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# DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM

## Student Handbook

Updated 8/2023

## Preface

Students in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program (DPT) are officially considered to be students of West Coast University (WCU). Therefore, DPT students are expected to comply not only with the regulations and academic standards in this handbook (including the clinical education component), but also with those specified in the most current edition of the WCU University Catalog and Student Handbook. Please be advised that the University Catalog contains policies and procedures that apply to all students and is the primary source of reference. If there are any discrepancies in policies or procedures that are contained in the University Catalog with those contained in the DPT Programmatic Student Handbook, the University Catalog will be followed. Students enrolled in the DPT program are expected to be familiar with the information in this handbook, and must acknowledge such by signing the following forms found in the Appendix after having reviewed the material:

- Student Acknowledgment of DPT Program Policies and Procedures (Appendix A)
- Student Release, Informed Consent and Waiver (Appendix B)
- Student Informed Consent Form (Appendix C)
- Health Insurance Statement (Appendix D)

WCU reserves the right to change any provision or requirement, including fees, contained in this informational document at any time with or without notice.

Please read this handbook carefully. Questions related to the content of this manual should be directed to DPT Dean/Program Director:

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# Table of Contents

## WCU DPT Program Overview

Welcome.....	6
Description of the Profession of Physical Therapy .....	6
Program Mission .....	7
References .....	7
Goals and Expected Outcomes .....	8
Professionalism.....	8
Core Performance Standards .....	9
Technical Standards for Admission, Promotion and Graduation .....	9
Observation Skills .....	9
Communication Skills.....	9
Motor/Psychomotor Skills .....	10
Intellectual – Conceptual Integrative and Quantitative Analysis Abilities .....	10
Behavioral/Social Attributes and Professionalism.....	10–11
Generic Abilities.....	12

## Academics

Academic Advisement.....	13
Curriculum .....	13
Progression in the DPT Program (Refer to the Academic Action Plan flow-charts in Appendix A).....	13
DPT Academic Action Plan .....	14
Graduate Academic and Financial Aid Warning.....	15
Incomplete Work.....	15
Academic Dismissal.....	15
Practical Exam Competency .....	16
Competency Prior to DPT Clinical Education Participation .....	17
APTA Code of Ethics .....	17–18

## Additional DPT Program Policies

Classroom Attendance.....	19
Drug Screening/Background Check.....	19
Health Insurance .....	20
Laboratory Policies and Procedures.....	20
Personal Health Requirements for Lab Participation .....	21
Dress and Grooming Standards for Lab Participation .....	21

General Lab Policies.....	22
Guests in WCU Laboratories .....	22
Use of Human Subjects and Informed Consent.....	23
Use of Chemicals and Lab Substances .....	23
Licensure.....	23
Providing Safe Patient Care.....	23
Student Pregnancy Policy.....	24
Mandated Reporting.....	24
Professional Organization Membership.....	24

## **Appendices**

Appendix List.....	53
Appendix A: Academic Action Flow Charts .....	54–57
Appendix B: Catalog and Handbook Acknowledgments.....	58
Appendix C: Student Informed Consent.....	59
Appendix D: Health Insurance Statement.....	60
Appendix E: Consent for Release of Information .....	61
Appendix F: Multimedia Consent/Release .....	62
Appendix G: Guest Participant Informed Consent.....	63
Appendix H: Authorization for Electronic Use of Signature.....	64

# WCU DPT Program Overview

## Welcome

Welcome to the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program and West Coast University (WCU). We are glad that you have chosen to pursue your education with us. Your selection into the program reflects our acknowledgement of your past achievements and confidence in your future potential. The academic and clinical demands of this program require high standards of performance from you. We also have a strong commitment to you, the student, to help you in your education and development as a professional in the field of physical therapy.

Please let any of your faculty know if you are having trouble in any course and need tutoring or other help. We also encourage you to help one another, studying cooperatively, rather than competitively, while taking responsibility for your own work, knowledge and skill development. We want you to succeed.

We invite you to set your goals high and become a valued part of the DPT program and the profession of physical therapy.

## Description of the Profession of Physical Therapy

“Physical therapists provide services to patients/clients who have impairments, functional limitations, disabilities, or changes in physical function and health status resulting from injury, disease, or other causes; interact and practice in collaboration with a variety of professionals; address risk; provide prevention and promote health, wellness and fitness; consult, educate, engage in critical inquiry and administrate; and direct and supervise the physical therapy service, including support personnel.”<sup>1</sup>

“Physical therapists assume leadership roles in rehabilitation: in prevention health maintenance, and programs that promote health wellness and fitness; and in professional and community organizations.

The practice of physical therapy necessitates that the individual physical therapist engages in specific and complex cognitive, psychomotor and affective behaviors when providing services to patients/clients, families, or caregivers. Using their body of knowledge, physical therapists integrate five elements of care in a manner designed to maximize the patient’s outcome: examination, evaluation, diagnosis, prognosis, and intervention.”

Physical therapists practice in a broad range of inpatient, outpatient and community-based settings and treat age groups ranging from newborns to geriatric patients.

<sup>1</sup> Guide to Physical Therapist Practice, 3rd ed. Alexandria VA: American Physical Therapy Association; 2014. [guide.toptp.org](http://guide.toptp.org).



## Program Mission

The mission of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program is “to provide a student-centered education that prepares graduates for caring, innovative, interdisciplinary, and evidence-based approaches to physical therapy patient-centered care.”

The DPT program strives to attract a dynamic and diverse faculty who possess a common desire to shape the physical therapists of tomorrow by modeling both clinical and teaching excellence. WCU recognizes that even with the best technology and curriculum, the heart and soul of the program is the student. Our program will cater to highly motivated students who wish to be active participants in their education.

In keeping with both the University and Program Missions, WCU graduates will be prepared to enter the physical therapy work force as skilled and ethical members of the healthcare community.

The DPT curriculum foundationally rests in the current literature on adult learning, including:

- Learning is enhanced in a learner-centered model of education, where students are actively involved in the teaching/learning process. This model of education recognizes multiple methods for effectively engaging students in their learning. Curricular methods include internet/online learning, lecture, skills laboratories, group discussions and inquiry, case-studies, student presentations, independent study, writing components, and clinical experience. Students are expected to increasingly accept personal responsibility for their success in achieving excellent educational outcomes.
- Practical application and clinical education occur at intervals throughout the curriculum, for a variety of practice environments. This sequencing of learning recognizes the importance of active and clinically relevant learning for the adult.
- Student learning is enhanced when the faculty model and encourage critical reflection. In discussions of clinical cases, the faculty actively considers interpretations, develop hypotheses, and present intervention strategies that are integrated into existing or new cognitive frameworks or schemes. A balance of open-mindedness and questioning is demonstrated using varied teaching strategies and patient management approaches.
- Course content builds on the student’s existing knowledge base, progressing from simple to complex conceptualization and advancing from concrete to abstract analysis.
- Program activities and curricular content are not focused solely on technical skills and knowledge, but also facilitate the development of the student as a professional. Student development of core values and skills is enhanced through appropriate faculty interaction and modeling of professional behaviors and attitudes.
- Assessment of student learning and preparation for clinical practice is an intentional and integrated component of student learning. Assessment methods attempt to facilitate understanding rather than rote memorization and include a variety of evaluation methods including ability-based assessment utilized to facilitate the use of knowledge and psychomotor skills.

## References:

- Arnold-Garza, S. The flipped classroom teaching model and its use for information literacy instruction. *Communications in Information Literacy* 8(1), 2014.
- Furze J, Black L, Hoffman J, Barr JB, Cochran TM, Jensen GM. Exploration of Students’ Clinical Reasoning Development in Professional. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*. 2015;29(3):22-33.

## Goals and Expected Outcomes

Program goals flow out of the DPT program's mission statement and the University's core values. Student goals as they progress through the program include the following:

- All students will demonstrate academic excellence by meeting or exceeding the academic requirements of the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program.
- All students will engage in service by participating in a minimum of one community or professional volunteer event annually.
- All students will demonstrate professional engagement by joining the American Physical Therapy Association and participating in at least one State of California APTA event (e.g., G.L.A.D., CPTA Conference, Student Conclave, etc.)

