

Mercer County Community College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program



PTA Learner Handbook

Class of 2019

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Mercer County Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Congratulations, and welcome to the Mercer County Community College (MCCC) physical therapist assistant (PTA) program. We are excited about your being here and look forward to a professionally rewarding experience for us all as you prepare to enter the field of physical therapy. This handbook had been developed to answer your questions making your progress within the PTA program a more informed one. This booklet contains valuable information for you to refer to as you progress within the PTA program curriculum. It is recommended that you keep it in a secure place, for frequent reference.

The PTA program faculty members maintain an open-door policy for learners to meet with us. Our office hours are posted on each of our office doors. Please feel free to stop in to share your thoughts, discuss your concerns or just to get acquainted.

Welcome!

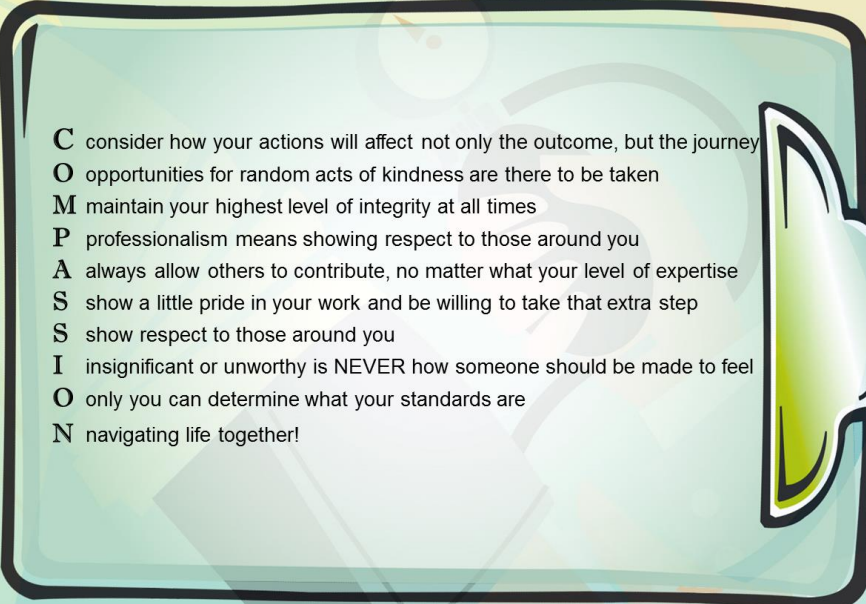
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Compassion



C consider how your actions will affect not only the outcome, but the journey
O opportunities for random acts of kindness are there to be taken
M maintain your highest level of integrity at all times
P professionalism means showing respect to those around you
A always allow others to contribute, no matter what your level of expertise
S show a little pride in your work and be willing to take that extra step
S show respect to those around you
I insignificant or unworthy is NEVER how someone should be made to feel
O only you can determine what your standards are
N navigating life together!



Mercer County Community College PTA Program

The role of the physical therapist assistant is one of a team player within the field of physical therapy and one who collaborates with the physical therapist placing the care of the patient first.

This relationship is marked by compassion, integrity, professionalism, honesty and caring.

The faculty members of the PTA program pledge to demonstrate this model in all their interactions with each other, adjunct faculty members, administration, prospective PTA learners, and all learners along life's path.

Mercer County Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Learner Handbook

