



**GRAND VALLEY  
STATE UNIVERSITY®  
PHYSICAL THERAPY**

# **STUDENT HANDBOOK**

**DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM  
COLLEGE OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS**

(616) 331-5700  
[www.gvsu.edu/PT](http://www.gvsu.edu/PT)

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## INTRODUCTION

Welcome to a new venture in your life. Our curriculum provides a unique opportunity for you to engage in a most rewarding educational experience – one which combines aspects of a health care profession with the individual personal and intellectual growth associated with graduate study.

*Note: This Student Handbook does not supersede the GVSU Undergraduate or Graduate catalogs.*

## ACCREDITATION

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program at Grand Valley State University is accredited by the [Commission on Accreditation in Physical Education \(CAPTE\)](http://www.capteonline.org), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; Telephone: 703-706-3245; email: [accreditation@apta.org](mailto:accreditation@apta.org); website: <http://www.capteonline.org>.

## PROFESSIONAL AND GRADUATE EDUCATION

The goal of a professional curriculum is to facilitate the passage of students from pre-professional coursework to active participation in a professional group. Being accepted into this program is the first step on this journey. Along with the status and privilege you have accepted, you also will be expected to fulfill the responsibilities of being a professional. As a student, the privileges include membership in the professional organization and the right to work with patient populations in clinical settings (under supervision). Your added responsibilities include demonstration of appropriate professional behaviors in all interactions on campus and in the clinic. Additional time commitments in academic work and professional activities are also part of your new responsibilities.

The PT faculty members make a commitment to you to present educational content which will enable you to become a licensed physical therapy professional. We commit ourselves to working with you throughout the curriculum to attain this goal. You will have much to learn and probably will be surprised at the time commitment and flexibility required. Behavioral patterns will be expected of you which are not all attained in the classroom, but which grow from an innate belief that every person is worthy of our respect.

Throughout the program, please keep in mind that requirements and responsibilities will be different than what you have experienced in your pre-professional curriculum. Much emphasis is placed on self-directed learning, which in turn requires assumption or engagement in collaboration, and responsibility for individual choices and actions.

In your interactions with peers, faculty, staff, patients, and public audiences, we expect you to demonstrate consistent, professional, and courteous behavior. Your involvement in your education from this point forward is most like an employment situation. Any problems that occur require immediate and responsible attention by you to ensure a successful and positive journey through the physical therapy program.

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## MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES STATEMENTS

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

The APTA mission statement for the profession of physical therapy is:

**“Building a community that advances the profession of physical therapy to improve the health of society.”**

The APTA vision statement for the profession of physical therapy is:

***“Transforming society by optimizing movement to improve the human experience.”***

This vision statement builds upon the foundation of the APTA’s Vision 2020 that included: autonomous practice, direct access, Doctor of Physical Therapy [preferred degree], evidence-based practice, practitioner of choice, and professionalism. The new vision reflects the maturation of the profession of physical therapy from an *inward-facing* profession to an *outward-facing* profession that focuses on the impact of physical therapy on individuals, communities, and populations. There are eight guiding principles to achieve the vision, also adopted by the HOD in 2013, and these include:

**Identity:** The importance of validating the movement system along with other body systems and affirming the physical therapy profession’s responsibility to define it, promote it, and evaluate and manage it in patients and clients.

**Quality:** The commitment of the profession of physical therapy to establish and adopt best practice standards.

**Collaboration:** Charges the profession to join others in solving the health-related challenges that society faces.

**Value:** Includes accountability in demonstrating that services are safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, efficient, and equitable.

**Innovation:** Describes the creativity and proactivity of the profession that will enhance health services delivery and increase the value of physical therapy to society.

**Consumer-centricity:** Indicates that patient/client/consumer values and goals are central to all efforts of the profession.



**Access/Equity:** Acknowledges the profession's obligation to recognize and ameliorate health inequities and disparities.

**Advocacy:** Identifies the profession's role to advocate for patients/clients/consumers as individuals and as a population.

To realize this vision, the APTA embarked upon the adoption of the movement system as a professional identity by having a Movement System Summit, and beginning work on a draft movement screening tool, as well as definitions for and discernment of movement system diagnoses.

## **GVSU College of Health Professions**

### ***Mission***

The College of Health Professions empowers learners to impact the health and well-being of individuals and society through experiential education, evidence-based practice, and meaningful community engagement.

### ***Vision***

Through innovative education of tomorrow's health professionals, the College will support the advancement of inclusive and equitable health and health care delivery.

### ***Core Values***

- Professional and ethical behavior
- Respect and appreciation of differences
- Life-long learning
- Excellence in teaching, scholarship, practice
- Appreciation of personal well-being
- Collegiality and collaboration
- Social responsibility

## **GVSU Doctor of Physical Therapy Program**

### ***Mission***

The GVSU DPT program will develop autonomous, collaborative, and reflective physical therapists who optimize health, well-being, and movement ability of individuals and society.

### ***Vision***

The GVSU DPT program will develop autonomous, collaborative, and reflective physical therapists who are specialists in the human movement system. Our graduates will be recognized in their communities as the provider of choice to optimize health and function at both the individual and community levels. As life-long learners, they will be leaders in their profession and communities who promote inclusive and equitable healthcare.

## *Core Values*

- Professional and ethical behavior
- Respect and appreciation for diversity in all forms
- Life-long learning
- Excellence in teaching, scholarship, and practice
- Collegiality and collaboration
- Social responsibility
- Evidence based practice
- Reflective practice
- Advocacy
- Leadership

## **INCLUSION AND EQUITY**

[GVSU's Commitment to Inclusion and Equity and Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Policy](#) serves as the Position Statement of the university regarding issues of Inclusion and Equity. GVSU defines diversity broadly, including the variety of personal experiences, values, and worldviews that arise from difference of culture or circumstance. Diversity includes but is not limited to the following categories: race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, differently abled, age, class, religion and spirituality, geographic and international. Inclusion requires active engagement with diversity and establishes an environment where individuals feel welcomed, respected, supported, and valued such that they can thrive in authentic ways.

The “Vision Statement for the Physical Therapy Profession” (APTA, 2019) included the following guiding principle to achieve the vision. APTA said, “The physical therapy profession embraces cultural competence as a necessary skill to ensure best practice in providing physical therapist services by responding to individual and cultural considerations, needs and values.”

Cultural competence, as defined by the CDC and adopted by the APTA (2020), is the “integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes.” The DPT faculty and staff acknowledge the non-medical barriers to achieving positive health outcomes related to social determinants of health. Faculty and students will engage with these issues throughout the curriculum to raise awareness of long-standing health disparities and inequities to improve healthcare delivery for underserved populations. Increasing racial and ethnic diversity within the physical therapy profession is integral to effectively addressing inequities among historically underrepresented and excluded populations.

It is the expectation that all students, faculty, and staff within the DPT program will value individual differences and seek to create an inclusive and equitable learning environment where people are treated with dignity and respect. Immediate feedback is encouraged if a student feels that any aspect of a course, including the instructor’s involvement, fails to meet this expectation.

If anyone in the GVSU community feels belittled, disrespected, or isolated based on their identity, there is a mechanism to report the incident. If you have observed or personally experienced a campus climate incident, please report it through any of the following ways:

Campus Climate Concerns

Online: <https://www.gvsu.edu/ccc/>

(If you wish to remain anonymous, please use the online reporting option.)

By Phone or In Person:

Division of Inclusion & Equity

4035 James. H. Zumberge Hall (JHZ)

(616) 331-2242

## **GENERAL PHILOSOPHY AND PRINCIPLES**

A primary goal of the DPT program is to prepare graduates to perform all aspects of the role of an entry-level physical therapist.

Physical therapists are healthcare professionals who help individuals maintain, restore, and improve movement, activity, and functioning, thereby enabling optimal performance and enhancing well-being and quality of life. Their services prevent, minimize, or eliminate impairments of body functions and structures, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. Physical therapy is provided for individuals of all ages who have or may develop impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions related to (1) conditions of the musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, cardiovascular, pulmonary, and/or integumentary systems or (2) the negative effects attributable to unique personal and environmental factors as they relate to human performance. (Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, 2014)

Understanding all aspects of human function, including physical, psychological, sociocultural, spiritual and developmental aspects, is important for effective practice of physical therapy. In light of this need, faculty use a holistic perspective which embraces an interdisciplinary approach in education, practice, and research. We strive to develop professionals who can manage patient care and integrate other professionals into a plan of care.

Physical therapy is a dynamic profession in a changing health care environment. Physical therapists must possess fundamental skills of examination and intervention, be well educated health scientists who are able to contribute to the knowledge of the field and be problem solvers who can adjust to modified roles and new situations. We are preparing students for a specific role as physical therapists, but we also equip them for the ever-changing world of health care.

## **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND METHODS**

The GVSU DPT curriculum has been deliberately constructed to create an environment of learning success for students. The faculty considered many educational theories in building a sequential and progressive course of study that emphasizes active learning and reflection. The educational beliefs and theoretical underpinnings of the curriculum are listed below.