The expected program learning outcomes flow from our mission statement, philosophical base, and programmatic goals. They reflect the practice management expectations found in the APTA Standards of Practice for Physical Therapy.

Graduates should be able to:

- Provide professional physical therapy services to diverse populations consistent with American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) standards.
- Perform autonomous entry-level skills in a safe manner.
- Facilitate culturally sensitive communication using consultative and collaborative skills as a part of the healthcare team.
- Design evidence-based physical therapy treatment plans using clinical reasoning for optimal patient-centered care.
- Exercise professional conduct that is consistent with the ethical and legal practice of physical therapy.

## Professionalism

Students are expected to act in a professional and responsible manner at all times inside and outside of the learning environment. Professionalism in the DPT program is defined as:

“Physical therapists consistently demonstrate core values by aspiring to and wisely applying principles of altruism, excellence, caring, ethics, respect, communication and accountability, and by working together with other professionals to achieve optimal health and wellness in individuals and communities.”

(Stern DT. *Measuring Medical Professionalism*. Oxford University Press. New York, NY, 2006:19.)

## Core Performance Standards

Students in the DPT program are likely to achieve success when they come prepared to participate fully in the educational process. This preparation includes and assumes that students enter the program with a baseline level of ability in specific areas, termed technical standards, and will continue to develop those and additional skills and attitudes, called the generic abilities. The generic abilities in particular will be assessed periodically throughout the program. Inability to meet any of the technical standards and generic abilities which are integral components of the core performance standards may result in the need for remediation, probation, suspension or dismissal from the program. The core performance standards are listed below.

## Technical Standards for Admission, Promotion and Graduation

Physical therapy is an intellectually, physically, and psychologically demanding profession. Students acquire the foundation of knowledge, attitudes, skills and behaviors needed throughout the physical therapist's career. Those abilities that physical therapists must possess to practice safely are reflected in the technical standards that follow.

***For successful completion of degree requirements, students must be able to meet minimum technical standards with or without reasonable accommodation.***

**Technical standards include the following:**

### Observation Skills

Observation requires the functional use of vision, hearing, somatic sensations, and the use of common sense. Students must have visual perception which includes depth and acuity. A student must be able to observe lectures, laboratory dissection of cadavers, and lecture and laboratory demonstrations. The student must be able to observe a patient accurately, observe digital and waveform readings and other graphic images to determine a patient's condition. Students must be able to observe patients and be able to obtain an appropriate medical history directly from the patient or guardian. Examples in which these observational skills are required include palpation of peripheral pulses, bony prominences and ligamentous structures; visual and tactile evaluation for areas of inflammation and visual and tactile assessment of the presence and degree of edema. A student must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand, noting nonverbal as well as verbal signals.

### Communication Skills

Communication includes speech, language, reading, writing, computer literacy and informatics. Students must be able to communicate effectively, sensitively, and convey a sense of compassion and empathy with patients to elicit information regarding mood and activities, as well as perceive non-verbal communications. Physical Therapy education presents exceptional challenges in the volume and breadth of required reading and the necessity to impart information to others. Students must be able to communicate quickly, effectively, and efficiently in oral and written English with all members of the healthcare team. Students must be able to complete forms according to directions in a complete and timely fashion. Students are expected to demonstrate effective writing skills.



## **Motor/Psychomotor Skills**

Students must possess sufficient motor function to elicit information from the patient examination, by palpation, auscultation, tapping and other evaluation maneuvers. Students must be able to execute movements required to provide general and therapeutic care, such as positioning large or immobile patients, gait training using therapeutic aids and orthotics, positioning, and performing manual mobilization techniques, performing non-surgical wound debridement, and placing surface electrodes. Students must have the physical strength to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency treatment to patients. These skills require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movement, equilibrium, and the integrated use of touch and vision.

## **Intellectual – Conceptual Integrative and Quantitative Analysis Abilities**

To effectively solve problems, students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize information in a timely fashion. For example, the student must be able to synthesize knowledge and integrate the relevant aspects of a patient's history, physical examination, and laboratory data, provide a reasoned explanation for likely therapy, recalling and retaining information in an efficient and timely manner. The ability to incorporate new information from peers, teachers, and medical literature in formulating treatment and plans is essential. In addition, students must be able to comprehend three dimensional relationships and to understand spatial relationships of structures. Candidates must have the ability to use computers for searching, recording, storing, and retrieving information.

## **Behavioral/Social Attributes and Professionalism**

Students must possess the psychological ability required for the full utilization of their intellectual abilities, for the exercise of good judgment, for the prompt completion of all responsibilities inherent to diagnosis and care of patients, and for the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. Students must be able to tolerate physically and mentally taxing workloads and function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to a changing environment, display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of patients. As a component of their education, students must demonstrate ethical behavior.

Specifically, students should be able to\*:

1. Attend and participate in classes for 30 or more hours per week during each academic semester. Classes consist of a combination of face to face and online lecture, discussion, laboratory, and clinical activities.
2. Use auditory, tactile, and visual senses to receive classroom instruction and to evaluate and treat patients.
3. Read, write, speak, and understand English at a level consistent with successful course completion and development of positive patient-therapist relationships.
4. Complete readings, assignments, and other activities outside of class hours.
5. Apply critical thinking processes to their work in the classroom and the clinic.
6. Exercise sound judgment in class and in the clinic.

7. Participate in clinical experiences which typically require students to be present 40 or more hours per week on a schedule that corresponds to the operating hours of the clinic.
8. Gather decision-making pieces of information during patient assessment activities in class or in the clinical setting without the use of an intermediary (classmate, aide, etc.).
9. Perform treatment activities in class or in the clinical setting by direct performance or by instruction and supervision of intermediaries.
10. Sit for two to 10 hours daily, stand for one to 10 hours daily, and walk or travel for two hours daily.
11. Frequently lift weights less than 10 pounds and occasionally lift weights between 10 and 100 pounds.
12. Occasionally carry up to 25 pounds while walking up to 50 feet.
13. Frequently exert 75 pounds of push/pull forces to objects up to 50 feet and occasionally exert 150 pounds of push/pull forces for this distance.
14. Frequently twist, bend, and stoop.
15. Occasionally squat, crawl, climb stools, reach above shoulder level, and kneel.
16. Frequently move from place to place and position to position and must do so at a speed that permits safe handling of classmates and patients.
17. Frequently stand and walk while providing support to a classmate simulating a disability or while supporting a patient with a disability.
18. Occasionally climb stairs and rarely negotiate uneven terrain.
19. Frequently use their hands repetitively with a simple grasp and frequently use a firm grasp and manual dexterity skills.
20. Frequently coordinate verbal and manual activities with gross motor activities.

\*Evaluative Criteria for Accreditation of Education Programs for the Preparation of Physical Therapists (Adopted October 26, 2004 and effective January 1, 2006; revised 5/07, 10/07, 4/09), Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education. Available at: [www.captionline.org/home.aspx](http://www.captionline.org/home.aspx) Last accessed 9/15/15.

## Generic Abilities

The program expects DPT students to develop and demonstrate 10 generic abilities important to the practice of physical therapy. These are adopted from the work of Warren May, PT<sup>3</sup>, and colleagues, and Jette and Portney (2003).<sup>4</sup> Generic abilities are behaviors, attributes, or characteristics that are not necessarily an explicit part of a profession's core knowledge and technical skills, but nevertheless are required for success in that profession.

