading and Writing Lab offers free, one-on-one tutoring in writing, reading, and study skills to all currently enrolled students. Appointments for tutoring are recommended, but drop-ins are welcome according to tutor availability. To sign up for an appointment, students can visit the Reading and Writing Lab in AS360, or call 443-674-1976. The lab also offers computers and a printer for student use; tables, chairs, and couches provide a comfortable study environment.

Computer Lab

The Computer Lab provides free computer assistance to all enrolled students enrolled at Cecil College. Students are not required to be enrolled in a computer course or computer program to use the lab services. The lab is located in the Technology Center, Room 316.

Library

The Cecil County Veterans Memorial Library at Cecil College is an essential part of the educational program of the College, providing resources, services, and assistance to support the College's academic credit and career and community education programs. The library contains print, multimedia, and online resources and provides students with the proper physical environment and materials fundamental to the lifelong learning process. There is always a professional librarian on duty when the library is open to assist patrons with research.

Professional Development

The PTA program believes that students should be committed to their professional development. We encourage students to become actively involved in the following organizations:

PTA Student Association

The program supports students in their creation and maintenance of student organizations such as a PTA Student Club or Association. The PTA Student Club/Association provides a vehicle for personal growth, leadership, professional development and social activities. There will be information presented on developing a Student Association at the program orientation.

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA)

Student applicants must be enrolled in an accredited PTA program. The program acknowledges that Cecil students belong to the next generation of PTAs. APTA resources will help students grow beyond the classroom to successfully launch their careers in the professional realm.

<http://www.apta.org/Benefits/Students/>

Maryland Chapter of the APTA

The Maryland Chapter offers a variety of events, professional development activities, and opportunities for students to meet and interact with other APTA members in our geographic region. It is an excellent venue to learn, share and network.

aptamd@aptamd.org

Professional Resources

The Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) is the only nationally recognized accrediting agency for physical therapist and physical therapist assistant education programs. CAPTE is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) for this purpose.

<http://www.capteonline.org/Home.aspx>

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is the professional organization for physical therapist and physical therapist assistants. As a physical therapist assistant, you need resources at the ready to move your career forward, keep up with the latest physical therapy practice strategies, get paid appropriately for services, keep abreast of federal legislation and regulations, and make a difference in the lives of your patients.

<http://www.apta.org/>

Check the following for chapter and section meetings:

www.apta.org/ and select the Chapters & Sections tab

www.aptamd.org/ and select the Meetings tab

Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT): Links to the various jurisdictions that control physical therapist practice in the U.S. Also includes information on the national board examination for the PTA.

<http://www.fsbpt.org>

Maryland State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners: The Board of Physical Therapy Examiners has been in existence since 1947 to regulate the practice of physical therapy in the State of Maryland. Physical therapist assistants have been licensed in this state since 1972. Board meetings are held every third Tuesday of the month and are open to the public.

Duties of the Board include writing regulations, interpreting the scope of practice, educating licensees, and disciplining those who violate the law. The most important function is protecting the citizens of Maryland.

<http://dhmh.maryland.gov/bphte/SitePages/Home.aspx>

Student Advisement

Advising is an integral part of Cecil College. Academic advisors at the College are prepared to provide support services designed to assist students in obtaining the information they need to make knowledgeable decisions about their academic future. The best time to see an advisor is during the admissions process before registering for classes. It is in the best interest of students to maintain contact with their advisor throughout their period of study at Cecil. Students and advisors work out an appropriate choice of courses based on the results of the skills assessments, past academic performance, curriculum choice and outside commitments.

Advisors can assist students in staying on track. Students should also seek advice from their advisor if they are:

- Having academic issues that have interfered with success in the academic area; or
- Contemplating a change in career education goals; or
- Nearing graduation in order to determine graduation eligibility.

Advising services are available to all students as described in the College Catalog. In addition, all students who are admitted to the PTA program will have a PTA faculty advisor. Advisors are available to review student progress and identify strengths and weaknesses. Appointments are recommended. Individual contracts may be made with students to remediate weaknesses.