Topic Area	Page
Academic Integrity Policy Statement	16
Academic Requirements	7
Accreditation	5
ADA Information	5
Attendance for PTA Program Courses	17
Capstone Exams	35
Clinical Education Course Grading	8
Communication Expectations & Skills	8
Compassion	3
Competency Testing	24
Computer Skill Expectations	38
Confidentiality Expectations	18
Contact Information Page	39
Courses Completed at other Colleges	10
Courses required in the PTA Program	9
Equal Opportunity & Americans with Disabilities Information	5
Expectations for Lab Sessions	34
Goals & Objectives for the PTA Program, Program Outcomes	6
Index	40
Informed Consent: Receiving Interventions & Contraindications	22
Lab Safety & Open Lab time	49
Learner Introductions	37
Leave of Absence	15
Legal Requirements for Licensure as a PTA	7
M-Alert & MercerMail	12
MCCC Academic Integrity Policy Statement	16
MCCC Health Profession Programs Suspension/Expulsion Policy	34
MCCC Policy for Learner Conduct	9
Methods of Instruction	10
Practical Examination Policies	28
Practical Examination Re-Take Policy & Procedure	30
Pregnancy & Parenting	21
PTA Program Academic Regulations	14
PTA Program Course Descriptions	13
PTA Program Mission Statement	5
Re-Entry Into the Professional Phase of the PTA Program	32
Repeating a PTA Professional Phase Course	33
Returning to the Professional Phase following a Withdrawal from the 1 st Summer	33
Safety During On-campus and Off-campus Educational Experiences	21
Learner Expenses	18
Suspected Learner Substance Abuse Policy	11
Testing	11
Transfer Credit	16
Volunteer Opportunities for PTA Learners	38

PTAP Mission Statement

The physical therapist assistant program (PTAP) housed in the Division of Health Professions of Mercer County Community College (MCCC), believes in and supports the MCCC mission and goals by striving to prepare the most highly qualified physical therapist assistants (PTAs) possible to meet the needs of the physical therapy profession and the community. The PTA faculty members recognize and understand the important role of the PTA within the practice of physical therapy and serve as advocates for PTAs and MCCC learners seeking to join the profession.

Consistent with the MCCC Mission & Goals, the PTAP faculty members are committed to the establishment and promotion of a professional learning environment that will foster equal access, academic excellence, the capacity for lifelong learning, and the development of self-reliant, competent health care professionals. Curriculum content and instructional methodologies for didactic, laboratory and clinical activities have been carefully selected and integrated to fulfill the needs of the community and to meet or exceed the standards established by the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) for PTA educational programs.

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Accreditation

The college's physical therapist assistant program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) of the American Physical Therapy Association, 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-9911, (800)-999-2782. www.capteonline.org

Mercer County Community College is accredited by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.

Equal Employment Policy

Mercer County Community College is committed to a policy of equal opportunity and non-discrimination against individuals on the basis of personal beliefs or characteristics such as political views, religion, national or ethnic origin, race, color, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, veteran status or disability unrelated to job or program requirements. Questions regarding the equal opportunity policy and compliance statement may be directed to the Equal Opportunity Officer or ADA Compliance Officer, West Windsor Campus, (609) 570-3601 or 3615.

Americans with Disabilities Act

On July 26, 1990, the President of the United States signed the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The ADA is intended to remove barriers against the more than 43 million people with disabilities in the United States. If a learner has a documented learning disability, psychological disability, physical disability, or other hidden disability that requires an accommodation, it is the responsibility of that individual to make an appointment to meet with the Course Instructor to provide written documentation for the accommodation. This meeting must occur **prior to** the due date for any course examinations or assignments to discuss what accommodations might be necessary. Any learner in this class who has special needs because of a disability is entitled to receive accommodations.

Mercer County Community College is committed to ensuring the full participation of all learners in all activities, programs and services. If you have a documented differing ability or think that you may have a differing ability that is protected under the ADA and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, please contact Arlene Stinson in LB 216 stinsona@mccc.edu for information regarding support services. If you do not have a documented differing ability, remember that other resources are available to all learners on campus including academic support through our Academic Learning Center located in LB 214.

The Goals of the PTA Program at MCCC are:

- to provide a community based education program for the physical therapist assistant (PTA);
- to provide well rounded health care education within the academic preparation to become a PTA, familiarizing the learner with healthy lifestyle alternatives and service oriented values;
- to offer a PTA educational program to all learners who are capable of benefiting from and contributing to the profession of physical therapy by successfully passing the licensure examination;
- to prepare and graduate clinicians who will seek employment in legal, ethical and safe physical therapy delivery settings;
- to graduate knowledgeable clinicians who will enhance the delivery of physical therapy services by effectively performing treatment techniques and patient education activities as delegated by the physical therapist, and
- to graduate clinicians who will enhance the quality of physical therapy care provided by practicing effective communication and documentation skills, and providing appropriate psycho-social support for patients and their families.