Commitment to learning	The ability to self-assess, self-correct and self-direct; to identify needs and sources of learning; and to continually seek new knowledge and understanding.
Interpersonal skills	The ability to interact effectively with patients, families, colleagues, other healthcare professionals and the community and to deal effectively with cultural and ethnic diversity issues.
Communication skills	The ability to communicate effectively (i.e., speaking, body language, reading, writing, listening) for varied audiences and purposes.
Effective use of time and resources	The ability to obtain the maximum benefit from a minimum investment of time and resources.
Use of constructive feedback	The ability to identify sources of, seek out feedback, and to effectively use and provide feedback for improving personal interaction.
Problem solving	The ability to recognize and define problems, analyze data, develop and implement solutions and evaluate outcomes.
Professionalism	The ability to exhibit appropriate professional conduct and to represent the profession effectively.
Responsibility	The ability to fulfill commitments and to be accountable for actions and outcomes.
Critical thinking	The ability to question logically; to identify, generate and evaluate elements of logical argument; to recognize and differentiate facts, illusions, assumptions and hidden assumptions; and to distinguish the relevant from the irrelevant.
Stress management	The ability to identify sources of stress and to develop effective coping behaviors.

<sup>3</sup> May WW, Morgan BJ, Lemke JC, Karst GM, Stone HL. Model for Ability-Based Assessment in Physical Therapy Education. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*, 1995;9(1):3–6.

<sup>4</sup> Jette DU, Portney LG. Construct Validation of a Model for Professional Behavior in Physical Therapist Students. *Physical Therapy*. 2003;83(5):432–443.

# Academics

Academic standards specific to the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program are listed below. Refer to the University Catalog and Student Handbook for institutional standards and policies.

## Academic Advisement

Academic advisement is an important part of the educational process in the DPT program. Once a student is enrolled, he/she will be assigned to a DPT faculty member who will serve as the student's faculty advisor. All new first year students are expected to meet with their academic advisor within the first three weeks of the first semester they are enrolled in and a minimum of once each semester throughout the program. Academic advisement is not limited to the faculty advisor; students who are having academic difficulty will also meet with course directors and student affairs professionals. Students are expected to be proactive in the academic advisement process.

## Curriculum

The course sequence flows from the mission and goals of the DPT program and is designed to facilitate the education of our students. The program is a traditional, campus-based program consisting of nine continuous semesters of classroom and clinical experiences. By design, the DPT program curriculum relies on a progressive academic and clinical model. The DPT program curriculum and clinical education component incorporate technological and clinical advances as well as contemporary educational theory. Student courses are primarily delivered in person but there are also online web-enhanced courses.

## Progression in the DPT Program

**(Refer to the Academic Action Plan flow-charts in Appendix A)**

Each course within the DPT curriculum uses the West Coast University grading scale located in the University catalog.

- Courses are graded with letter grades (A–F) with the exception of Physical Therapy Experiences & Clinical Internships, which are graded as Pass or No Pass.
- A minimum of a 3.0 cumulative GPA (cGPA) is required at all times in the DPT Program; failure to maintain a 3.0 cGPA will result in **development of an Academic Action Plan** (see next section).
- A minimum of a 3.0 term GPA (tGPA) is required at all times in the DPT; failure to obtain a 3.0 tGPA for any given semester will result in **an Academic Action Plan** (see next section).
- Students must earn a minimum grade of “C+” or a Pass in all DPT courses using the scale outlined in the Grading section of the University catalog and DPT Syllabi. Due to the didactic and clinical practice requirements for licensure, progression in the DPT program from one term to the next is imperative to student success and for patient safety; therefore, DPT students who do not earn a minimum grade of “C+” or a Pass in each DPT course in each term will be **dismissed** from the program.
- If a student receives a non-passing grade on any examination or a student is receiving a failing grade in a course, it is suggested that student immediately meet with the course instructor, their faculty mentor, and the Student Affairs advisor.
- Students should comply with technical standards and appropriate performance in generic abilities.
- Students must complete 100% of all credits attempted each semester. Students must pass a Comprehensive Clinical Exam (CCE) in the last semester of year two; failure to pass the CCE within two attempts will prevent the student from progressing to clinical experiences in year three.

## **DPT Academic Action Plan (Related to Satisfactory Academic Progress)**

- To return to good academic standing, the student must satisfy the dictates of the faculty and possess a cGPA of 3.0 or better.
- A student will be placed on **Academic Action Plan** if the cGPA falls below 3.0 at any point in the student's academic progression.
  - The DPT student on academic action plan will have a maximum of two (2) consecutive semesters to restore the cGPA to a 3.0; failure to restore the cGPA to 3.0, following two consecutive semesters will result in **dismissal** from the program.
  - If a student's tGPA (term GPA) falls below a 3.0, while on academic action plan, the student will be **dismissed** from the program.
- A student must achieve a minimum of cGPA 3.0 prior to entering any clinical experience. A student currently on probation because of cGPA or tGPA < 3.0 will be evaluated on a case by case basis in terms of eligibility to enter into a clinical experience. The DCE has the right to notify any clinical site of the academic status of a student on probation.
- A student will be placed on an academic action plan if a term GPA (tGPA) falls below 3.0.
  - Failure to achieve a tGPA of 3.0 on the next subsequent term will result in **dismissal** from the program.
- If a student fails any clinical rotation, the student will be **dismissed** from the program.
- A student will be placed on an **Academic Action Plan** as a result of repetitive or serious professional behavior issues as defined by the expected student behaviors and generic abilities. This student is required to develop a successful strategy for professional growth.
  - Further professional behavior issues while on an academic action plan will result in **dismissal** from the program.
- A student may only be placed on an **Academic Action Plan** once during their academic progression. A second occurrence requiring an academic action plan, for any reason, will result in **dismissal**.

Successful completion of the DPT Program will require satisfactory fulfillment of all program requirements, including clinical internships, a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0, and adherence to the standards for professional conduct upheld by the Program, University, and the DPT profession.

At the completion of each academic term, the DPT faculty will review each student's performance to determine if academic and core performance standards are met to allow progression in the program or graduation. The student who meets all of his/her academic and core performance standards will progress and graduate.

## Graduate Academic and Financial Aid Warning

The University has an academic and financial aid warning policy. Please see University Catalog for details.

## Incomplete Work

The University has an incomplete work policy. Please refer to the University Catalog.

## Academic Dismissal

The University has an academic dismissal policy. Please refer to the University catalog.

Continuation in the graduate program in physical therapy is dependent on the following:

1. Satisfactory progress in removing any conditions imposed at the time of admission.
2. Satisfactory progress in restoring the cGPA to 3.0 during a probationary period of two (2) semesters.
3. Satisfactory completion of all clinical affiliations.
4. Satisfactory progress in removing any conditions imposed on the student as a result of professional behavior issues.

A student will not be allowed to continue in the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program as a result of academic, clinical, or professional infractions. A student will be **dismissed** from the program if any of the following conditions exist:

1. The student receives a grade of C or below in any course.
2. If, at the discretion of the Faculty, student conduct or professional behaviors are deemed inappropriate, inadequate, compromising, or unsafe. This could include a breach of policies stated in this handbook or breach of a professional behavioral contract.
3. The student **fails** a PT Experience or Clinical Internship.
4. The student on **academic probation** is unable to raise his/her cumulative GPA to 3.0 or above after two (2) consecutive semesters.
5. The student, while on **academic probation**, receives a tGPA below 3.0.
6. A student may not be placed on **academic probation** more than one time in their academic progression; any conditions resulting in a second academic probation will result in **dismissal**.
7. A student fails 4 total practical examinations within the first two years of the curriculum (not including the CCE).

The Physical Therapy program pledges to ensure due process to all students equitably, regardless of age, color, religion, national origin, race or gender, when carrying out the policies.

Any student dismissed from the DPT program for academic (clinical or didactic) or behavioral reasons has the right to appeal this decision with West Coast University. Please see the University Catalog for more information related to the appeal process and policy.



