

Introduction

This document introduces the nonacademic standards, skills, and performance requirements expected of every student in the Physical Therapist Assistant program. It is essential for all students entering the program to understand that these requirements are necessary for the satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum and development of professional attributes for graduation. Reading these standards carefully along with a realistic assessment of your own personality, interests, abilities, strengths, and weaknesses will ensure that you end up in a program and career path that is a good fit for you.

Physical therapist assistants work directly in the rehabilitation of people throughout the lifespan who have lost their ability to move and participate in functional activities due to an illness or injury. The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Guilford Technical Community College prepares graduates to work in direct patient care settings under the direction and supervision of physical therapists. Graduates receive an Associate of Applied Science degree and are eligible to take the National Physical Therapy Licensure Exam for Physical Therapist Assistants administered by the North Carolina Board of Physical Therapy Examiners.

Students are expected to demonstrate the following skills fundamental to the Physical Therapist Assistant practice:

Communication

- Interpret information from physical and electronic manuals, protocols, and medical records
- Document information on patients'/clients' medical records
- Communicate with patients/clients, caregivers, and health care workers in face-to-face and automated situations
- Practice patient/client confidentiality in speaking, writing, and use of technology

Motor Coordination

- Practice safe and effective patient/client handling
- Assist and train patients/clients in the performance of functional activities
- Practice safe and effective use of medical equipment

Mobility

- Independently move throughout a clinical setting for the duration of a typical work day
- Demonstrate functional activities to patients/clients and their caregivers
- Assist patients/clients in the performance of functional activities
- Move equipment throughout a health care facility

Sensory

- Accurately perceive verbal and nonverbal communication from patients and health care workers
- Accurately perceive displays from medical equipment
- Accurately perceive results from palpation of patients/clients

Intellectual

- Use short- and long-term memory to solve problems
- Apply critical thinking to solve problems
- Analyze patient/client data to determine appropriate physical therapy interventions

Social

- Work in groups and collaborate with other health care workers
- Demonstrate appropriate behavior and interactions with diverse patients/clients, caregivers, and health care workers
- Function effectively in high-stress environments and situations
- Function effectively in the face of uncertainty

Professional Behavior

- Demonstrate academic honesty
- Demonstrate promptness in attendance and submission of assignments
- Practice professional behavior while using social media
- Adhere to the American Physical Therapy Association Code of Ethics
- Adhere to the GTCC Physical Therapist Assistant Handbook
- Adhere to the Professional Skills in PTA Program syllabi