Program Outcomes

1. The minimum ultimate NPTE pass rate will be 90% and will be based upon data from the two most recent graduating classes.
2. Matriculated learners will maintain a 70% graduation rate within six semesters.
3. 70% of graduates from the program will be employed as PTAs within 6 months of passing the NPTE for Physical Therapist Assistants.

Revised June 2014

Reviewed & Revised May 2011

Reviewed: May 25, 2010, Revision: May 2011, Reviewed 1/13, Reviewed 3/14, Reviewed 3/15, Reviewed 4/16, Reviewed 4/11, Reviewed 4/18

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR LICENSURE

The Physical Therapist Licensing Act of 1983 of the State of New Jersey State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners (NJSA 45:9-37.11 Chapter 39 A 2.1) and Regulations (NJSA 45:9-37.11. 13:39A 5.2) govern the legal practice of physical therapy in the state. It is important that applicants who plan to study physical therapy know that licensure requirements include the following:

“A licensed physical therapist assistant may initiate physical therapy treatment only at the direction of and under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist.”

And must:

- “1. Be at least 18 years of age;
2. Be of good moral character;
3. Have completed at least an Associate in Arts degree from an accredited college or university
4. Have completed a two-year physical therapist assistant program from an accredited college or university approved for the education and training of physical therapist assistants by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council on Post- Secondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education:
5. Have completed all clinical education requirements necessary for graduation from a physical therapist assistant program from an accredited college or university from an accredited college or university approved for the education and training of physical therapist assistants by an accrediting agency recognized by the Council on Post- Secondary Accreditation and the United States Department of Education and:
6. Have successfully completed the written examination as set forth in N.J.A.C. 13:39A-5.3.”

A criminal background check is now required for all new licensees. The New Jersey State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners has the authority to deny licensure if the applicant has a criminal record.

The NJ State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners makes determinations on an individual case basis at the time of application for licensure. Applicants should consider their current lifestyle and personal history before embarking on this course of study to ensure that, even though successful in completing the PTA program, they may be ineligible for licensure. Questions and concerns regarding these laws may be discussed in confidence with the **PTA Program Coordinator**. Applicants may, if they prefer, discuss their situation with the **Coordinator** who may be reached by emailing behrensb@mccc.edu.

ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS/INFORMATION

Policy: Course Grading

One of the goals of the MCCC physical therapist assistant (PTA) program is to prepare learners to practice as PTAs. In New Jersey, as in many other states, PTAs are required to be licensed. Licensure may be applied for in NJ following the successful completion of a standardized licensing exam administered by the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) which is referred to as the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE) for PTAs. In recognition of the standard, set by a board that is external to MCCC, the PTA program has adopted 77 which represents a grade of C+, as the minimal passing grade. Other grade ranges are as follows:

A = 93-100	B = 83-86	C = 70-76
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-82	D = 60-69
B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	F = 0-59

Grades below 77 are not considered passing grades for PTA program courses, and are therefore considered unacceptable. **All PTA program courses, those with a PTA prefix must be completed with a grade of “C+” or higher and they** may be attempted only twice.

Consistent with PTAP policies that state that a learner must be deemed competent and safe to proceed with clinical education courses, successful completion of all PTAP courses requires that learners separately pass both the psychomotor and cognitive portions of all courses that have laboratory components (PTA 107, PTA 201, PTA 210, PTA 211, PTA 213 and PTA 216). This will ensure that learners are adequately prepared to progress through the professional phase of the PTA program and maintain the safety of classmates, patients and faculty.

Psychomotor components for courses include the following graded activities:

- SOAP note assignments
- Competency Tests
- Practical Examinations

Cognitive components for courses include the following graded activities:

- Written exams
- Quizzes
- Paper Assignments
- Presentations
- All written paperwork or homework assignments

If someone has not earned a minimum grade of 77 for both the Psychomotor **AND** Cognitive portions of a lab course *separately*, then he or she will not be able to proceed to the next course in the Professional Phase of the PTA program.