## Practical Exam Competency

For courses involving clinical skills labs, a student must achieve competency in each clinical skill specified by the instructor to pass the course. Laboratory practical examinations for each course have defined scoring and grading criteria. Students must demonstrate appropriate **safety** measures in the performance of critical elements correctly. On each practical examination, all critical elements must be passed and a score of 80% or better achieved in order to successfully complete each laboratory examination and pass the course. If a student does not achieve the standard of competence (80%) or if a student fails any item related to safety (as identified on the practical grading form for the courses with specific lab components), the student fails the practical examination. In either case, the student will have an opportunity to remediate and re-take the practical exam once in order to demonstrate competence of the material. The original score earned by the student will be retained for final grade computation. The practical re-take policies are as follows:

- A student who fails a practical exam for a safety **item**, will not be informed at that time, but will be allowed to complete the practical examination and be graded on the other portions of the examination.
- When the student is informed that they have failed the practical exam, either for a safety item and/or for failure to achieve the standard of competence (80%), it is recommended that the student reflect, contact their faculty and determine a plan to remediate and re-take the exam with the course instructor.
- If the lab practical **safety items** are performed appropriately during the second examination, the student will earn no higher than the numerical score achieved on the first examination.
- If the practical examination **safety items** or the minimum standard of competence (80%) are not achieved in the second practical examination, the student will receive a “zero” for the practical examination and an “F” grade in the course resulting in dismissal from the DPT program.
- All practical examination retakes must occur with the course instructor within one week of the end of the semester.
- Practical examination retake opportunities will require the student to retake the entire assessment, not just the specific element that resulted in the failure. The maximum grade that can be earned on a practical examination retake is 80%.

Students should review specific course syllabi for additional information on requirements pertaining to any given course.

## Competency Prior to DPT Clinical Education Participation

All students must demonstrate readiness to engage in clinical education, based upon the criteria listed in the University Catalog and all applicable handbooks.

- Completion of all previous academic coursework with a minimum grade of C+, and cumulative GPA of 3.0 or higher. A student currently on an Academic Action Plan because of cGPA or tGPA < 3.0 will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis in terms of eligibility to enter into a clinical experience. The DCE has the right to notify any clinical site's SCCE as to the academic status of a student on probation.
- Completion of all Laboratory Practical exam components with a minimum of 80% grading with no safety concerns.
- Satisfactory demonstration of generic abilities and technical standards with no concerns from Core faculty prior to clinical placement.
- Earning a passing grade on the Comprehensive Clinical Examination (CCE).

## APTA Code of Ethics

It is also expected that DPT students and faculty will comply with the ethical standards of the profession. These are as follows:

### Preamble

The Code of Ethics for the Physical Therapist (Code of Ethics; 2010) delineates the ethical obligations of all physical therapists as determined by the House of Delegates of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). The purposes of this Code of Ethics are to:

1. Define the ethical principles that form the foundation of physical therapist practice inpatient/client management, consultation, education, research, and administration.
2. Provide standards of behavior and performance that form the basis of professional accountability to the public.
3. Provide guidance for physical therapists facing ethical challenges, regardless of their professional roles and responsibilities.
4. Educate physical therapists, students, other healthcare professionals, regulators, and the public regarding the core values, ethical principles, and standards that guide the professional conduct of the physical therapist.
5. Establish the standards by which the American Physical Therapy Association can determine if a physical therapist has engaged in unethical conduct.

No code of ethics is exhaustive, nor can it address every situation. Physical therapists are encouraged to seek additional advice or consultation in instances where the guidance of the Code of Ethics may not be definitive.

The APTA Code of Ethics is built upon the five roles of the physical therapist (patient/client manager, educator, critical inquirer, administrator, and consultant), the core values of the profession, and the multiple realms of ethical action (individual, organizational, and societal). Physical therapist practice is guided by a set of nine core values: *accountability, altruism, collaboration, compassion/caring, duty, excellence, inclusion, integrity, and social responsibility*. Throughout the document, the primary core values that support specific principles are indicated in parentheses. Unless a specific role is indicated in the principle, the duties and obligations being delineated pertain to the five roles of the physical therapist. Fundamental to the APTA Code of Ethics is the special obligation of physical therapists to empower, educate, and enable those with impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and disabilities to facilitate greater independence, health, wellness, and enhanced quality of life.

**PRINCIPLE 1:**

Physical therapists shall respect the inherent dignity and rights of all individuals.  
(Core Values: Compassion, Integrity)

**PRINCIPLE 2:**

Physical therapists shall be trustworthy and compassionate in addressing the rights and needs of patients/clients.  
(Core Values: Altruism, Compassion, Professional Duty)

**PRINCIPLE 3:**

Physical therapists shall be accountable for making sound professional judgments.  
(Core Values: Excellence, Integrity)

**PRINCIPLE 4:**

Physical therapists shall demonstrate integrity in their relationships with patients/clients, families, colleagues, students, research participants, other healthcare providers, employers, payers, and the public.  
(Core Value: Integrity)

**PRINCIPLE 5:**

Physical therapists shall fulfill their legal and professional obligations.  
(Core Values: Professional Duty, Accountability)

**PRINCIPLE 6:**

Physical therapists shall enhance their expertise through the lifelong acquisition and refinement of knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional behaviors.  
(Core Value: Excellence)

**PRINCIPLE 7:**

Physical therapists shall promote organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients/clients and society.  
(Core Values: Integrity, Accountability)

**PRINCIPLE 8:**

Physical therapists shall participate in efforts to meet the health needs of people locally, nationally, or globally.  
(Core Value: Social Responsibility)

## **Additional DPT Program Policies**

The University catalog can be accessed by clicking on the following link:

[westcoastuniversity.edu/admissions/catalog.html](http://westcoastuniversity.edu/admissions/catalog.html)

### **Classroom Attendance**

Class attendance, preparation, and participation are integral to a student's academic success. It is the student's responsibility to communicate with the instructor directly, in person or by email, prior to the scheduled class, if an absence from class, lecture, or laboratory session occurs. The percent of absences for the didactic and lab portion of courses is 10% and 0% for clinical experiences.

It is strongly recommended that students not miss class other than for illness or extenuating circumstances. Missed class time may require make-up work at the discretion of the course director regardless of percentage threshold of in-semester absences. Missed examinations will require same day documentation from a medical provider or a zero grade will be assigned to the student. Make-up examinations must occur within 5 business days upon returning to class; make-up examinations are subject to different methods of assessment and exam format.

### **Drug Screening / Background Check**

Many states require that individuals working in healthcare facilities consent to and be cleared through a criminal background investigation and/or a drug screening. This may also be a policy of a corporate entity or individual facility depending on the practice setting. Usually, State agencies conduct these investigations and oftentimes a list of problematic offenses is available. Many State professional licensing agencies require reporting of misdemeanor and felony charges.

All students in the WCU DPT program must undergo a criminal background check prior to admissions and may be required to undergo additional criminal background checks prior to clinical education experiences, depending on the individual facility policy. The criminal background check upon admission to the program will be at the student's expense. All follow-up background checks required by a clinical site will be paid for by WCU. More than one may be required depending on the individual facility's policies. Students should be aware that a history of criminal offenses will likely impact the ability of a student to participate in clinical education and/or obtain employment in the healthcare field. If a student is unable to complete clinical education courses, they will be dismissed from the program.

All students in the WCU DPT program are required to undergo drug screening prior to admissions and may be required to undergo additional drug screening prior to clinical education experiences, depending on individual facility policy. Drug screenings upon admission to the program will be at the student's expense. All follow up drug screenings required by a clinical site will be paid for by WCU. Should a student test positive for an illicit or illegal substance, the student would not be allowed to participate in clinical education and would be referred to the program director, DCE, and school administration for further action. Please see drug and alcohol policy in the University catalog for additional details.

Criminal background checks and drug screens are conducted per University policy.

## **Health Insurance**

DPT program students are responsible for all of their own healthcare costs during their education at WCU. DPT program students are required to carry and maintain personal health insurance during their entire tenure at WCU to include coverage in any State they have a clinical experience in. Students are required to submit a health insurance statement and sign a waiver assuming all financial responsibility for any illness or medical bills that occur while enrolled (see Appendix D) and are responsible for updating this information regularly.