**A strong and broad foundation of knowledge is required for success.**

Evidence-based physical therapy practice is built upon a foundation of basic science: anatomy, physiology, kinesiology, and exercise science. Using Bloom's Taxonomy as a model, attaining this foundational knowledge is essential for developing higher-level understanding (application and synthesis). Traditional medical education used a teacher-centered model where faculty presented a finite body of knowledge and skills. Students would regurgitate these facts and replicate these skills with the reward of a grade. This model of education is based on behaviorist theory (think Skinner and positive/negative reinforcement). Long-term retention is questionable in this model.

Although the faculty recognizes the efficiency of this model, we also acknowledge the limitations: students are passive rather than active learners; and knowledge is neither static nor finite. The faculty has minimized the influence of the behaviorist model, requiring increased student participation in the creation of the knowledge foundation.

**Students benefit from the active construction of this knowledge.**

Adult learning theory (Knowles) informs the faculty that adult learners benefit from active participation in the construction of knowledge and skill. Adult learners are motivated, self-directed, and experienced. The faculty acknowledges and respects the fact that individuals construct knowledge and develop skills in a variety of manners. Students create their own knowledge; the faculty serves as facilitators to the process.

**Students benefit from the collaborative construction of this knowledge.**

The faculty believes that student collaboration leads to improved learning outcomes, and in the development of physical therapy practitioners who recognize the benefits of teamwork. Situated Learning Theory (Lave and Wenger) informs this belief, contending that learning involves a community of individuals whose unique experiences, cultures, and knowledge bases provide a rich educational environment. Collaborative learning that occurs in context (labs, seminar courses, and clinical education) leads to superior educational outcomes.

**Students benefit from the application of this knowledge.**

John Dewey, a philosopher and educational theorist, posited that learning is best achieved by doing. Genuine experiences, and subsequent reflection, are required for the learner to create an evolving body of knowledge. Adult learners appreciate the relevance and practicality of this approach. Piaget's concept of equilibration (bringing new experiences/knowledge into equilibrium) prompts learners to use previous knowledge and experience in assimilating new experiences. The faculty recognize the value of asking students to apply their learning in new contexts. Through this iterative process, students develop the requisite skill of being able to assimilate new knowledge into existing practice; or, conversely, adapt existing practice to accommodate new knowledge.

**Students benefit from collegial faculty/clinician mentorship.**

The traditional model of medical education was authoritarian, placing barriers between faculty and students. Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory challenges this paradigm, asserting that collaboration between students and faculty creates a dynamic, reciprocal learning environment. Adult learners value a cognitive mentorship model—rather than discipleship—that allows for social learning. Learning occurs through discourse, observation, active coaching, and reflection. A collegial environment in the classroom, in labs, and in clinical education allows students to learn from peer mentors with whom they can identify.

**Students should be prepared to consistently revise the knowledge base.**

Epistemology, the study of knowledge, asks the question, "How do you know what you know?" Although graduate education requires students to acquire a broad and deep knowledge base, it also expects students to question the facts, assumptions, and theories comprising this base. It is imperative to recognize that medical breakthroughs are achieved by questioning current "knowledge".

Constructivist theory argues that knowledge is not objective or "set in stone" but is relational and emerging. Therefore, more important than teaching a set of finite and potentially incomplete facts, the faculty strive to develop students who can critically evaluate current theories or beliefs, construct new ideas based upon their current knowledge, and adapt currently held beliefs to a consistently changing body of research.

**Students recognize the learning process is as important as the learning outcome.**

Considering the Constructivist theory above, the accumulation of "facts" should not be the goal of the curriculum. Although tests, lab practical exams, and clinical education assessments are used as markers to establish student competency, the faculty believes that cultivating life-long learners is a desired outcome. Students should develop individualized learning strategies and processes that will be used long after graduation. Learning *how to learn* is as important as excellent test and practical grades, given that adequate test and practical scores are required for program completion. Although the GVSU DPT program is finite, the faculty strives to create lifelong learners who understand that the process continues long past graduation.

According to Dewey, "education must be conceived as a continuing reconstruction of experience." The faculty has deliberately organized the curriculum in a spiral manner so that students learn to construct intellectual scaffolds. Webster defines a scaffold as a "temporary or moveable platform... on which a person stands while working high above the ground." An intellectual scaffold, therefore, is an adaptable mental platform (thought process) that allows students to view problems from a wide perspective. Students are challenged to acquire, construct, and reflect upon increasingly complex and ambiguous problems to create sound and adaptable thought processes. The use of intellectual scaffolding promotes the development of cognitive processes that assist in retention and transfer of learning.

## *Teaching Methods*

To best prepare our students, a wide variety of teaching/learning activities are used throughout the curriculum to foster cognitive, behavioral, and physical skill development. We use a mixture of traditional, problem-based, team-based, case-based, and system-based educational experiences. We strive to involve students actively in the learning process as adult learners. Student input is sought and utilized in teaching/learning activities, students are encouraged to set their own educational goals, and students are held accountable for learning and goal attainment. Group learning activities and inquiry are incorporated throughout the curriculum. Reflective activities are used to facilitate assessment of self, others, and experiences. A collegial approach is emphasized with faculty-student interaction contributing to mutual development. Through this interaction, faculty model and strive to impart a value system to guide professional development and decision-making.

Many courses employ a traditional model of teaching based on behaviorist theory (Watson/Skinner). Faculty provide structured lectures allowing students to build a foundation of knowledge. Knowledge and skills are taught in sequence, from simple to complex. This model is efficient for distributing a finite body of knowledge (e.g., anatomy). However, this “teacher-as-guru” model allows students to be passive learners. Thus, the faculty strives to minimize the traditional learning model in favor of more active models.

### *Problem-Based Learning*

Problem-based learning (PBL) is a student-centered pedagogy in which students learn about a subject through the experience of problem solving. Students recall previously gained knowledge, identify gaps in their current knowledge, and construct new knowledge with the assistance of a faculty mentor. Seminar classes primarily utilize problem-based learning. Patient cases are presented on paper, with standardized patients, or in a simulation lab. These experiences, facilitated by a faculty mentor, allow students to build a bridge between the theoretical and the practical.

### *Team-Based Learning*

Team-based learning is a form of collaborative learning that allows students to construct knowledge independently; and then reconstruct that knowledge collaboratively. Students independently complete learning modules and apply the information to cases. Students then meet as part of a team to discuss and refine answers—and thought processes—related to the case. The process involves students as active learners and teachers. The faculty recognizes the benefit of utilizing high-performing, motivated adult learners to assist with the achievement of learning outcomes.

### *Case-Based learning*

Case-based learning allows the faculty to present patient cases to students in order to develop and refine clinical thought processes before the student proceeds to the clinic. The goal of case-based learning is to shift the focus from “knowing” to “applying”. Case-based learning can be the main focus of a course (i.e., the Clinical Seminar series), or a tool used in a more traditional course (e.g., Musculoskeletal Examination).

### *System-Based learning*

Physical therapists assist in the management of individuals with functional limitations related to the musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, cardiopulmonary, and integumentary systems. The curriculum emphasizes the examination, evaluation, and management of each of these systems. System-based courses use a variety of teaching methods to deliver information related to the anatomy, physiology, pathology, and physical therapy management of the different systems.

### *Simulation*

Simulation is used periodically throughout the curriculum with the goal of reproducing situations where learning occurs, in low-risk contexts. This is achieved with either actors (simulating the characteristics of patients), or real patients presenting their injuries, disabilities, and functional abilities. This type of learning is believed to allow students to practice clinical skills, decision-making, and interventions in high-fidelity environments. Policies regarding student participation in simulation events and in laboratory can be found at <https://www.gvsu.edu/simcenter/faculty-resources-17.htm>.

### *Course Delivery*

Courses may be delivered in several formats designed to facilitate learning. GVSU definitions for various formats used in this program are:

#### *Traditional (or Face-to-Face)*

The standard in-class course. Typically, an instructor and students come to a regular meeting space a fixed number of times per week. There are exceptions (e.g., independent studies, clinical rotations, Master's theses, etc.), but the expectation is that any content delivery/instruction is done face-to-face with the student.

#### *Hybrid*

A course in which the instructor **deliberately and purposefully** replaces some face-to-face instruction with online instruction. A hybrid course is one that requires purposeful use of online instructional strategies in lieu of coming to class. This does not include the use of online methods to replace absence due to illness, snow days, etc.

#### *Online*

A course where the instructor has **replaced all in-class with online instruction**. Students and instructors never come to campus. Online courses can be *synchronous* (virtually meeting at the same time), or more commonly, *asynchronous* (students and instructor interact with course material at different times).

## **STUDENT OUTCOME GOALS**

The program expects to graduate ethical healthcare providers who model our vision and core values. The program regularly performs assessments regarding goals that the faculty feel are vital to the integrity of the program. Our students/graduates will:

1. **Develop physical therapy diagnoses and individualized plans of care for the management and prevention of movement dysfunction across the lifespan.**
2. **Effectively participate in intra- and interprofessional teams.**
3. **Demonstrate effective clinical practice management skills required for the delivery of physical therapy services.**
4. **Design and deliver appropriate educational programs for diverse patients, caregivers, and community members across all settings.**
5. **Incorporate the three components of evidence-based practice into the clinical reasoning process.**
6. **Demonstrate commitment to the advancement of the profession and society.**

## **TECHNICAL STANDARDS / ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS**

Technical (“standards”) of the profession apply to the professional course of study, clinical experiences during that course of study, and the actual practice of physical therapy. We require that student physical therapists be able to meet these standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, for admission and progression through the DPT program.