Clinical Education Course Grading:

Clinical education courses **are graded by PTA program faculty members.**

Communication Expectations and Skills

1. As potential members of the profession of physical therapy, learners are expected to:
 - demonstrate behaviors that reflect respect for each other
 - conduct themselves in a manner that invites communication with others
 - **Refrain from texting and cell phone use during classroom labs or lectures** unless it is part of the class activity that is taking place (e.g. “Kahoot.it” or another interactive tool that utilizes smart phone technology)
2. Physical therapist assistants are expected to work under the direct supervision of a licensed physical therapist and are responsible for communicating effectively with the physical therapist to assure that the safety and well-being of their patients is maintained.
3. All communication within PTA program courses is prefaced with the expectation that it will be **constructive and professional.**
 - Email is a form of communication and therefore requires professionalism.
 - Email needs to be constructed the same way that a letter would be constructed. It needs a "salutation", a body, and a signature. Email also needs to have a subject line. The body of the email must use complete sentences. (<http://www.buzzle.com/articles/email-etiquette-at-work.html>)
 - Example:

Subject: Feedback on lab use today

To: Course Instructors

Good Afternoon,

I would like to express my thanks for the extra time that you provided in between classes today so that we could use the lab. My classmates and I were surprised that we were able to use the lab and we really accomplished more than we thought we would and now we understand much more.

Thank you!

Count Scapula

SPTA Class of 2013

Learner Conduct

The Physical Therapist Assistant program, as an academic program and a part of Mercer County Community College has adopted and expects all PTA program learners to abide by Mercer County Community College's Student Conduct Code. OMB 501B

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE (MCCC OMB 501B)

Reason for Policy

To maintain a campus environment that is conducive to learning, protects the College's educational purposes, maintains reasonable order on campus, and protects the rights of all members of the college community.

Courses Required in the Program

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program curriculum will follow the program for the Associate in Applied Science Degree (AAS).

1. All learners are responsible for ensuring that all graduation requirements have been met including appropriate courses. Graduation requirements can be found in the college catalog. Learners are encouraged to consult with their academic advisors regarding acceptable Humanities electives.
 - Should there be any question regarding acceptability of coursework, the learner shall consult with the PTA Program Coordinator.
 - ***By the time of registration for PTA 235 and PTA 237, all required courses should be on the transcript or final semester schedule. It is the learner's responsibility to follow up on his or her transcripts on file at Mercer.***
 - Learners can access their transcripts by going to www.mccc.edu/mymercer
 - At the prompt for a LOGIN type "student" followed by your USERNAME which is your *first name.last name*.
 - Then enter your PASSWORD (*your birthdate, entered as mmddyy*).
 - If you need help, visit www.mccc.edu/mymercerhelp
 - This "MyMercer" online portal page is accessible 24/7.

Please note that: Although PTA program learners walk through the Commencement ceremony in May, graduation does not officially take place until August.

Class of 2019 PTA Program Degree Requirements

Pre-Professional Phase Courses

Continuation of the Professional Phase

Fall II Professional Phase (14 weeks)

ENG 101	English Composition I	(3/0)	3	PTA 201	Therapeutic Exercise	(1/2)	2
ENG 102	English Composition II	(3/0)	3	PTA 210	PTA Techniques [#]	(3/2)	4
PSY 101	Intro to Psychology	(3/0)	3	PTA 211	Physical Agents [#]	(3/3)	4
MAT *	Mathematics Elective	(3/0)	3	PTA 224	Clin Ed I 40 hpw x 4 wks	160hrs	3
BIO 103	Anatomy & Physiology I	(3/3)	4	PTA 227	PTA Seminar I [#]	(2/0)	3
BIO 104	Anatomy & Physiology II	(3/3)	4	Spring II Professional Phase (14 weeks)			
HPE 110	Concepts of Health & Fitness**	(1/2)	2	PTA 205	Motor Development	(1/0)	1
&&& &&&	Gen. Ed. Elective &	(3/0)	3	PTA 213	Therapy Clinic [#]	(3/3)	3
				PTA 216	Ortho for PTA	(1/2)	2
PTA 101	Introduction to PTA	(1/0)	1	PTA 235	Clin Ed II 40 hpw x 5 wks	200hrs	4
PTA 112	PTA Pathology	(3/0)	3	PTA 237	Professional Development [#]	(3/0)	3