I understand that it is my responsibility to maintain current continuous medical (including hospitalization and emergency care) coverage while enrolled at the University due to contractual agreements between the West Coast University and all clinical education sites. It is my responsibility to obtain and maintain coverage for all states where I am a student, and the states in which I will be practicing in during my clinical education experiences.

In consideration of my clinical education participation sponsored by the University, I hereby assume all responsibility involved with providing medical insurance coverage and indemnify, release, and hold harmless from all liability, the West Coast University, its directors, officers, representatives, volunteers, participants, employees, students and all other person acting in any capacity on their behalf.

I understand health care coverage is required so that I have access to necessary care should an incident occur on campus or in the clinical site that requires medical attention, as all healthcare costs are my responsibility. A copy of my health insurance card has been provided acknowledging my understanding and responsibilities regarding healthcare coverage.

## **Laboratory Policies and Procedures**

The DPT laboratory facilities provide an environment suitable to demonstrate, learn, and practice physical therapy examination, evaluation, and treatment procedures and techniques in a setting that simulates a clinical patient care setting. As such, it is expected that students will maintain the laboratory and display professional behaviors. In addition, the department will assure that all equipment, electrical or otherwise, are annually serviced, calibrated, and assured to be of safe working order for student instructional purposes. The DPT office maintains a record of all annual calibration and safety checks for all pertinent lab equipment.

## **Lab Participation Policy**

In general, personal healthcare practitioners are expected to be skilled and to give us the best care possible. Your patients and clients will expect the same of you. Take advantage of every opportunity to practice and develop the skills you will need to become a valuable healthcare professional.

It is both necessary and customary that physical therapy students participate as both a healthcare professional and as a subject or patient simulator. Common laboratory activities may include observation, and palpation (touching) of various parts of the body, exercise, application of various physical agents and manual techniques. It is anticipated that every student will work with all genders. Details of the clinical activities that you will be asked to participate in may be obtained from course instructors and course syllabi. It is the student's responsibility to become familiar with the clinical procedures and laboratory activities for each course and to resolve any concerns you may have about those procedures with your instructor. Any concerns regarding this should be discussed with the instructor, student advisor, director of student affairs, and/or program director. Prior to participation in lab activities, all students must sign and return the following forms found in the Appendix of this handbook.

## **Personal Health Requirements for Lab Participation**

All physical therapist students should maintain proper hygiene and good health habits, as well as good grooming and personal cleanliness.

Students must sign, date, and turn in to your course faculty instructor the Health Insurance Statement found in the **Appendix D**. Students with special personal health needs or Americans with Disabilities Act concerns should refer to the University Catalog and Student Handbook for more information.

## **Dress and Grooming Standards for Lab Participation**

Laboratory dress standards vary between courses and the student will be instructed accordingly in individual course syllabi. In general, clean, shorts, t-shirts, tank tops, sports bras, and tennis shoes are commonly required for lab sessions. The use of university approved logo apparel is expected. Dress should be modest; however, students must be able to expose areas for observation and palpation applicable to the specific laboratory experience.

Loose-fitting gym clothes with appropriate undergarments are required for all students. One set of laboratory attire should be available on campus at all times.



## General Lab Policies

WCU is dedicated to providing you with a clean, professional and safe laboratory experience. All faculty, staff and students must work together to maintain our laboratories. Students should review and comply with the following rules:

1. No food or drink is allowed in any lab at any time.
2. Maintain a professional attitude and conduct as expected in the clinic at all times.
3. Cell phones are not allowed to be turned on in labs or classrooms. Phones and non-academic use of laptops/tablets distract others and detract from learning. If you have an emergency or are expecting an important call, please notify the instructor.
4. Store your personal items in a safe place such as in a locker while in lab.
5. All waste materials must be promptly placed in an appropriate waste receptacle.
6. Abide by and maintain safety precautions at all times.
7. The laboratory will be open during all scheduled course laboratory periods.
8. Properly clean and store all equipment after each session.
9. Students will be allowed to use most modality or electrical equipment after review of correct use in class by a faculty member.
10. The laboratory will only be used for the study or practice of DPT procedures. Other activities in the laboratory such as meetings, general study, or unrelated classes must be approved by the program director.
11. DPT students are permitted to use all clinical skills labs outside of scheduled class times during normal campus operating hours.
12. It is the program's expectation that the lab will be maintained in a safe, clean, and orderly manner. Out of respect and as a professional responsibility to all who use the labs, everyone must:
  - Replace equipment in its proper location;
  - Fold and put away linens and pillows;
  - Put refuse in receptacles available;
  - Wipe down all mat surfaces, clean chairs and all equipment used during the session.

## Guests in WCU Laboratories

Outside guests can be a valuable resource to the learning experience in our lab classes, both as guest lecturers and as volunteer subjects. However, no guests are allowed without the specific consent and supervision of your instructor. Guests who are to participate in clinical activities must be referred to the program director or faculty member prior to participating. Additional information on the University's Visitors on Campus policy can be found in the Student University Handbook located on the WCU website.

## Use of Human Subjects and Informed Consent

Individuals who serve as demonstration or practice subjects for any component of the DPT program will acknowledge their voluntary participation after being briefed regarding the contraindications, risks, and benefits of the physical therapy procedure to be performed. Written informed consent will be obtained from any person, student, or patient volunteer who participates in a demonstration or practice session on the University campus. Informed consent will be obtained from patients/clients in the clinical setting appropriate to facility policy. All patients have the risk-free right to not participate in clinical education.

## Capstone Research

The DPT student will complete a Capstone experience to culminate the academic and clinical experiences. The Capstone project will be developed and produced by the DPT student, cooperatively in a small group (n = 3-5 students) with one faculty mentor; individual Capstone projects may be considered with approval of the faculty. The final Capstone product will result in a presentation, which will be displayed and presented at the annual DPT Research Day celebration in the final month of the DPT curriculum. The Research Day celebration will include the DPT faculty and may also include faculty from the Center for Graduate Studies as well as clinical partners from the community. Failure to present your Capstone project with your peers at Research Day may result in delayed graduation and/or disciplinary action.

Options for Capstone Research Projects:

- Evidence-Informed Case Development
- Scientific Inquiry involving faculty driven research
- Develop an Evidence-Informed Educational Program related to Physical Therapy (may be for the DPT student, clinicians, or the community)
- Develop an Evidence-Informed community service project
- Develop an Evidence-Informed Public Service/Education program

## Use of Chemicals and Lab Substances

Liquids and substances used in laboratory exercises must be used with caution, safely stored, and properly marked. Each chemical or substance in the lab has a Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS) on file at a location identified by your instructor. MSDS's provide specific information pertaining to each hazardous chemical. Students should familiarize themselves with the properties, precautions and risks of these substances.

Universal precaution standards are to be followed at all times, including the use of gloves when appropriate. \*Please comply with the following:

- Follow all directions for use of substances exactly as prescribed.
- Be aware of all precautions and contraindications for use before opening any container.
- Tightly close all containers immediately after use.
- Return substances to their properly labeled storage location after each use.
- Inform the instructor of supplies that need replenishing.

*Note: A small number of people develop an allergic reaction to latex gloves. You may read about latex sensitivity in the MSDS file in the lab. If you suspect latex sensitivity, inform your instructor.*

## Licensure

It is the goal of the DPT program to assist students in every way to help prepare them to practice as physical therapists. Licensure is not required for student clinical education experiences. However, licensure of physical therapists is required by every U.S. jurisdiction following graduation. Complete information on practice acts and regulations may be obtained from the individual State licensing boards. Candidates should contact the licensing organization in the State of choice to determine work requirements. Graduates of the DPT program will be encouraged to take State and nationally recognized licensing examinations as soon after graduation as possible. Further information regarding the national physical therapy examination (NPTE) can be obtained at [www.fsbpt.com](http://www.fsbpt.com).

Practice licensure exams are required for third year students in May and August as is a licensure exam preparation course. These are mandatory in-person activities so students should plan their travel and housing accommodations accordingly.