Consistent with the description of physical therapy practice provided in The Guide to Physical Therapy Practice, and in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and the Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act of 2008, the DPT program has adopted the following standards for all DPT students:

**Motor Skills:** Physical therapy students must demonstrate sufficient motor function to perform all physical tasks necessary for satisfactory academic performance and effective patient/client management. Students must have the physical strength and balance needed to safely assist with the movement another person’s body during transfers and with gait training. Students also must have the strength and endurance to perform maximal manual muscle testing and cardiopulmonary resuscitation. Students must be able palpate body structures. Students must demonstrate the strength and stamina to participate in all clinical placements, 40 hours/week.

**Mobility:** Physical therapy students must be able to perform duties while standing, lifting, reaching, bending, stretching or assuming any other posture that provides support and assistance, and ensures the safety of each individual client. Students must be able to move in rapid succession from the floor to upright and, in an emergency situation, must be able to move quickly to ensure client safety.



**Coordination:** Physical therapy students must have the sensorimotor function, manipulative skills, and eye/hand coordination to permit appropriate grasp and provide assistance with therapeutic activities.

**Sensory:** Physical therapy students must have adequate sensory skills necessary for patient/client management, including the ability to observe and detect changes, take a history, perform accurate palpation, sense muscle tension and joint movement, and ensure the client's safety. Students also must be able to obtain information quickly and accurately from written documents, videotaped data, graphic images, and equipment. These skills necessitate the functional use of vision, hearing, touch and other sensory modalities. The student must have functional visual acuity, the ability to hear or to lip read and the ability to sense light touch and proprioceptive changes.

**Communication:** Students must be able to communicate in English for both oral and written communication with faculty, other students, and clients. Students must recognize the significance of verbal and non-verbal communication in academic and clinical settings. They must be capable of responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity to potential cultural differences. Students also must be able to read and understand English written communication as well as produce communication, which is accurate, timely, and complete.

**Cognitive:** Physical therapy students must have the intellectual capacity to efficiently gather relevant information during patient examinations; analyze collected data in a timely manner; and effectively synthesize data to formulate a plan of care. Students must demonstrate sound judgment and critical thinking in all aspects of patient/client management. Cognitive skills in problem-solving, as well as the integration of theory with practice, are critical to the determination of appropriate evaluation and treatment decisions in all areas of practice.

**Behavior/Social Skills and Professionalism:** Physical Therapy students must have the stability of emotional health required to exercise sound judgment, complete their responsibilities, and develop and maintain effective appropriate relationships in the health care setting, with clients and members of the health care team. They must possess attributes that include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, honesty, and responsibility. Students must recognize and respond appropriately to individuals regardless of age, sex, gender, sexual orientation, religious beliefs, national origin, cultural background, race, creed, color, disability, or socioeconomic status. Students must demonstrate maturity, tolerance and adaptability in stressful situations. Students must possess the ability to reason morally and practice physical therapy in an ethical manner.

After an offer of admission, students are required to review these standards and consider their ability to meet each. If an admitted or matriculating student is concerned about the ability to meet any standard, they should immediately notify the program chair and the Office of Disability Support Resources. The DPT faculty will work with the student and the Office of Disability Support Resources to determine if reasonable accommodations are available and appropriate. An offer of admission may be withdrawn, or a student may be dismissed from the program if the student cannot articulate or demonstrate how a standard will be met, even with reasonable accommodation.

## PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS DEVELOPMENT

In addition to a core of cognitive knowledge and psychomotor skills, it has been recognized by educators and practicing professionals that important professional behaviors are required for success in any given profession (Alverno College Faculty, Assessment at Alverno, 1979). These behaviors reflect the values of any given profession and, at the same time, cross disciplinary lines (May et. al., 1991). Visualizing cognitive knowledge, psychomotor skills and appropriate professional behaviors as the legs of a three-legged stool serves to emphasize the importance of each. Remove one leg and the stool loses its stability and makes it very difficult to support professional growth, development, and ultimately, professional success. (May et. al., Opportunity Favors the Prepared: A Guide to Facilitating the Development of Professional Behavior, 2002)

The intent of the [Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool](#) is to identify and describe the professional behaviors deemed necessary for success in the practice of physical therapy and supplement student growth and development in the classroom and clinic. It also contains behavioral criteria for the practicing clinician. Each professional behavior is defined and broken down into developmental levels with each level containing criteria that represent possession of the professional behavior. Each developmental level builds on the previous level, representing growth over time in physical therapy education and practice. It is critical that students, as well as academic and clinical faculty utilize the Professional Behaviors Assessment Tool in the context of physical therapy and not life experiences. For example, a learner may possess strong communication skills in the context of student life and work situations, however, may be in the process of developing communication skills necessary to be a successful professional in a greater health care context. Students and their faculty advisors will formally communicate once each year regarding the student's personal assessment.

## PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM PROFESSIONAL CURRICULUM

The Doctor of Physical Therapy program professional curriculum includes didactic coursework, clinical experiences, and a faculty-led research process designed to develop outstanding clinicians, prepared at the doctoral level, who utilize the available literature to guide their practice.

### ***CLASSROOM REQUIREMENTS***

#### ***First Year***

##### ***Fall – (14 credits)***

- 4 BMS 561 Prosected Regional Anatomy
- 3 PT 511 Foundations in Physical Therapy Examination
- 1 PT 512 Evidence Based Practice in Physical Therapy
- 2 PT 513 Clinical Science I
- 1 PT 515 Professional Topics I
- 3 PT 517 Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics I

*Winter – (16 credits)*

- 4 PT 521 Musculoskeletal Examination
- 4 PT 522 Musculoskeletal Intervention
- 3 PT 523 Clinical Science II
- 2 PT 526 Clinical Seminar I (includes clinical observation)
- 3 PT 528 Clinical Kinesiology and Biomechanics II

*Spring/Summer – (17 credits)*

First 5 weeks (4 credits):

- 4 PT 636 Clinical Education I

Last 9 weeks (13 credits):

- 3 BMS 538 Advanced Neuroscience
- 2 PT 510 Lifespan Motor Development
- 2 PT 631 Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy I
- 2 PT 632 Integumentary Practice Management
- 1 PT 634 Clinical Seminar II
- 0 PT 636 Clinical Education I (Post-clinical Discussion)
- 3 STA 610 Applied Statistics for Health Professions

***Second Year***

*Fall – (17 credits)*

- 2 PT 610 Research in Physical Therapy
- 4 PT 641 Neuromuscular Examination
- 4 PT 642 Interventions in Neuromuscular Physical Therapy
- 3 PT 643 Clinical Science III
- 2 PT 644 Clinical Seminar III
- 2 PT 647 Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy II

*Winter – (15 credits)*

First 6 weeks (5 credits):

- 5 PT 656 Clinical Education II

Last 10 weeks (10 credits):

- 2 PT 654 Applied Geriatric Practice
- 1 PT 655 Professional Topics II
- 0 PT 656 Clinical Education II (Post-clinical Discussion)
- 2 PT 657 Teaching for Physical Therapists
- 4 PT 661 Exam and Intervention for Rehabilitation
- 1 PT 790 Physical Therapy Research I

*Spring/Summer – (13 credits)*

- 3 PSY 668 Health Profession Disability Psychology
- 4 PT 651 Spinal Exam and Intervention
- 3 PT 662 Pediatric Practice Management
- 2 PT 665 Professional Topics III
- 1 PT 790 Physical Therapy Research I

***Third Year***

*Fall – (12 credits)*

- 6 PT 675 Clinical Education III (9 weeks)
- 6 PT 677 Clinical Education IV (9 weeks)

*Winter – (9 credits)*

- 2 PT 681 Advanced Clinical Decision-Making
- 3 PT 682 Health, Wellness and Special Topics in Physical Therapy
- 2 PT 685 Professional Topics IV
- 2 PT 793 Physical Therapy Research II

*Additional Elective Courses\* (offered according to enrollment/demand)*

- 3 PT 684 Advanced Topics: Sports Physical Therapy
- 3 PT 686 Advanced Topics: Pediatric Physical Therapy
- 3 PT 687 Advanced Topics: Spinal Manual Therapy
- 3 PT 688 Advanced Topics: Neurologic Physical Therapy
- 3 PT 689 Advanced Topics: Cardiopulmonary Physical Therapy

\*Electives are not required for graduation; however, students are encouraged to take at least one. Each elective is graded as credit/no credit, and students may elect to audit elective courses. An audited course requires payment of the same tuition as the credit/no credit course. Electives have limited enrollment. If the course is filled to capacity, you may ask the instructor to place you on his/her waiting list. If under enrolled, courses may be cancelled.

*Spring/Summer – (6 credits)*

- 6 PT 698 Clinical Education V (9 weeks)

***Summary***

- 119 Required credits
- 38 Weeks in full-time clinical experiences

***Research Continuation Course (1 credit)***

- 1 PT 796 Continuation of Doctoral Project or Dissertation Research registration is required if all above research project credits are completed, and the project is not completed.

## RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS

The research sequence is designed to fully prepare the student to achieve the curricular outcome(s) for research. The following represent the research options open to physical therapy students under the PT 790 and PT 793 course sequence. Complete details regarding the research process and curriculum are available in the [Physical Therapy Research Handbook](#).