Students may make an appointment with their College advisor by calling 443-674-1872 or by stopping by the Advising/Registration Center located in the Division of Student Services. Students will make an appointment with their PTA Faculty advisor as instructed by that advisor in their initial meeting.

Student Life

Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society: Alpha Theta (AAT) is Cecil College's Chapter of Phi Theta Kappa (PTK), the International Honor Society of Two-Year Colleges. Cecil College students are invited to join AAT when they have completed twelve transferable credits with a cumulative grade point average of 3.25 or higher. Once inducted into the honor society, members must maintain a grade point average of at least 3.0 to remain in good standing. For more information, please contact Cathy Skelley, AAT Advisor, at cskelley@cecil.edu or by calling 443-674-1988.

Student Life at Cecil College offers something for everyone. Involvement in student activities offers students opportunities for personal growth in leadership roles, social activities and extra-curricular programs. To view a listing of Cecil College groups, clubs and activities, refer to the College Catalog or on my.cecil.edu at [https://my.cecil.edu/ICS/Cecil Life/Cecil Groups/](https://my.cecil.edu/ICS/Cecil%20Life/Cecil%20Groups/).

Students with Disabilities

Students needing assistance with receiving accommodations or who have questions or concerns regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) should contact the Cecil College ADA and Special Services Officer or seek access through the Cecil College website at www.cecil.edu.

GRADUATION AND AWARDS

Requirements for Graduation

The graduation requirements of the PTA program are consistent with those of the College and include the following criteria. To qualify as a candidate for the degree of Associate of Applied Science for a Physical Therapist Assistant, a student must have the following:

1. Completed all the requirements of the program.
2. Completed the minimum number of semester hours of academic credit which must include all courses required in the curriculum specified in the Cecil College Catalog and the PTA Program Manual.
3. Earned a minimum grade of "C" (76%) or better in all PTA theory and clinical courses.
4. Earned a minimum overall grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale.
5. Settled all financial obligations to Cecil College.
6. Made application as a candidate for the Associate of Applied Science Degree in the Registrar's Office during the last semester prior to published due date.

If the course or clinical work of the Physical Therapist Assistant program is not completed until after the posted graduation date of the spring semester, students will not graduate or receive their diplomas until the following summer or winter graduation.

Application for Graduation

At the start of the spring semester in the second year of the PTA program, students apply for graduation. They will complete a graduation checklist and will submit this to the Admissions and Records Office. The student's academic record is reviewed to ensure that all requirements for graduation have been completed.

Students are responsible for completing all records and paying all applicable fees for graduation. Course substitutions for coursework at prior institutions must be completed prior to the spring semester of the year the student wishes to graduate.

Graduation Ceremony Participation

Students who have completed all PTA curriculum courses will be allowed to participate in the graduation ceremony. The cap and gown for the graduation ceremony can be obtained through the College bookstore.

Students are encouraged to review all graduation information available on the College's main Web page.

Awards Ceremony

The PTA program will present three awards during the final semester prior to graduation. The PTA faculty selects the student(s) who will receive these awards. Feedback is sought from faculty and CIs in the participating facilities. The awards use the following criteria:

- The Outstanding Academic Achievement Award will be given to the PTA student who maintained the highest grade point average in the program.
- The Outstanding Clinical Achievement Award will be given to the PTA student who has consistently embodied the professional abilities and the core professional values of the physical therapy profession.
- The Outstanding Leadership Award will be given to the PTA student who has demonstrated leadership both in the classroom and clinic and demonstrates the potential to become a leader in the professional community.

POST GRADUATION ACTIVITIES

Graduate Surveys

Prior to graduation or immediately after, each student will be asked to complete an evaluation of the program which seeks information concerning students' feedback about their achievement of the program objectives and the major strengths and weaknesses of the program, as well as recommendations for program improvement. This input is essential to the continual process of program improvement embraced by the PTA program faculty.