### **Providing Safe Patient Care**

Students are to notify the Program Director/Dean or Director of Clinical Education immediately if there is a change to their health status that requires any special attention or medications. At no time is a student to be providing direct patient care while under the influence of any medications, legal or illegal, that can impair the student's ability to provide safe and effective patient care. At times with various health conditions, a student may be need to take medications that impair their ability to think clearly, impact fine motor coordination or dexterity, or cause other symptoms that may interfere with a student's reasoning or ability to perform with appropriate judgment and safety; medical clearance may be required to return to school.

### **Student Pregnancy Policy**

Students are strongly encouraged to carefully evaluate the strenuous physical and mental demands and the strict attendance requirements of the physical therapy program when considering pregnancy. Although the program adheres strictly to OSHA and CDC guidelines for patient care, the student must consult their physician regarding their possible exposure to physical and chemical agents while attending the program.

Students must obtain, in writing, their physician's comments and recommendations for the continuation in the program. The document must address whether the student may participate fully in all the scheduled learning activities for each semester.

Following delivery, students must again obtain and submit to the Program Director/Dean a physician's written orders that the student may return to the program to fully participate in all learning activities.

### **Mandated Reporting**

Physical therapists play an important role in the identification of suspected abuse and neglect. In some states including California, physical therapists have an obligation to report it to the authorities. Mandatory reporting requires that physical therapists be cognizant of the reporting regulations in the state(s) in which they practice and the mechanisms available for reporting suspected abuse in those states.

There are four basic types of abuse: physical, sexual, emotional, or neglect. Physical Therapists, as Mandated Reporters, are required to:

- Recognize signs and symptoms of abuse/neglect.
- Ask direct, non-judgmental questions with compassion.
- Document all findings.
- Assess patient safety.

- Review, refer, and report to appropriate authorities.
- All students are required to report any suspicion of abuse and/or neglect to their clinical faculty. Faculty or clinical instructors will take the appropriate steps to refer or report to the appropriate authorities.

### **Professional Organization Membership**

All DPT students are required to become members of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). The APTA is the national organization dedicated to serving the physical therapy profession. By becoming a member, students gain access to a large number of benefits and professional opportunities. One significant benefit is access to the *Physical Therapy Journal* (which will be needed for many course assignments) and online access to research resources with many full text articles which may not be available through the University databases. The student will gain automatic membership in the Student Assembly which functions as a forum for future Physical Therapists and Physical Therapist Assistants. The National Student Conclave also provides the student with access to the latest trends and issues in the profession. Membership applications and information will be given to each student at the beginning of the DPT program. Information may also be found at [www.APTA.org](http://www.APTA.org).

Students are also encouraged to become active in the California State Chapter of the APTA. The chapter typically sponsors conferences and offers other opportunities for professional service, networking, skill development, and promotion of the profession. This is a very useful way for students to become more acquainted with the physical therapy profession; visit [www.ccapta.org](http://www.ccapta.org).

## DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM CURRICULUM

TRIMESTER	TERM	COURSE CODE	CR	COURSE TITLE	COURSE TYPE
1	1	PT 700	2	Physical Therapy Professionalism	Lecture
	1	PT 701	4	Foundation Sciences: Human Anatomy	Lecture/Lab
	1	PT 704	4	Clinical Skills I: Foundations of Physical Therapy Practice	Lecture/Lab
	1	PT 731	4	Foundation Sciences: Physiology/Histology	Lecture
	1	PT 720	2	Foundation Sciences: Applied Biomechanics	Lecture/Lab
2	2	PT 714	3	Clinical Skills II: Physical Therapy Examination	Lecture/Lab
	2	PT 716	3	Critical Inquiry: Research Methods and Biostatistics	Lecture
	2	PT 706	3	Ethicolegal Issues in Healthcare and IPE Collaboration	Lecture
	2	PT 726	4	Foundational Sciences: Kinesiology/Pathomechanics	Lecture/Lab
	2	PT 751	3	Foundation Sciences: Pathophysiology	Lecture
3	3	PT 724	4	Clinical Skills III: Therapeutic Exercise and Physical Agents	Lecture/Lab
	3	PT 725	2	Evidence-Based Practice I	Lecture
	3	PT 707	5	Musculoskeletal Physical Therapy I	Lecture/Lab
	3	PT 708	3	Cardiopulmonary and Vascular Physical Therapy	Lecture/Lab
	3	PT 713	3	Foundation Sciences: Neuroscience I	Lecture
4	4	PT 743	3	Foundation Sciences: Neuroscience II	Lecture
	4	PT 717	5	Musculoskeletal Physical Therapy II	Lecture/Lab
	4	PT 712	5	Neuromuscular Physical Therapy I	Lecture/Lab
	4	PT 732	3	Pharmacotherapy	Lecture
5	5	PT 734	3	Clinical Skills IV: Physical Therapy Evaluation I: Focused Guidance	Lecture
	5	PT 722	5	Neuromuscular Physical Therapy II	Lecture/Lab
	5	PT 728	2	Evidence-based Concepts of Musculoskeletal Imaging	Lecture
	5	PT 719	5	Physical Therapy Experience	Clinical
6	6	PT 730	2	Introduction to Management, Advocacy and Health Promotion	Lecture
	6	PT 735	2	Evidence-Based Practice II	Lecture
	6	PT 740	2	Prosthetics and Orthotics	Lecture
	6	PT 744	3	Clinical Skills V: Physical Therapy Evaluation II: Independent Evaluation	Lecture/Lab
	6	PT 710	2	The Socio-Cultural Aspects of Human Interaction	Lecture
	6	PT 780	2	Elective	Lecture/Lab
7	7	PT 729	13	Clinical Internship I	Clinical
8	8	PT 739	13	Clinical Internship II	Clinical
9	9	PT 749	13	Clinical Internship III	Clinical
	9	PT 723	1	Interprofessional Healthcare	Lecture