Students may meet the expectations for completing the research requirements for the program by successfully completing one of the following:

**Research Project** - Student groups, with faculty mentor guidance, participate in the planning, execution, analysis, and/or reporting of a research project. The aspects of the project a student group is required to complete is at the discretion of the faculty principal investigator. Not all projects will be started de novo and completed by a single student group. Some projects span several years and incorporate several student groups. However, regardless of which aspect of a project in which a student group is involved, each student group will be required to thoroughly review the literature and demonstrate a strong knowledge and understanding of the theoretical and empirical underpinnings of the project.

**Case Report** - Individual students choosing this option follow the guidelines as described in research handbook and perform and present two case reports (single-patient case report, one preliminary, one final).

**Systematic Review** - Student groups, with faculty mentor guidance, complete a systematic review of the literature in order to answer a specific research question.

Students move either individually or in groups through the research process depending on their choice for type of project. Timelines may differ with faculty mentorship, option chosen, and population studied. However, **for all three options, students must:**

- Prepare written products appropriate to the chosen option and format determined, both in part (for proposal defense/preliminary presentation) and as a complete final product (for final defense/final presentation)
- Orally defend a research proposal/plan for systematic review, or present a preliminary case report
- Orally defend the final results of a research project (outcomes), systematic review (outcomes), or present the final case report
- Submit research project/case report/systematic review abstracts to the PT research committee by early June during the final semester of their third year
- Disseminate research in the form of a professional presentation (platform or poster) at DPT Research Day in July (final semester)

## CLINICAL EDUCATION

Clinical Education is an important part of any Physical Therapy professional curriculum. The DPT Clinical Education faculty will schedule a meeting with your cohort to provide additional information. At GVSU, the academic and clinical components of the curriculum are intertwined and build toward attainment of professional competence. To this end, clinical experiences are interspersed throughout the professional curriculum and are sequenced. All students must satisfactorily complete all required clinical experiences as outlined in the syllabus for each course associated with a clinical experience. Clinical education sites are available throughout Michigan and out-of-state (including possible international clinical experiences).

Here are the most important clinical education policies and procedures that you need to be aware of currently:

- The timeline of full-time clinical experiences is:
  - Semester 2 – one 5-week clinical experience (PT 636)
  - Semester 5 – one 6-week clinical experience (PT 656)
  - Semester 7 – two consecutive 9-week clinical experiences (PT 675 & PT 677)
  - Semester 9 – one 9-week clinical experience (PT 698)
- Clinical experiences are required in the following settings:
  - outpatient musculoskeletal practice
  - inpatient acute care
  - post-acute rehabilitation

In addition, one of the third-year clinical experiences must be completed in outpatient musculoskeletal practice.

- Across all clinical experiences, students are required to manage a variety of patient diagnoses including those of the musculoskeletal, neuromuscular, cardiopulmonary, and integumentary systems. In addition, students must manage patients across the lifespan.
- Students should expect to complete some clinical experiences at sites outside of a 50-mile radius from Grand Rapids.
- Students should not contact a clinical site regarding establishment of a new site or placement at an existing site. All student interest in potential clinical sites and/or placements must be directed through the Director of Clinical Education.
- All students must provide their own transportation to and from assigned clinical sites. In addition, students are responsible to make their own contacts or arrangements for housing during a clinical experience. If free housing is not provided by a clinical site, the student is responsible for this cost.

- GVSU is contractually mandated to ensure that all students attain and maintain full health compliance. The health compliance requirements encompass vaccinations (including COVID-19), drug screening (including that for medical marijuana), and a criminal background check. Clinical sites may, in turn, mandate additional health compliance items be completed to allow participation in a clinical experience through their organization. Failure to fulfill all health compliance requirements, both for GVSU and the clinical site, will preclude a student's participation in clinical experiences and may delay graduation. Students are responsible for any additional costs related to health compliance requirements.
- The Health Compliance COVID-19 vaccine requirement continues to be updated to align with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines for health-related programs. Individuals who have a recognized medical condition for which the vaccine is contraindicated or not recommended or who have a sincerely held religious belief that prevents them from receiving the vaccine should request an exemption through the Health Compliance Vaccine Exemption Committee. If a student cannot be placed at a particular clinical site due to exemption status, the Director of Clinical Education will make a reasonable effort to find an alternative clinical placement.
- Students should have in force, at the commencement of a clinical experience, a health insurance policy satisfactory to the clinical site. This policy routinely includes minimum coverage for emergency medical services and hospitalizations. Upon request, students will be expected to provide their clinical site with documentation of their enrollment in a health insurance program as well as an outline of the coverages provided by the policy.

The [Clinical Education](#) page on the GVSU DPT website contains the most up to date information regarding all clinical education policies and procedures. If you have any questions regarding these policies, please contact the Director of Clinical Education or your faculty advisor.

## ADVISING

### *Assignment of an Advisor*

Each student who is admitted to the physical therapy program will be assigned an advisor from the Physical Therapy faculty. Notification of this is typically distributed at orientation.

### *Advising Appointments*

- Students are required to schedule an appointment to meet with their Faculty Advisor on three separate occasions during the first semester of the program. Following this, students shall schedule and meet with their Faculty Advisor a minimum of one time per semester.
- Faculty members will post times for advising/office hours and accept appointments. Students are responsible to set up specific advising appointments for this purpose.
- Upon request of the Program Director, students will complete Professional Behaviors Self-Assessments three times during the program. These Self-Assessments will be submitted to and

reviewed by the Faculty Advisor. The advisor will provide written and/or oral feedback and invite students in for a follow up appointment to discuss the Assessment form.

## **PHYSICAL THERAPY ACADEMIC POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### ***Academic Dishonesty***

Details of GVSU policies and rules regarding academic honesty are described in the [GVSU Catalog Academic Policies and Regulations](#), [Graduate Academic Policies and Regulations](#) and [Student Code](#). Physical Therapy Faculty consider violation of rules regarding academic honesty to be a serious offense and incidences of suspected academic misconduct will be reported to the [Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution](#) for adjudication.

Lecture and lab materials will be posted on Blackboard or distributed in class/lab. These materials are copyright protected and may not be reproduced, distributed (including on any form of social media), publicly displayed, or made into a derivative work without the express written consent of the instructor. Video recordings captured in class or lab are subject to the approval of the professor. Students must request permission from the professor before any recording any portion of a class. Misuse of the intellectual property of another may subject the user to penalties up to and including dismissal. More information regarding these expectations can be found in the [GVSU Social Media Guidelines](#).

### ***Professional Behavior***

Professional behavior is expected in the classroom and in all program-related activities (such as field trips, clinic visits, and clinical education). This includes but is not limited to the expectation that students will be in class on time, silence all electronic devices, and demonstrate respect during all interactions with peers and faculty. It is expected that students will be prepared for each class session by reviewing required readings and previous lecture information. Students are expected to participate in class sessions in an appropriate manner, and become an independent, informed consumer of information.

The goal of the GVSU Physical Therapy Program is to develop a physical therapist who is competent in the practice of physical therapy practice and who represents the profession in an appropriate and professional manner (see Professional Behaviors' Development above). If a student fails to uphold these professional criteria, a professional development letter may be written and placed in the student's file with notification to the student and their advisor. If a student accumulates three such letters during their matriculation in the DPT Program, the student will be placed on probation and the Program Director will meet with the student. After meeting with the student, the Chair may elect to convene an Academic Progress Committee who will determine an appropriate response. The Program Director may decide to act independently of that committee's recommendation. These decisions may delay a student's progress through the program or result in dismissal.

Some professional behavior violations may be so egregious that immediate probation or dismissal is warranted. If any faculty member believes that this is the case, the Chair will convene an Academic



Progress Committee to make recommendations. The Chair will make the final decision in these cases, subject to appeal as stipulated in Section V of the Student Handbook.

### ***Criminal Background Check and Drug Testing***

At the time of application to Physical Therapy, if a student had a felony record or been arrested for a crime for which criminal charges are pending, and did not so indicate on their application, the student may be dismissed.

The university requires a criminal background check and a drug screen prior to engaging in clinical education. Clinical education sites may require additional background checks and drug screens. A criminal record or positive finding on a drug screen will be discussed with the student in an advising session.

It is important to note is that the application for licensure as a physical therapist includes a criminal background check and asks questions about felony conviction, misdemeanor conviction punishable by imprisonment for a maximum term of two years, misdemeanor conviction involving the illegal delivery, possession, or use of alcohol or a controlled substance (including motor vehicle violations), and treatment for substance abuse in the prior two years. If evidence of any of the aforementioned are present, the Michigan Board of Physical Therapy will review the application for licensure and will decide about moral fitness. The Michigan Board of Physical Therapy may refuse to grant a physical therapy license to the applicant. The student who has a concern about licensure may contact the Michigan Board to ask for clarification of the policy.

### ***General Procedures for Appeals and Complaints***

An appeal of a graded item or another course-related complaint should be communicated to the instructor of the related course. If the concern is not addressed to the satisfaction of the student, students should communicate with the Department Chair. If the dissatisfaction continues, subsequent appeals and complaints should be communicated to the Dean of the College of Health Professions, then in writing to the Provost. The Provost's decision cannot be appealed. The [Student Academic Grievance Process](#) provides further information about this process.