Start of the Professional Phase

Completion of the Professional Phase

Summer I Professional Phase (8 Weeks)

Summer II Professional Phase (8 weeks)

PTA 105	Kinesiology	(3/0)	3	PTA 240	Clin Ed III 40 hpw x 6 wks	240hrs	5
PTA 107	Therapeutic Measurement	(1/2)	2				

NOTES

* MAT 115 Algebra & Trig I or MAT 140 Applied College Algebra or MAT 125 Elementary Stats or a higher-level MAT course

** HPE 111 Living with Health or HPE 110 Concepts of Health & Fitness or CSW 100 College Success & Wellness

Certifications: First Aid and CPR for the Health Care Professional

Learners are required to hold and maintain current certification in both First Aid and CPR throughout the Clinical Education component of the PTA program curriculum. Learners must present evidence of current certification in both areas prior to the start of Fall Semester II. (Detailed instructions are contained within the PTA Clinical Education Handbook for Learners regarding these certifications.)

Courses Completed at Other Colleges

If any applicable science, mathematics or general education courses were completed at another accredited academic institution that one would like to have considered for transfer credit, it is **the learner's responsibility** to make sure that official transcripts have arrived at the registrar's office. To verify that the transcripts have arrived, unofficial transcripts can be viewed on the "MyMercer" page of Mercer's website which can be accessed at www.mccc.edu and scrolling to the



logo.

Methods of Instruction (each of the following methods are employed for PTA program courses)

- Classroom Lectures:** presentation of material that represents a compilation of new information, clarified information, and discussion topics. Classroom methods of instruction include PowerPoint presentations, large and small class discussions, case study explorations, invited specialty guest speakers, various interactive learning activities, non-graded classroom assessment techniques, the use of worksheets, videos, inter-professional collaborative learning experiences, learner presentations, classroom debates and Blackboard discussion board postings/responses, quizzes, exams, presentations, learner centered lessons with formative and summative assessment activities.
- Lab Activities:** presentation and practice of hands-on techniques that will be utilized with patients in the clinical **setting but practiced first with classmates.** Selected elements of lab skills are tested and must be passed through

competency testing. The totality of patient care skills culminates in practical exams which must be passed before a learner can progress within the professional phase of the PTA program.

3. **Clinical Affiliations:** each learner will have the opportunity to work with a clinical instructor in a variety of clinical settings after passing all competency tests and practical exams. The clinical education courses provide patient experience in the clinical sites to foster further skill development as a PTA learner under the direct supervision of a licensed PT or PTA under the supervision of a PT.
4. Preparation for all methods of instruction will be reviewed by the course instructor and/or clinical instructor at the orientation that takes place during the first class-meeting. All learners are expected to arrive to class, lab and clinical *with evidence of prior preparation*.
5. Faculty members are authorized to deny any learner the privilege of participation in clinical affiliations, competency tests, lab activities or classroom lectures if the learner:
 - a) is unprepared, *(which could potentially present a safety risk to others)*
 - b) presents a health hazard to clients or fellow classmates, or
 - c) when the learner's performance falls below a competent level with regard to safety, or
 - d) when the learner does not meet agency or facility health standards

PLEASE NOTE:

If a learner has been denied participation due to any of the above reasons, participation in the experience will be discontinued until:

1. there is evidence that the learner **is prepared** for classroom lectures, psychomotor tests, lab or clinical activities
2. there is evidence that the learner **no longer presents a health hazard** to fellow classmates, faculty or patients
 - a. **If documentation is required from the learner's health care provider to be able to return to full activity due to a medical reason, all expenses are the learner's responsibility.**
3. there is evidence that the learner's progress meets ***minimal criteria for safe clinical performance***
 - a. The Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE) in conjunction with the Clinical Instructor (CI) and learner, will create an action plan to foster performance improvement for those learners who are not meeting clinical objectives

Testing:

The MCCC Academic Testing Center ***may be used for written exams***. Use of the Testing Center means that testing for classes will take place outside of class time rather than during regularly scheduled class time. If an exam has been scheduled for administration in the Testing Center, there may be several possible days when the exam will be available to learners and this information will be made available to learners in advance of the first date of availability. It is NOT advisable that anyone should schedule to take his or her exam during the last possible hour that any exam is available.