Professional Licensure

The steps for obtaining the initial licensure, along with the development of an individualized study plan for the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE), are initiated in the final semester of the program. Professional licensure generally involves the following steps:

1. Application to the jurisdiction in which the successful PTA program graduate wishes to practice.
2. Follow all instructions for the new graduate from a U.S. institution for initial licensure.
3. Submit all documents required by the jurisdiction to apply for the licensure exam.
4. Once approved by the jurisdiction, get permission to access the licensure board examination (aka: "Authorization to Test").
5. In some jurisdictions, the applicant for licensure must also take and pass a jurisprudence examination which tests the applicant's knowledge about the practice of physical therapy in that jurisdiction. **(In Maryland, the jurisprudence exam is on paper and open note, open book.)**
6. Apply to take the examination within the time specified by the Board—may be done simultaneously as applying to the state for initial license.
7. Pass the examination and successfully complete all requirements of the state Board for initial licensure.

Graduates wishing to apply to be licensed in Maryland or any other U.S. jurisdiction can access the Board of Physical Therapy from links on the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) Web page at: www.fsbpt.org.

When the jurisdiction verifies that the graduate is eligible to apply to take the national licensure board examination (NPTE) for physical therapist assistants, he/she then contacts the Federation of State Boards for Physical Therapy (FSBPT). FSBPT creates and administers this standardized exam nationwide in conjunction with the Prometric testing centers. For more information on the test, to access practice exams, and to review the student guide to the NPTE, see the FSBPT website at www.fsbpt.org. This site has current information on the exam as well as helpful links to all U.S. physical therapy board jurisdictions.

*Beginning in 2012, the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy instituted fixed date testing. The PTA Licensing examination is offered 4 times a year. Testing dates and the application process are posted and available on the Federation of State Board's website:
<http://www.fsbpt.org/ExamCandidates.aspx>*

Job Search and Resume Preparation

Cecil College Career Center provides student assistance with job search skills and resume preparation. The program will also provide guidance on job searches and resume preparations as part of the final semester Professional Seminar.

Professional Organizations

Program graduates are encouraged to maintain their APTA memberships following graduation. Graduates are directed to the APTA website for “starter memberships” and member benefits at www.apta.org.

Graduates are also encouraged to participate in state, local, and national professional meetings and conferences.

Participation in PTA Program Activities

Following graduation, all Cecil College alumni are encouraged to continue their relationship with the PTA program. Alumni can participate in any of the ongoing PTA program activities listed below.

- PTA Program Advisory Board
- Mentoring current students
- Tutoring current students
- Teaching or Lab Assistant positions
- Participation at New Student Orientation
- CI for PTA students
- Guest Lecturer
- PTA Club Events

APPENDIX

1	Cecil College Student Agreements and Waiver Form
2	Student Introduction Form
3	Non-Emergency Absence Form
4	Field Trip Release Form
5	Clinical Experience Preference Form
6	Release of Medical Information Form
7	HIPAA Acknowledgment Form
8	Clinical Site Safety Policy & Procedures Acknowledgment
9	Inclement Weather Policy
10	PTA Program Skills List—2015
11	American Hospital Association (AHA) Patient’s Bill of Rights
12	Direction and Supervision of the PTA
13	Levels of Supervision
14	Minimum Required Skills of PTA Graduates at Entry-Level
15	Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant
16	Values-Based Behaviors for the Physical Therapist Assistant
17	Criteria for Skill Check Assessment
18	PTA Master Practical Examination Grading Rubric
19	Master Skills Competency List
20	Standards for a “C” Paper
21	In-Service Presentation Evaluation
22	Clinical Practicum I Assessment Tool—Student Self-Assessment
23	Clinical Practicum I Assessment Tool—CI Assessment of Student
24	CPI Grading Rubrics—Practicums II and III
25	Clinical Education Affiliation Agreement
26	Guidelines: Clinical Education Sites
27	Guidelines: Clinical Instructors
28	SPTA Clinical Contract
29	SPTA Confidentiality Agreement
30	Student Evaluation: Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction
31	ACCE/DCE Performance Assessment Student Survey
32	PTA Problem Solving Algorithm
33	PTA Direction Algorithm Chart
34	PTA Supervision Algorithm Chart