### ***Specific Complaint Procedures***

Procedures for submitting complaints about accredited physical therapy programs may be found by contacting the [Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education](#) (CAPTE). The ability to give and receive feedback is a professional behavior that physical therapy students are expected to develop. Physical Therapy faculty members strive to continuously develop in their role as educators. We encourage students to communicate concerns to the appropriate individual(s) in a discrete and constructive manner. If a student has concerns about a fellow student, instructor or class, the student should first communicate directly to the person involved. If the instructor involved is not the primary course instructor, the student also can communicate with the primary instructor. If a student is unable to communicate with the involved person, he or she may communicate with their assigned Physical Therapy advisor or the Class Advisor for their cohort as a resource to discuss the issue. If concerns are

not addressed to the satisfaction of the student, the student should communicate with the Program Director. The Program Director will follow established procedures. When there are no established procedures, the Program Director will document and keep on file the documents that describe the complaint, communication about the complaint and actions taken. See above “General Procedures for Appeals and Complaints” for subsequent steps.

## Definition of Required Grades and Program Grading Information

### Required grades are:

- B- or better for all required courses (not electives) in the DPT Program.
- University policy mandates that a Graduate Student may not count a grade below “C” toward a graduate degree.

Grade	Percentage	Grade	Quality Points
A	94-100	A	4.0
A-	90-93.99	A-	3.7
B+	88-89.99	B+	3.3
B	84-87.99	B	3.0
B-	80-83.99	B-	2.7
C+	78-79.99	C+	2.3
C	74-77.99	C	2.0
C-	70-73.99	C-	1.7
D+	68-69.99	D+	1.3
D	60-67.99	D	1.0
Failure	< 60	F	0.0

### **\*PLEASE NOTE:**

- Biomedical Sciences, Psychology, and Statistics departments may use a different grading scale.
- Regarding “good standing” and “probation”, the program uses the letter grade, NOT the numerical score.
- PT 681 is graded pass/fail
- PT 793 is graded with a “pass”, “pass with distinction”, or “fail”. Please see the Research Handbook for more details.
- All Advanced Topics courses are graded pass/fail and may be audited.
- Clinically based courses have both a midterm and final written exam and practical exam. Regardless the final percentage grade in the course, students may only earn a score below 80% on the first attempt on one written and one practical exam. Details regarding this is specifically discussed in each course syllabus for which this requirement applies.

## DPT Program Probation

### *Grounds for Probation*

1. A final course grade below a B- in any required course in the DPT Program. The course instructor, or the DPT faculty-at-large, may require the student to repeat the course.
2. A cumulative graduate level GPA less than 3.0 (B) after completion of nine or more hours of graduate level course work (i.e., at the end of semester one).
3. A cumulative GPA below 3.0 for any semester in the DPT Program.
4. A final grade of “no credit” in PT 636, PT 656, PT 675, PT 677, PT 681 or PT 698.
5. Failure to complete a specific course requirement at the required level leading to a faculty recommendation for remediation or to repeat a course.
6. Having three faculty ***professional development letters*** on file (previously termed Letters of Reprimand)
7. Faculty recommendation for probation for a significant violation of professional behavior expectations, or concerns that lead to a delay in participating in or completing a clinical experience.

### **Probation Procedure for Repeating a Course and Re-entering the Program in a New Cohort**

1. A course repeat will be required in situations where a student receives a final course grade of C-, or below (or NC) in any required course in the DPT Program.
2. The PT program faculty, with the advice of the course instructor(s), will make the decision about requiring a course repeat or remediation, when the final course grade is in the C range in one or more of the required courses in the Program.

A course repeat means that the student’s graduation will be delayed by one year. The student will remain on probation until the course has been successfully repeated. In addition to successfully repeating the course, the student is required to demonstrate “continued competency” in specific, clinically focused courses that were successfully completed in previous semesters, as well as those that were successfully completed during the same semester as the course that is being formally repeated. The student’s academic progress committee, in consultation with the instructors from the clinically focused courses, will create a learning contract to guide and monitor the student through the process of returning to the Program. The learning contract will be administered through a contract arrangement with the student. At minimum, the learning contract will require the student to pass cumulative, written exams and practical tests in those courses with scores of 80% or higher. If the terms of the contract are met, the student will join the next sequential PT cohort and be returned

to good academic standing at the beginning of the semester after the unsatisfactory grade is resolved. When the student is required to sit in on certain classes, as part of their learning contract, they will be required to register for a 1-credit special topics course for each term they are involved in class participation (except for the term for which they are repeating the course). Students will not be required to register, or be charged, for the classes which they have previously passed at a satisfactory level.

### **Probation for Remediating Course Requirements or Inappropriate Professional Behaviors, While Remaining with the Original Cohort**

In the case that a student passes a course but does not achieve a required score on a specific course requirement, the instructor may require remedial work to achieve the required score. The requirement to perform remedial work in a course will be decided upon by the instructor of a single PT course. Remedial work does not change the final grade in the course but does allow the student to continue in the program. In this case, the student will be granted a temporary exception to the next semester's course prerequisite, "Successful completion of all previously required courses in the DPT curricular sequence." The student may be required to enroll in independent study for the remediation at the discretion of the faculty member or the Program Director. After the remedial work is completed at the required DPT standard, the student will be returned to good academic standing at the beginning of the next semester.

### **Procedure for Monitoring the Performance of a Student on Probation**

When a student is placed on probation, an academic progress committee will monitor the student's progress. The Academic Progress Committee (APC) will consist of:

1. Three DPT program faculty, to include an Associate Program Director as Chair. If an Associate Program Director is not available, a senior faculty member will serve as Chair.
2. A physical therapist clinician
3. The faculty advisor of the student as a non-voting advocate for the student

In consultation with the course instructor or members of the faculty, the academic progress committee will implement a formal learning contract which outlines steps to be followed in order to be taken off of probation. The learning contract will be signed by the student and the APC Chair. The student may appeal the process to the Program Director. This contract is specific to the individual student on probation.

After the student satisfactorily completes procedures outlined in the contract, the student will be returned to good standing at the beginning of the next semester. If a student does not complete the requirements of the contract, the academic progress committee will convene to consider dismissal.

## **DPT Program Dismissal**

### ***Grounds for Dismissal from the Program***

1. Failure to complete items required in a learning contract.
2. Being placed on probation, for any reason, in two semesters in the program.
3. A semester where the student receives more than one course grade below a B-.
4. A semester where the student receives a single course grade of C- or below.
5. The student has less than a 3.0 graduate program grade point average **AND** has accumulated nine or more hours for which a grade less than a **B-** was earned.
6. Failure to demonstrate “continued competency.”
7. At the time of application to physical therapy, and throughout matriculation as a PT student, failure to report a felony record or arrest for a crime for which criminal charges are pending.
8. Evidence of unethical, illegal or dishonest behavior, in academic or community life, from the date that GVSU's offer of admission is accepted to the date of graduation.
9. Behavior endangering others' safety or well-being.
10. Any single professional behavior violation egregious enough to warrant removal from the program after consideration by an academic progress committee.
11. Any reasons stipulated in the [GVSU Graduate School policies](#) on automatic removal.

### ***Procedure for Considering Dismissal***

1. An academic progress committee will be formed to consider student performance.
2. The academic progress committee will review available information to determine if the student meets a criterion for dismissal. If the student meets a criterion for dismissal, the committee will determine whether the student should be immediately dismissed or placed on probation and offered a special learning contract to remain in the program.
3. If a learning contract is selected by the academic progress committee, the contract will specify the procedures and activities the student must follow to regain good academic standing. In establishing a student's process for reentry, the academic progress committee will take into consideration the unique circumstances and individual educational background of the person seeking re-admission. A learning contract for re-entry will be established by the Academic Progress Committee, with input from individual members of the faculty, as needed. The Chair of the committee and the student will sign the contract. When the a learning contract has been satisfactorily completed, the student will be returned to good academic standing at the beginning of the next semester. Failure to satisfactorily perform the procedures or activities in the contract will result in consideration for dismissal.

4. **Appeal Procedure:** Should a student decide to appeal a decision for dismissal (initial appeal), the student must submit a written defense to the APC committee within 14 days of receiving the letter of dismissal. The defense should provide compelling information (established or new) in support of allowing the student to remain in the program. The defense will be considered by the APC and a decision provided to the student within 10 days of receipt. The student may elect to appeal a dismissal decision (secondary appeal) to the Department Chair who will consider this secondary appeal and render a decision. The secondary appeal decision may be appealed to the Dean of the College of Health Professions (tertiary appeal). Seven work days after a decision on an appeal is rendered, are allowed for each subsequent appeal beyond that of the original committee decision. A final appeal may be made to the Provost. The decision of the Provost is final. Throughout this process, a student may continue to participate in their classes until the final, unchallenged decision is reached.

## **GVSU Graduate School Dismissal Policy**

Graduate School [policies and procedures](#) outline specific Graduate School requirement to remain in Good Standing in the DPT program.

## **Leave of Absence Policy**

Graduate School [policies and procedures](#) have specific requirements surrounding a Leave of Absence. The DPT Program has these additional guidelines:

1. The student will send a written leave of absence request to the Physical Therapy Program Director. The Director may request to meet with the student to discuss reasons for requesting a leave of absence.
2. The Program Director will review the request with DPT faculty and will notify the student of the decision in writing.
3. If the request is granted by the DPT program, the request will then be forwarded to the Dean of Graduate Studies for consideration.