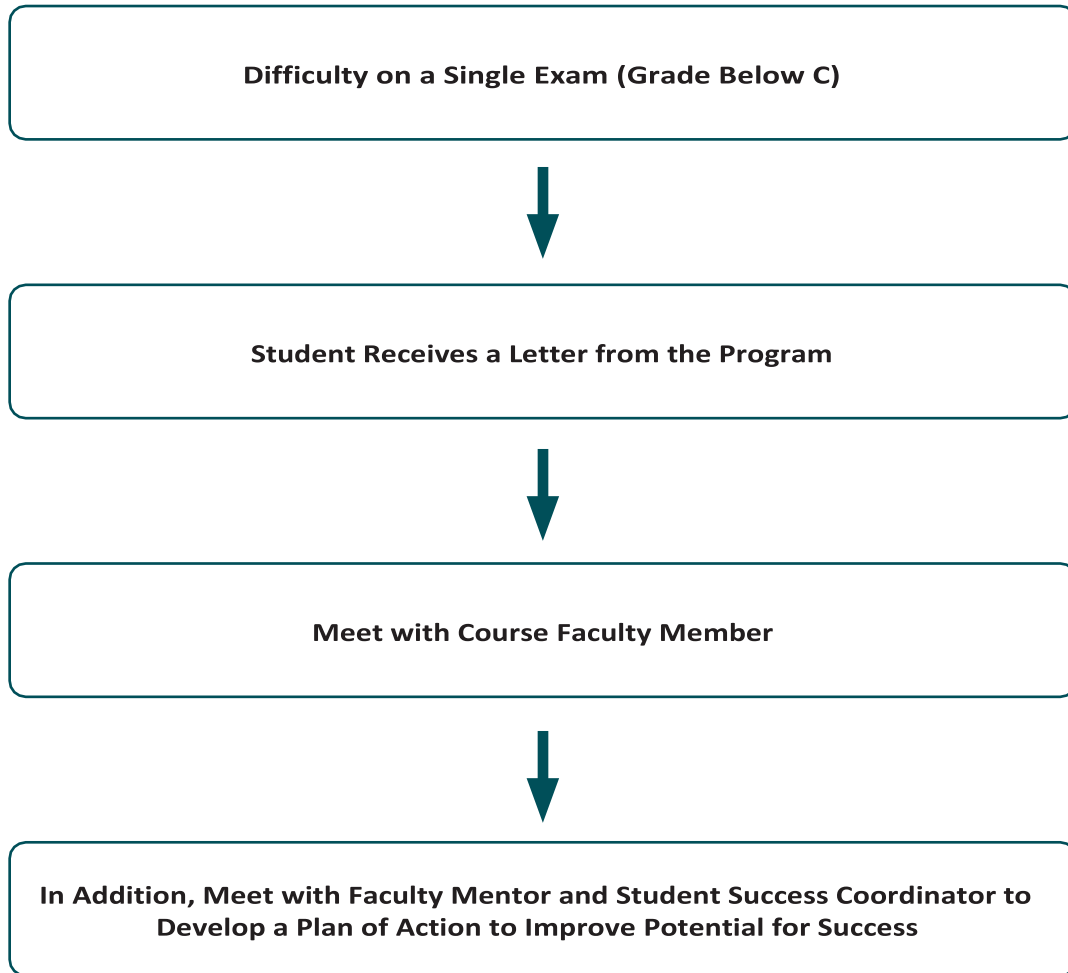
## Appendices

<b>Appendix A</b>	Academic Action Flow Charts
<b>Appendix B</b>	Catalog and Handbook Acknowledgement
<b>Appendix C</b>	Student Informed Consent
<b>Appendix D</b>	Health Insurance Statement
<b>Appendix E</b>	Consent for Release of Information
<b>Appendix F</b>	Multimedia Consent/Release Form
<b>Appendix G</b>	Guest Participant Informed Consent
<b>Appendix H</b>	Authorization for Electronic Use of Signature

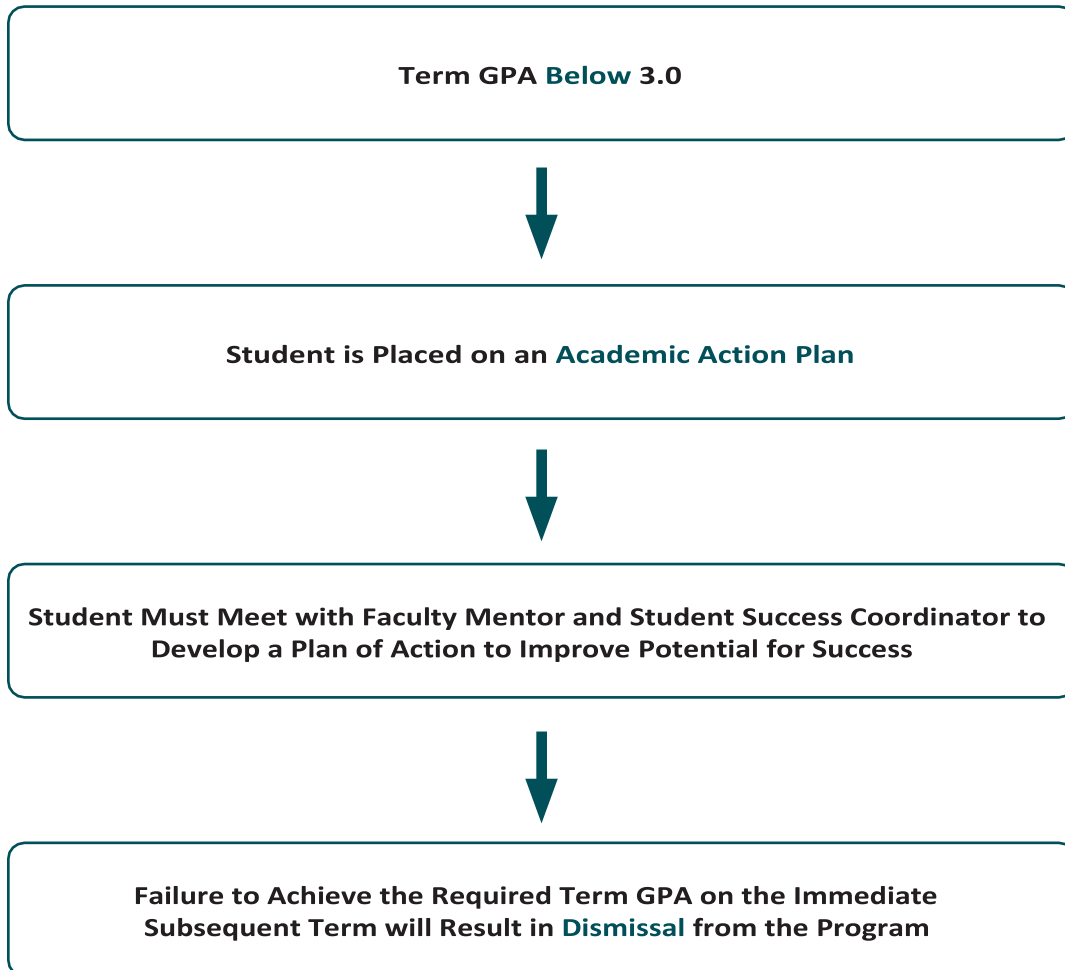


## **APPENDIX A:**

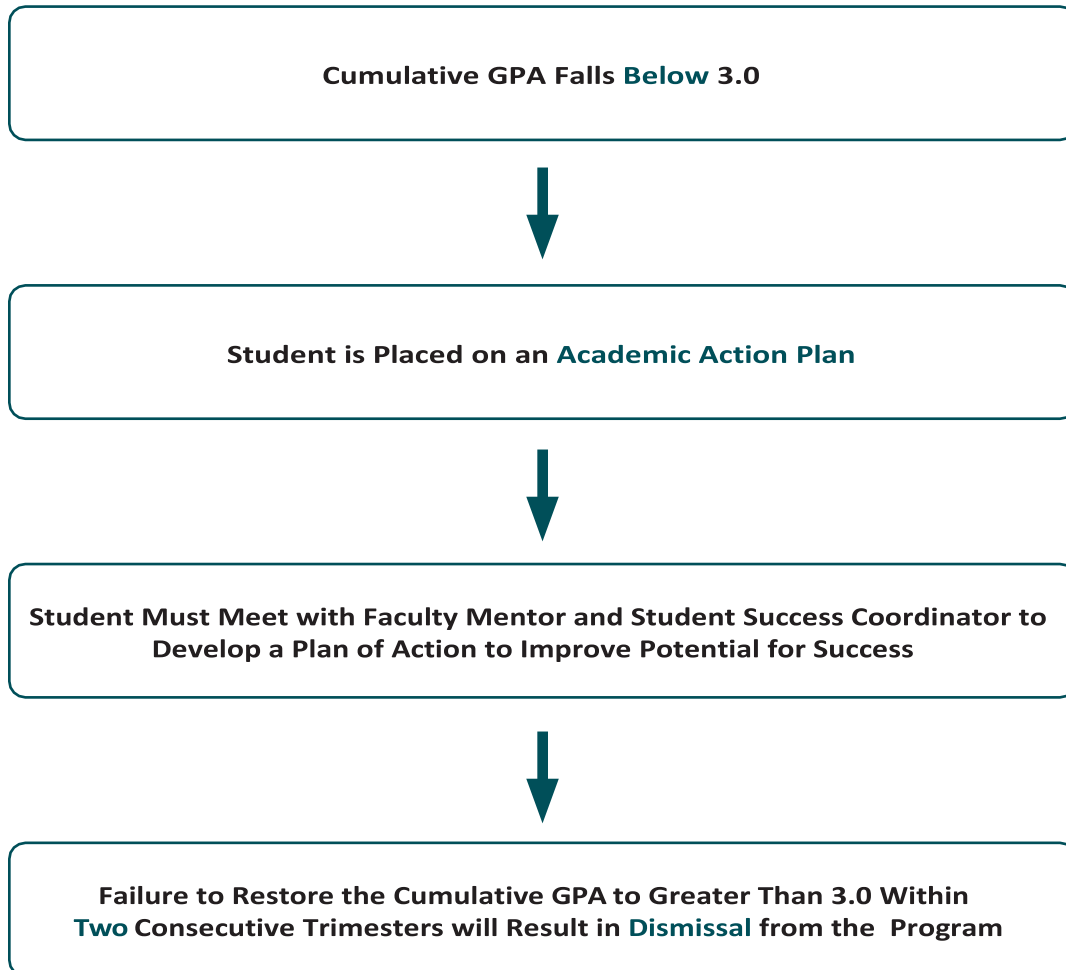
### **Academic Action Flow Charts Exams And Assessments**



