



Welcome message from GVSU PT Department:

The Department of Physical Therapy offers students an integrated curriculum that features a variety of clinical rotations that are scheduled at intervals throughout the students' three years of study in the program. Classroom preparation is closely followed by relevant clinical experiences across the domains of physical therapists' practice. This allows students an opportunity to apply what was just presented in class. These clinical experiences are offered across the country (even internationally) and provide students with a chance to see the practice of physical therapy applied across state and regional boundaries, in a variety of settings.

The GVSU Simulation Center provides support to our health professions' students which has enabled the Department of Physical Therapy to become one of the first programs in the country to incorporate the use of high fidelity simulation into its curriculum. These simulation events provide students an opportunity to practice clinical reasoning and intervention skills in a realistic setting. Students learn to apply course materials while enhancing their level of preparation for upcoming clinical experiences. Simulation is also used throughout the curriculum for interprofessional education events where students have a chance to learn about, with, and from health professions students representing multiple health care disciplines.

Physical therapist students at Grand Valley also have the opportunity to work with the underserved in our community through our longstanding pro bono clinical affiliations. Our DPT program's faculty members and/or local clinicians volunteer their time to work with students to provide these services. The clinics are managed by our students with faculty supervision. This offers students a valuable opportunity to experience first-hand the value of giving back to the community through professional service. Students also get the chance to serve the global

community through the Program's annual service trip to Guatemala where physical therapy services are provided under faculty supervision to the underserved in that country.

The GVSU Department of Physical Therapy features 15 full-time and one part-time faculty members. A doctoral degree is held by 12 of those faculty members and 11 hold advanced clinical practice certifications. The level of academic experience of our faculty, averaging over 17 years, complements the breadth of clinical expertise that this group offers its students. Every member of the faculty is still involved in some level of clinical practice.

Students at GVSU's program will experience research first-hand through a faculty mentored project that begins during the second year and leads to a culminating presentation of that research at our annual DPT Student Research Day. Our Biomechanics and Motor Performance Lab is a state-of-the-art facility where several research projects are undertaken every year. Many of those students annually take those presentations to state or national meetings where their work is featured in a poster or platform presentation. A number of projects also are published along with members of our faculty in peer-reviewed, professional journals.

The DPT program at GVSU is three years of full-time classroom and clinical experiences. Students matriculate in cohorts of 60 students. During those three years, our students develop personal and professional relationships that are sustained well beyond the three years of preparation in our program. In fact, the most frequent feedback that we receive from our graduating students regarding our program is a statement of appreciation for the relationships that they have developed with members of this faculty.

The GVSU DPT program also offers Advanced Topics electives that are very popular with our students. Students in their last didactic semester have the chance to choose from advanced classes in neurological practice, sports medicine, manual therapy, and pediatrics. Other advanced topic courses are in development. The content of these courses offers students a

chance to explore these practice areas in greater depth and often facilitates decisions regarding early career pathway options.

In sum, I am confident that you will like what you see if you thoroughly investigate our program. Our outstanding faculty, opportunities for research, nationwide clinical experiences, and wonderful facilities complement an excellent setting where students can learn and thrive. Please let us know if you have questions and feel free to contact us if you would like to get a closer look at what we have to offer. We welcome your inquiries and visits.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Vaughn", followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Dan Vaughn, Department Chair