To re-enter the program, the student must contact the Physical Therapy Program Director for instructions. Students will be required to demonstrate competence in previously completed coursework prior to reentry into the new part of the curriculum. Failure to demonstrate competency will require the student to retake all, or part of, the classes completed in the curriculum, to the point where the leave of absence was granted.

## Withdrawal Policies

Graduate School [policies and procedures](#) have specific requirements surrounding a Leave of Absence. The DPT Program has these additional guidelines:

1. Students choosing to withdraw from a course required to step down for a minimum of 1 year, due to the lockstep nature of the DPT curriculum.
2. A student needs approval of the DPT Program Director, to receive a course/program withdrawal. The Chair, in consultation with DPT Program faculty, will determine the suitability of the course/program withdrawal. The Chair will determine if a leave of absence is a suitable alternative for the student to consider.
3. The student should send a written withdrawal request to the Chair. The Chair may request to meet with the student to discuss reasons for withdrawing. If approved, the Chair will send the request to the Dean of Graduate Studies. A student may appeal the decision to the Office of the Provost.
4. This withdrawal mechanism only may be applied once throughout the entire DPT Program.
5. The DPT Program requires that any student, who is readmitted following an approved withdrawal, will be required to demonstrate competency for all material covered up through the point of departure from the Program. Failure to do so will result in dismissal.

## HEALTH COMPLIANCE

University policy, state and federal statutory regulations, and accreditation standards for academic programs and affiliated organizations, require students enrolled in health/health related programs to comply with certain health, safety, and legal requirements. GVSU is contractually required to ensure all students achieve full compliance **prior** to participation in experiential learning (including laboratory experiences, simulation activities, and clinical placements) and until program completion.

Health compliance requirements are to be completed by the program's identified due date. The GVSU Health Compliance Office provides students with directions related to all health compliance requirements, including, but not limited to, health records, insurance information, background checks and drug screens (when required). Failure to submit required items on time are considered a breach of professional behaviors and may impact a student's ability to participate in experiential learning.

Students must comply with all University mandated health compliance procedures for prevention of transmission of illness when entering campus spaces. These procedures may change, and it is the responsibility of the student to be prepared.

Students are required to submit documentation of health compliance items prior to the due date communicated by the Health Compliance Officer. A full description of each requirement can be found in the [GVSU Health Compliance Policy](#).

It is recommended that students begin submitting health compliance documents as soon as possible as some requirements may take several weeks, or months, to complete. Requirements may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical exam (required for most programs)
- Immunizations and/or titers (bloodwork) to check for immunity
- Tuberculosis screening (annually)
- Influenza vaccine (annually)
- COVID-19 Vaccination as required by university policy
- Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR)
- Training Modules-completed online annually via Blackboard

Prior to entering the GVSU campus or any experiential learning environment, students must follow any directions related to screening and illness prevention measures, as posted by the University. As part of an experiential learning placement, students must also follow the directions, and adhere to any policies or procedures, posted by the placement site or facility.

### ***Health Compliance Costs***

Students are responsible for the cost of obtaining/maintaining health compliance. Health care costs vary widely, with estimates ranging from \$250 to \$550 depending upon the type of services required and location received. Some services may be covered by health insurance. Students with limited, or no insurance coverage, may find the GVSU Family Health Center or local health department cost effective options.

### ***Health Insurance***

While encouraged, GVSU does not require students to have health insurance. Some sites may require proof of insurance as a condition of placement at the site. Lack of insurance coverage could impact a student's ability to participate in experiential learning at sites with this requirement. Students are not covered by a site's worker's compensation coverage during their experiential learning. All health care costs if exposed to a medical condition that requires assessment, monitoring or treatment, or if injured while working with a patient/client, are the student's responsibility. If you require health insurance, please review optional [GVSU Student Health Plans](#) that are available to you.



## ***Criminal Background Checks, Drug Tests, and Fingerprinting***

Students are notified by the Health Compliance Officer when criminal background checks, drug tests and/or fingerprinting are required. These may include criminal background check and drug tests that must be completed through CastleBranch.

Criminal Background Check includes:

- Seven Year Residency History
- County Criminal Records
- Statewide Criminal Records
- Nationwide Sex Offender Index
- Nationwide Healthcare Fraud and Abuse Scan

Drug tests are 10-panel test including:

Amphetamines	Methadone
Barbiturates	Methaqualone
Benzodiazepines	Opiates
Cocaine Metabolites	Phencyclidine
Marijuana Metabolites	Propoxyphene

Some sites require background checks and/or drug tests within a specific timeframe (i.e. 30 days prior to placement date), which may require students to undergo an additional background check and/or drug testing.

Fingerprinting must be completed through the Grand Rapids Community College (GRCC) Police Program. Students outside of west Michigan may contact the Health Compliance Officer for other approved locations.

Results of criminal background checks and fingerprinting are reviewed in accordance with the State of Michigan regulations on mandatory exclusions. Conviction of a crime on the mandatory exclusion list, or presence of a substance on the drug test, may impact a student's ability to complete experiential learning as required for program progression.

## **LABORATORY PROCEDURES AND INSTRUCTIONS**

### ***Equipment***

Students have access to lab equipment during labs. Some lab equipment is available for checkout through the Simulation Center for practice outside of class. Students are responsible to maintain equipment:

- Clean/disinfect and return all equipment after use.
- Place used linens into the dirty linen hamper.
- Report any equipment problems to the course instructor immediately.
- Lab equipment is for instructional use only. Use for treatment or exercise is prohibited.

### *Locker Usage*

Hallway lockers are available for student use at the CHS facility. In addition, CHS 239 includes a locker room for changing clothes in preparation for lab and lockers for storing clothes and books that are not needed during lab. Backpacks should be stored in a locker rather than being brought to lab or lecture rooms.

### *Laboratory Dress/Protective Equipment & Procedures for Addressing Sensitive Regions of the Body*

Throughout the DPT Program, students will frequently serve as models for practice and demonstration by members of the course's faculty and for one another. This requires appropriate dress and use of prescribed procedures and personal protective equipment as directed by the GVSU Simulation Center's Policies & Preparedness Plan. Personal protective equipment (PPE) includes but is not limited to exam gloves, face masks, face shields, for labs. Faculty will guide you on the specific details of this for each course, as indicated. Generally, the expectations are that clothing allows easy, unobstructed movement of the body and body parts and modest exposure of the body regions being studied for the purposes of observation, palpation, and/or movement analysis.

Addressing regions of the body that are potentially sensitive to touch, via examination or therapeutic interventions, is integral to instruction and learning in our profession. Faculty and students alike are expected to touch others in a sensitive, professional manner. Serving as a model in many of our courses also requires that one allows others to perform an appropriate and instructive touch on themselves, in order to facilitate the learning experience for their peers. Lab instructors will establish clear guidelines regarding appropriate and professional touch for procedures in sensitive regions. All faculty and students will abide by these guidelines. Students have the right to request and receive the presence of a third-party chaperone during any lab procedure.

In this regard, irreproachable professional and ethical conduct is the expectation at all times; this applies to students and members of the faculty alike. Students and faculty will utilize appropriate draping techniques and obtain consent prior to performing the required palpations, assessments, or interventions taught in this course. The latter is an expectation for *all instances* where those are conducted in sensitive regions of the body, including the face/neck, chest, pelvic girdle, or gluteal regions.

Students are also expected to give appropriate and immediate feedback to their peers, or faculty members, regarding the location or pressure, or any other concern, associated with any palpation in the lab. The same applies to experiences related to a therapeutic assessment or intervention, which the student is a part of. Any concerns, with a faculty member or student, that compromise, or fail to meet, the standards set forth in this Handbook should be brought to the attention of a member of the DPT faculty, or the Program Director.

These standards apply to class-related experiences both within, and outside of, scheduled laboratory or class times. For the safety of our students, the DPT faculty *strongly* recommend that students do not engage in practice sessions outside the classroom with less than three persons on-hand. Moreover, for any potential 1:1 experience (faculty: student or student: student), the faculty also suggests and encourages a student to ask for a third party to serve as a chaperone for that experience.

The faculty and staff of the DPT program take any form of sexual harassment or gender-based misconduct very seriously. If you feel threatened or violated in any way, you should report your concern to any member of the DPT faculty. If, for any reason, the latter seems difficult or insufficient for you, the faculty encourages you to consider reporting to, or discussing the incident with, the university's [Title IX Office](#).

Finally, if a student is experiencing pain or a physical limitation in a particular region of the body, it is their responsibility to inform their lab partner and a course instructor prior to engaging in a lab experience that might adversely influence the student's wellness. When in doubt in this regard, please seek guidance from an instructor in the class.

### ***General Rules for the Laboratory***

1. CDC procedures for hand washing/hand sanitizing are expected of each participant, at a minimum, upon arrival to lab, and again prior to departure from lab. It is strongly recommended that participants complete hand hygiene after portions of lab that require close contact (less than 6 feet from another person). Hand sanitizer (and sinks with soap in some labs) is present in all laboratories for hand hygiene during laboratories.
2. Students may eat in designated areas within the buildings on the Health Campus or in outside spaces. No food or drinks will be allowed in the Simulation Center or in laboratory classrooms, except for labs where food preparation or food for functional physical evaluations and treatment are part of the course objectives.
3. At the conclusion of each lab session, students are expected to prepare the lab for the next class - see that all tables, linens, chairs, and equipment are sanitized returned to original positions and all trash has been disposed.