- a. The Academic Testing Center is located in **LB 208** and learners will need to present a valid college ID to gain access to the Testing Center. If a learner has documented special needs, it is the responsibility of the learner to speak with the Course Instructor so that arrangements with the testing center can be made in advance. The Academic Testing Center can be reached at 609-570-3295.
- b. No materials are permitted to be taken into the exam. However; there are lockers across the hall from the Testing Center that can be rented for a small rental fee.
- c. Hours for the Testing Center change from semester to semester. Learners are encouraged to contact the Testing Center in advance to determine the hours of operation in a given semester.

Please note: The minimum passing score for all PTA specific courses is a 77.

If a learner is having difficulty with any of the academic courses, it is the responsibility of the **learner** to contact his or her instructor for assistance and to identify the areas where he or she is having difficulty. Tutors may be available for some subject areas through the college's Learning Center in the Library building on the West Windsor campus. Additional resources include class notes, PowerPoint notes which may be accessed via the Blackboard course shells, course handbooks, classmates, academic advisors, required and recommended course textbooks and the organization of study groups.

Suspected Learner Substance Abuse Policy

Everyone's personal safety is of the utmost importance and in the forefront of our thoughts. The purpose of this policy is to ensure the safety of all persons involved with the physical therapist assistant program, including but not limited to, learners, patients, clinical instructors and faculty.

1. Academic and clinical faculty members of MCCC's PTA program, have the right to require a drug test of a learner if the faculty member, clinical faculty or clinical instructor personally observes impairments in behavior as compared to the normal behavior of that particular learner that in the opinion of the faculty member could place others at risk of potential injury. (*"Faculty member" refers to individuals identified above.*)
2. The identified learner will not be permitted to return to the clinical site or to continue in the physical therapist assistant program until he or she has received a clean and clear drug and alcohol test and has provided written copies of those results to both the college and clinical site if applicable.
3. Any time lost due to this incident must be made up and will not be considered an excused absence. A plan for making up the lost time must be submitted to both the instructor for the course and Clinical Instructor if applicable and be agreed to by all parties. Signed copies of the plan will be part of the learner file maintained in the PTA program office.
4. The cost of any required tests will be incurred solely by the learner.

This policy has been provided to each clinical site and faculty member within the PTA program and each learner prior to the placement of a learner from the PTA program into a clinical site.

M-Alert

All PTA program learners have been **registered** utilizing your contact information provided to Mercer County Community College (Mercer). M-Alert is a mass notification system for learners, faculty and staff at Mercer. This system delivers important safety and emergency messages by voice recordings, email and text messages. To check your registration or change information regarding how it notifies you, here's the email address: www.mccc.edu/m-alert. This system will be used to contact the class in the event of college closings!

Emergency Actions on Campus

An active shooter is an event in which one or more persons are actively engaging in killing or attempting to kill people in a populated area. In most cases, active shooters use firearms and there is no apparent pattern or method to their selection of victims. These situations are dynamic and evolve rapidly, with immediate deployment of law enforcement officers to stop the shooting and mitigate harm to innocent people.

PROCEDURE: If faced with an active shooter incident, there are THREE things you can do that make a difference. RUN, HIDE, FIGHT. http://www.mccc.edu/welcome_emergency_actions.shtml

MercerMail

All those who are currently registered in classes at Mercer are included in **MercerMail**. The PTA program utilizes this system to notify you of important information. This system has 2 gigabytes of storage space, and you can select options to forward your MercerMail automatically to another email account. It also has calendar options both college-wide and personal that can be utilized. This system is supported and provided by Microsoft Office 365 which means you have access to all the Microsoft Office Suite Online tools including Word, Outlook, PowerPoint, and Excel. It's highly recommended that all PTA learners check MercerMail email often for important college updates and emails from the PTA program faculty members. To get started, go to www.mccc.edu/mercermail.