### **Term Grade Point Average (GPA)**



## **Cumulative (GPA)**



## **Course Or Clinical Education Experience**

**Failure of a Course or Clinical Education Experience**



**Student is Dismissed from the Program**



**Student May Appeal for Continuation in the Program**

# APPENDIX B

## DPT Program

### Catalog and Handbook Acknowledgement

By signing below, I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree that I have received, read, and understand all information contained in the West Coast University Catalog, the West Coast University Student Handbook, the DPT Student Handbook and the Clinical Education Manual. I also agree that I will adhere to and abide by the policies and regulations contained therein, which include, but are not limited to, the Academic Honor Code. I am aware of the consequences of violations of specific policies and standards, including plagiarism and dishonesty.

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

Student Printed Name \_\_\_\_\_ Year Admitted \_\_\_\_\_

University Representative: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX C

## DPT Program

### Student Informed Consent Form

Initial next to each line to indicate your understanding and acceptance of these terms:

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that laboratory sessions are a required element in my education at WCU and that this informed consent form applies to my participation in all laboratory sessions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the instructor if I have medical concerns that may interfere with my participation in any laboratory exercise, and that it is my responsibility to consult with my physician if there are questions pertaining to my full participation in laboratory sessions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I acknowledge that I am participating voluntarily, and that it is my responsibility to learn of indications, contraindications and precautions in advance of allowing any clinical technique or procedure to be performed on me.

\_\_\_\_\_ To the best of my knowledge, I am safe to perform the assigned procedures and have the procedures performed on me by fellow students and instructors. I confirm that I have disclosed all pertinent information to West Coast University and can safely participate in the laboratory sessions.

\_\_\_\_\_ I release my fellow students, instructors, WCU and its representatives and employees from all claims and liability arising out of, or relating in any way to, my participation in laboratory sessions, whether I may be acting as student, subject, clinician, or otherwise.

\_\_\_\_\_ I also understand that WCU instructors will help me understand the indications, contraindications, precautions, and techniques of all procedures in which I will be asked to participate, either as clinician or subject.

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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



# APPENDIX D

## DPT Program

### Health Insurance Statement

The practice of physical therapy may have certain occupational risks. Students are required to carry their own health insurance and sign a waiver assuming all financial responsibility for medical expenses incurred while enrolled in WCU DPT Program.

Please read the following information and initial next to each line to indicate your understanding and acceptance of these terms:

\_\_\_\_\_ I have read the health insurance statement above. I am presently insured and will maintain coverage for all stated where I am a student, and the states in which I will be practicing in during my clinical education experiences.

\_\_\_\_\_ I declare to the best of my knowledge that I do not have and/or have not been exposed to any serious communicable diseases.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that I assume all liability for any injury caused while performing laboratory or technical skills.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that the performance of these procedures is required in order to graduate from this program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I understand that any information discussed with the Program Director/Dean may be discussed with appropriate personnel including other faculty and administrators on an as needed basis.

Student Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

Name of Health Insurance Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

Health Insurance Policy #: \_\_\_\_\_

University Representative Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

# APPENDIX E

## DPT Program

### Consent for Release of Information

As a student/graduate of WCU, there will be occasions when WCU is requested to provide information concerning your academic and clinical education performance to third parties, including, but not limited to employers, licensing boards, or personnel from clinical facilities. Additionally, I allow for WCU to release my health, medical, background check, and drug screening information to clinical facilities where I may participate in my clinical experiences upon their request.

The purpose of this form is to provide consent for the release of all such information.

Please initial below which information may be released and to whom:

\_\_\_\_\_ Health, medical, background check, and drug screening information Grades

\_\_\_\_\_ Class participation

\_\_\_\_\_ Clinical education performance information

\_\_\_\_\_ Current and/or permanent address to prospective employers

\_\_\_\_\_ All of the above

\_\_\_\_\_ Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Do not release any information about me

Student/Graduate Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

# APPENDIX F

## DPT Program

### Multimedia Consent/Release Form

I do hereby consent to be photographed and/or videotaped, and have my voice and image recorded or otherwise by students, staff, or faculty of WCU.

I understand that these recordings will be utilized for educational purposes only and as such will not be made available for public viewing.

This authorization extends from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ (Indefinitely, if not otherwise)

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

# APPENDIX G

## DPT Program

### Guest Participant Informed Consent Form

I willingly volunteer to participate as a clinical subject in one or more class or laboratory sessions at WCU and agree to the following:

I may be asked questions pertaining to the details of my health and healthcare.

I may be asked to expose an area of my body for inspection by students and faculty but may expect my dignity and modesty to be protected.

I may refuse to participate in any way I feel necessary.

I understand that this is a student educational laboratory and that the quality of care I receive may be less than that received from a graduate professional.

I waive any claims against WCU, its representatives, employees, and students arising from my participation, excluding such claims as may be the result of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

I understand that I will not be compensated for my participation.

Name (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

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

# APPENDIX H

## DPT Program Authorization for Electronic Use of Signature

### Notice Regarding E-Mail Communications

In order for WCU to operate as a distance learning institution, the use of electronic communication is an integral part of our design and structure. To that end, we have developed an e-mail network and avenues for inquiries and responses through this e-mail network. It is our intention to provide you with excellent service, and for our communications and responses to you to be expeditious while adhering to legal requirements. In order for that to be possible, we need your acknowledgment of your e-mail address, i.e., electronic mail signature (digital signature), as a valid and binding signature on your part for the transmission of electronic communication by you. It is particularly important that you understand the necessary confidentiality of your e-mail login and password. Share it with NO ONE. Should you suspect or become aware of another person gaining access to your e-mail password or login ID, change it, and notify us of your new e-mail signature immediately. Please be advised that WCU assumes no liability for the event or the consequences of another party gaining access to your e-mail account, and electronically “impersonating” you.

Should you choose not to return this form, we will not be able to respond to requests for information, or updates to information that are received via e-mail. Regardless of the effects upon you caused by delays or other unforeseen consequences, WCU assumes no liability, and will not respond to e-mail requests or updates without your signed “Authorization for Use of Electronic Signature” on file. WCU assumes no liability for late or misdirected mail.

I hereby authorize WCU to accept all correspondence transmitted by me via electronic mail from the e-mail address submitted herein, as a valid electronic message from me and I agree that until my e-mail address is changed, all communications sent from this address shall be upon my signature, acceptable as a replacement for my written signature, including but not limited to financial transactions. I understand that I am responsible to notify the WCU in the event that my valid digital signature changes, by mailing an updated signed “Authorization for Use of Electronic Signature” form to WCU.

I understand that I am not guaranteed confidentiality of information that is transmitted electronically (by e-mail or by FAX), by WCU, others, or myself. In the event that I request, either by valid electronic signature or in writing, that confidential information be transmitted, I release WCU from all liability related to the release of the requested confidential information. WCU will do its utmost to insure total confidentiality of all communication between you and the university.

By signing below, I release WCU from any liability for consequences pertaining to this request.

<hr/>			<hr/>	
Last	First	Middle	Program	Class
<hr/>			<hr/>	
Street address/PO Box			Primary E-mail address	
<hr/>			<hr/>	
City	State	Zip	Secondary E-mail address	
<hr/>			<hr/>	
Date of Birth (MO/DAY/YR)			Signature	Date

*By signing this Authorization for Use of Electronic Signature, all other previous submissions of this form received by WCU become invalid.*