### ***Laboratory Access***

Student may access the labs for skill practice outside of scheduled class time with instructor permission and a pass card from security. Students will be given instructions for accessing the form to complete for a pass card at orientation.

## **MANAGEMENT OF STUDENT HEALTH ISSUES POLICY**

**The DPT Program's regular and adjunct faculties do not have a formal faculty practice in the CHS building and will not provide a physical therapy examination, evaluation, consultation, or treatment on-site (CHS).**

## *Rationale*

“Quick” or “informal” PT consultations by a faculty member preclude a complete history, review of systems, and examination which substantially increase the risk that serious, underlying pathology may go undiagnosed and unmanaged. The appropriate response to *any* patient or client who seeks these types of consultations is to recommend that the patient or client be formally evaluated by a health care provider who is appropriate for the problem for which the patient/client (or student) is seeking consultation.

## *Options for Students*

A student may:

1. **If uninsured/underinsured:** visit one of the pro bono clinics to consult with a local clinician, through the GVSU Family Health practice. An examination and evaluation can be provided without a prescription. Subsequent treatment recommendations would require a prescription from a physician, dentist or physician’s assistant.
2. **If insured:** you may see a physician, dentist, or physician’s assistant for a prescription for physical therapy (for insurances that require it), OR utilize the direct access route to consult with a physical therapist.

## *Exceptions to Policy*

1. PT examination, evaluation, and treatment of a student health issue is allowed by law whenever those are conducted in the context of a teaching session. In these situations, it is implied that:
  - ✓ The context of the examination, evaluation and/or treatment would appropriately fit within the course at that particular moment in time.
  - ✓ The students at-large would know the specifics of your situation.
  - ✓ The student should understand that the examination, evaluation or treatment does not replace that of the student’s own health provider.
2. Emergency situations: This policy does NOT include emergent situations that may require first responder-type actions on the part of a faculty member.

## *Emergency Situations*

In the event of emergencies, the university has prepared an [excellent and all-inclusive website](#). We encourage our students to review this carefully and bring your questions forward as they may arise.

## EMAIL AND BLACKBOARD COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

The University, Faculty, and Staff will communicate important information ***via your university email address and through our learning management system***. You are accountable to read and respond to these communications in a timely manner. Unless otherwise stated, the faculty will expect a response within 24 hours.

***Responsiveness to email and other communication regarding the program is considered an important professional behavior.***

## CONFIDENTIALITY

### *Confidentiality of Students*

The Physical Therapy Program abides by the laws ensuring confidentiality of information regarding students. Accordingly, we cannot provide information from a student's educational record (or personally identifiable information) to family members, friends or other interested parties without the written permission of the student. Should a student want information released or letters written to specific audiences, such as future employers, residency selection committees, and external award or scholarship committees, the student must complete a release of information form. A copy is accessible at [www.gvsu.edu/pt](http://www.gvsu.edu/pt). This completed form is submitted to the faculty member who is to provide a reference, and the faculty member will retain the form in paper or electronic copy. An alternative to the release form is an email request signed by the student that specifies the information to be released and the person to receive the information. Generic requests and release forms (e.g., for all potential employers) will not be accepted.

### *Confidentiality of Medical Records and Patient Information*

Hospitals and Clinical Facilities place great importance in the confidentiality of medical records. Use of medical records for learning experiences or research is permitted, provided that the student, faculty member, or researcher realizes his/her role and responsibility in protecting the confidentiality of personally identifiable information. Misuse of information collected could result in personal liability and the implementation of punitive action. Personally identifiable information includes, but is not limited to, first name, last name, unique set of initials, signature, address, unique physical characteristics, and other unique identifiers.

### *Standard Release Form*

When a student, faculty member, or researcher obtain images or audio recordings by any electronic or physical means of another individual for educational purposes, the student, faculty member, or researcher must obtain a release form that is signed, dated and witnessed by that individual. See the PT Research Handbook (Table of Contents) for "Standard Release Form".

## ATTENDANCE POLICY

In alignment with the program's goal of developing professional behavior, the faculty expects students to approach the curriculum as a professional job. The physical therapy curriculum has been designed to be a full-time activity for students. The courses are demanding, and a great deal of time is spent in the labs. Therefore, punctual and engaged attendance is expected.

There will be times during the program when we will need to combine labs or utilize previously unscheduled time slots. There also may be special seminars and guest lecturers which may be available to the students. These events often occur on short notice. The reasons for these adjustments are many but are generally due to weather cancellations, the need to accommodate adjunct faculty schedules or to consider other health professions' programs utilizing shared spaces. Students are expected to demonstrate flexibility in adapting their schedules for these occasions.

Students who are absent from class are responsible for any missed work, assignments, or assessments (quizzes, tests, papers, etc.). Faculty members may allow students with documented **excused** absences (see definition below) to make up missed work or assignments when this is feasible. When the nature of the assignments makes this impossible, faculty members may attempt to make reasonable adjustment of the assignment. Faculty may use their discretion regarding making up missed assignments and the ramifications of missing certain class periods (e.g. deducting participation points if applicable). Faculty are under no obligation to allow make up opportunities for unexcused absences.

### *Planned Absences*

Students should avoid planning absences during scheduled class, clinical education time, or important scheduled events (eg. DPT Research Day, APTA Student Conclave). Additionally, other important functions may not be directly associated with a course. Providing notice of planned absence **does not** guarantee the absence will be excused. Students should assume that a planned absence is unexcused unless instructed otherwise.

To avoid missing scheduled class sessions when scheduling personal activities, students should consult course syllabi for class schedules and the University Calendar for dates of holidays and semester breaks. Please note that some semesters hold class outside of typical University dates. When planning more than a semester in advance, students should consult the Program Director who can direct the student to the appropriate instructors for information regarding the anticipated course schedule.

### *Unexpected Absences*

Students who are unable to attend class or lab must notify the instructor prior to the start of the class except in unusual circumstances. Any planned absences need to be communicated to the instructor well in advance. The absence may still be considered unexcused at the discretion of the instructor. Excused absences include the following:

- Illness or injury preventing the student from attending class.
- Religious observation during a scheduled class session.

- Participation in university activities at the request of university authorities.
- Death or serious injury/illness of a close friend or family member or another significant person.
- Professional Association activities approved by the Program Chair.

### *Attendance Related to Final Exam Week*

The DPT program's final exam schedule generally conforms to the schedule dictated by the University. However, there are infrequent circumstances that require an exam or practical exam to be moved to a later date in the final exam week. Past examples include:

- University closure due to weather
- Student unable to complete scheduled exam due to illness
- Scheduling a re-examination for a student who performed below the required course standard
- Moving an exam to avoid a cohort having 3 exams in one day. Although this is done in advance with input from the class, room scheduling can be a challenge.

The DPT faculty appreciates and respects your time outside of class. We understand that students often make travel and/or work plans well in advance of Final Examination Week based on the Final Exam calendar. Please be advised, however, that you should consider the ***entire week*** of final examination week, Monday –Friday, as possible dates for scheduling an exam. Students who schedule travel or work prior to the end of the Final Exam week may be required to change these plans if circumstances mandate an exam to be scheduled later in the week.

An exception to the conformation to the university's exam schedule occurs in your 6<sup>th</sup> term (S/S of second year). During that term, the DPT curriculum is not lock-step with the university and a special schedule will be arranged by the Program. Please check with the Program Director if you have any questions about timing of the final exams during that term. The Program's calendar (on the DPT website) will also indicate the general days on which those exams will be scheduled.

## **EXAM AND TEST POLICIES**

### *Written Tests*

The DPT program faculty regards academic integrity as a vital paradigm of this professional program. In an effort to create a setting where integrity in the administration of examinations is optimized, the faculty has established the following policy for these occasions.

1. Students will be required to place backpacks and all study materials in a remote area of the room, as indicated by the faculty member proctoring that session.
2. Students will be asked to place cell phones, tablets, Smart Watches, and laptops away from their seat, as indicated by the faculty member proctoring the exam. Please make sure each of these items is turned off when you enter the room for the examination.
3. Only water bottles that are clear may be taken to your seat.
4. Hats may not be worn during tests. This does not apply to head coverings worn for religious reasons.

5. Talking amongst students is prohibited unless approved by the faculty member proctoring that session and only for specific purposes related to the testing process.
6. Spacing between students will be maximized. Students may expect faculty member proctoring the session to ask students to move whenever spacing can be enhanced. Students should not interpret this as a personal directive designed to single out any one student.
7. Students will focus on their own exam, keep their test immediately in front of them, and avoid spreading any papers over a wide berth.  
Leaving the room during the examination is disruptive to other students taking the exam. We request that you remain in your seat until you have completed the exam.

## ***On-line Testing Requirements***

### **Hardware**

- PC, Mac, Chromebook or tablet
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Webcam
- *Additional Hardware may be Required*

### **Software**

- Windows 10 or newer
- Mac OS 10.14 or newer
- *Additional Software may be Required (Details can be found in the Course Syllabus)*

### **Internet Connection**

- High speed Broadband Internet Connection is Required
  - Recommended Internet speeds:
    - Download speed of at least 25 mbps
    - Upload speed of at least 3 mbps
    - Ping response of less than 100ms
  - Test your Internet speed using [speedtest.net](http://speedtest.net), for an accurate speed test representative of your connection to GVSU, please change server to: “Grand Rapids, MI – Merit Networks, Inc”.
- Please consider the following while participating in online/hybrid courses:
  - Using a shared Internet connection will impact connectivity, such as additional household members use of streaming TV, gaming, and other Internet usage.
  - Wireless connections may be impacted by the distance from the router and interference from microwaves and other electronics. (Wired connections are recommended.)
  - Your Internet Service Provider’s performance may vary throughout the day based on community usage.
- Browsers
  - The most recent version of Chrome or Firefox
  - [Blackboard Browser Checker](#)
  - [Blackboard Browser Support](#)



Students may be required to use *Respondus LockDown Browser* to ensure academic integrity during online testing situations, whether in computer laboratories on campus or off campus testing via Blackboard Assessments. The most recent release of Chrome or Firefox is recommended for accessing/use of *Respondus LockDown Browser*.

Students may be required to use *Respondus Monitor* (which requires a working web camera) to further ensure academic integrity during online testing situations that occur off campus via Blackboard Assessments. Use of this technology requires a private, quiet, secure space for the test to be taken, and you must be ready to show your environment.

Instructors reserve the right to review *Respondus Monitor* video recordings in cases when needed to assess test taking behaviors.

### ***Written Test Review Policy***

The PT faculty generally offer students a chance to review written examinations given in their class. The format for those reviews may take different forms, especially those conducted in the online environment. However, when a faculty member allows students to review the exams in a group setting, the following rules shall apply. Faculty are not obliged by the Program to offer reviews.

1. Students may not write down any test question during test reviews. Students will receive a blank piece of paper from the faculty member in the room. Students may write down a question number and subsequently seek guidance on that test question from the course instructor at a later time.
2. All papers handed out in a test review session will be examined by the room proctor before the student is allowed to leave the room.
3. Students may NOT seek help from a faculty member during the conduct of an exam review session. The faculty member's express purpose during those sessions is to monitor the room.
4. Hats may not be worn during test reviews. This does not apply to head coverings worn for religious reasons.
5. Talking amongst students is prohibited unless approved by the faculty member in the room.
6. Students will be required to place cell phones, tablets, Smart Watches, and laptops away from their seat, at a location TBD by the faculty member proctoring the review session. Please make sure each of these items is turned off when you enter the room for the examination review.

## **PROGRAM SPONSORED LEARNING & ACTIVITIES**

Students who wish to participate in Program sponsored learning, service activities that occur outside of the university (such as the service-learning trips to Guatemala or Bay Cliff Health Camp) must be in good academic standing and have successfully completed all courses in the DPT curriculum (including clinical education courses) leading up to the learning and service activity and cannot be on probation for academic or professional issues.

## **PROGRAM POLICY ON EXTERNAL SPEAKERS AND AGENCIES**

The Program will allow students to arrange outside speakers/agencies, on their own accord, for: NPTE prep classes, potential employers, and similar purposes, provided the class' leadership: 1) informs the Program Director of that plan and gets approval, and 2) works with the Career Services office to orchestrate the actual event if the meeting involves recruitment. Speakers may offer continuing education segments as a part of these presentations. The Program will have no hand in these events, except to provide approval, or not, and to acquisition of space.

## **AFTER HOURS BUILDING ACCESS**

The Health Campus is secured after normal business hours. This includes internal doors that must be regularly locked to secure high-cost equipment and protect privacy. Each student will be provided an RFID swipe card that will gain access to the front entrance or the lower-level elevators to gain access to the building. This key will also be programmed to provide access to all the DPT laboratories. Before graduation, should be returned to the front desk on the CHS ground level. There is a \$10 replacement fee if the card is lost or not returned.

## **OTHER CAMPUS RESOURCES**

GVSU has abundant resources to meet your needs. We are covering just a few. To see all we have to offer our students, please refer to this important information on the [CHP Student Services](#) website. They have information regarding classes and registration, financial services, student services, academic support, and health & safety.

### ***Campus Health Services***

This Center, operated by Metro Health, is located just off the Allendale campus at 10383 42<sup>nd</sup> Ave., Suite A and is open to all students, faculty and staff. The phone is 616-252-6030. Services include general medical care, women's health, complete physicals, immunizations, STD testing and laboratory services. Additional information can be accessed at [www.gvsu.edu/campushealth](http://www.gvsu.edu/campushealth). Health care services also are available in Grand Rapids at the GVSU Family Health Center located at 72 Sheldon Blvd. SE. The phone is 616-988-8774. The web site is: <http://www.gvsu.edu/fhc/>

### ***Campus Counseling Services***

The [GVSU Counseling Center](#) is available to all students and offers a wide array of services. Additional contact information for the center is:

Location: 240 STU on Allendale campus

Phone: (616) 331-3266

## *Disability Support Resources*

Any student who has special needs and/or accommodations must contact Disability Support Resources at 331-2490 to ensure those needs are met. The student also has the responsibility of informing each instructor, in writing, of any special needs and/or necessary accommodations at the beginning of each semester. If a student's need for accommodation changes during the semester, the student must immediately notify the instructor in writing, specifying their needs and any necessary accommodations. A written statement from a physician or other appropriate professional should accompany the student's request for accommodations. Disability Support Resources website is [www.gvsu.edu/dsr](http://www.gvsu.edu/dsr).

## *Campus Police*

The Grand Valley Police Department, Allendale campus, can be reached at 331-3255. Pew Campus Security (Grand Rapids) can be reached at 331-6677. Additional information can be found at [www.gvsu.edu/gvpd](http://www.gvsu.edu/gvpd). Content includes parking, citations, lost and found, and crime statistics.

## *Career Center*

The [GVSU Career Center](#) includes Laker Jobs, job search assistance, simulated interviews, etiquette dinner, workshops, and career fair dates. Laker Jobs is a free on-line system that lists physical therapist jobs across the nation.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarships are available which are specifically designed for physical therapy students enrolled in the professional curricula. These scholarships are offered by service organizations, hospitals, private practice groups, health related industries, foundations, and GVSU.

1. [Volkhardt Family Scholarship](#)
  - Deadline for application: May 1 (spring of first year of the program)
  - Amount varies
  - Financial need is considered
  - Renewable 6 semesters
  - You will be informed by email to apply during first year Winter semester
2. [Ruth M. Perry Doctor of Physical Therapy Scholarship](#)
  - Deadline for application: May1 (spring of first year of the program)
  - Amount varies
  - Renewable 6 semesters
  - You will be informed by email to apply during first year Winter semester

3. [Rev. Darld and Joyce Black Doctor of Physical Therapy Scholarship](#)
  - Deadline for application: May 1 (spring of first year of the program)
  - Amount varies
  - One-time award
  - You will be informed by email to apply during first year - winter semester
  
4. [Wisner Doctor of Physical Therapy Scholarship](#)
  - Deadline for application: May 1 (spring of first year of the program)
  - Amount varies
  - Renewable 6 semesters
  - You will be informed by email to apply during first year Winter semester
  
5. [David Daniels Memorial Scholarship](#)
  - Deadline for application: Announced by faculty each year (spring of second year of the program)
  - Amount varies
  - One-time award
  - You will be informed of when to apply via email
  
6. Physical Therapy Urban Schools Endowed Scholarship
  - Assists students from urban schools
  
7. [Steven and Kathryn '83 Bandstra Clinical Placement Scholarship](#)
  - Assist students in clinical placement sites outside of urban areas in Western and Northern Michigan
  
8. [Steven and Kathryn '83 Bandstra Health Sciences](#)
  - Assists students with demonstrated financial need

## **STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND**

The fund is designated to provide students currently enrolled in the professional Doctor of Physical Therapy degree program with financial resources to meet unanticipated emergency needs.

Funds are maintained in a separate account and administered by the DPT Program Director. Applications are available in the DPT Program office and should be submitted directly to the DPT Program Director. A committee appointed by the Program Director will review all applications. All disbursements must be approved by the Physical Therapy faculty. Recipients may meet with financial aid officers if they are interested in having their financial aid repackaged.

Upon faculty approval of a disbursement, the Physical Therapy business administrator will instruct the Financial Aid Office to place the award on their student account. If the student is unable to pick up the check, arrangements can be made for a check to be mailed.

### *Criteria for Awarding Assistance*

1. The maximum amount a student may receive in any one academic year is \$100.00, with no student benefiting from this fund for more than three years.
2. Admitted DPT students may apply for financial assistance from the fund at any time during their participation in the DPT program.

Academic performance and standing are not criterion and are not considered for awarding assistance; however, if a student is under sanctions determined by the faculty in a professional conduct hearing, the student is not eligible to receive the funding.

### **GRADUATE ASSISTANTSHIPS**

Half-time graduate assistantships are generally available for semesters 4 and 8 for students who are in good standing in the program. Each position involves 10 hours of work per week. The remuneration is \$2000 plus 4.5 credit hours of tuition remission per semester. The Program Director will contact the entire class when applications are due.