Physical Therapist Assistant Program Course Descriptions

PTA 101 Intro to PTA (1 cr)

Course Description: This course is open to all learners who are potentially interested in physical therapy as a career choice. It is a required course for Physical Therapist Assistant majors. The course provides the learner with an overview of the healthcare system and the specific roles of professionals in physical medicine and rehabilitation. Topics include medical terminology, documentation and communication skills. Co-requisite course(s): ENG 101.

PTA 105 Kinesiology (3 cr)

Course Description: This course is a required course for Physical Therapist Assistant majors who have been accepted into the professional phase of the program. The concepts of locomotion, forces, levers and bio-mechanics will be introduced. Topics include origins, insertions, innervations, and actions of prime movers for the musculoskeletal system. Pre-requisite course(s): BIO 104 with a grade of C+ or higher.

PTA 107 Therapeutic Measurement (2 cr)

Course Description: Laboratory practice with measurement skills for joint range of motion (ROM) and muscle strength of peripheral joints. Includes volumetric, circumferential, and posture assessments. Learners will perform manual muscle tests and range of motion measurements using a goniometer and develop competency with assessment techniques. Competencies will be evaluated throughout the term. Pre-requisite course(s): PTA 101, BIO 104 with a grade of C+ or higher.

PTA 112 Pathology (3 cr)

Course Description: This course is open to all learners interested in physical therapy as a career or in the study of human diseases. It is a required course for Physical Therapist Assistant majors. The course is designed to familiarize the learner with the essential nature of diseases, abnormalities of structure and function that are characteristic of diseases. Pre-requisite course(s): ENG 102, BIO 104 with a grade of C+ or higher.

PTA 201 Therapeutic Exercise (2cr)

Course Description: Review and discussion of treatment interventions correlating with therapy goals. Topics include interpreting a physical therapy initial evaluation, stretching, strengthening, joint mobilization, massage, aerobic exercise, exercise parameters and progression. Students develop skills through practice with each other using patient scenarios to promote clinical decision making. Competencies evaluated throughout the course. *Restricted to approved PTA majors.* Pre-requisite course(s): PTA 101, PTA 112, BIO 104 with a grade of C+ or higher.

PTA 205 Motor Development (1 cr)

Course Description: Introduces developmental milestones for normal human motor development across the lifespan and discusses genetic and hereditary disorders, congenital and acquired disorders. Course design will familiarize the learners with the essential nature of abnormalities of structure and function that are characteristic of, or impact human motor development. Pre-requisite course(s): PTA 101, PTA 105, PTA 112.

PTA 210 PTA Techniques (4 cr)

Course Description: Addresses patient care and handling, including patient positioning and bed mobility, vital signs, transfers and gait, aseptic techniques, wound care, pharmacology, edema management, wheelchair use, body mechanics, and cardiac and pulmonary interventions. Students develop their skills through practice with each other. Competencies evaluated throughout the course. Pre-requisite course(s): PTA 107, PTA 112.

PTA 211 Physical Agents (4 cr)

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the learner to the use of physical agents, hydrotherapy; traction and therapeutic modalities in physical therapy practice. Lecture and laboratory activities develop problem solving skills and critical thinking in the use of electrical stimulation, aquatics, traction and therapeutic heat & cold to accomplish therapeutic treatment goals. Skills will be tested for competence throughout the course. Pre-requisite course(s): PTA 107, PTA 112.

PTA 213 Therapy Clinic (3 cr)

Course Description: Case study format for studying patients with conditions arising from a variety of circumstances, including the following: cerebral vascular accidents, spinal cord injuries, amputations, joint replacements, and cerebral palsy. Emphasizes activities to promote optimal functional outcomes. Lab develops decision-making skills involving assistive devices, orthotics and prosthetics. Competencies will be evaluated throughout the course. Pre-requisite course(s): PTA 210, PTA 211.

PTA 224 PTA Clinical Education I (3 cr)

Course Description: Supervised clinical instruction full-time clinical affiliation to observe the clinic environment and PT/PTA interactions; develop professional deportment; refine measurement and time management skills; and learn about patient chart information. Experiences are shared with classmates and faculty in PTA Seminar I (PTA 226). Pre-requisite(s): PTA 107, PTA 112, Co-requisite(s): PTA 226, PTA 210, PTA 211.

PTA 227 PTA Clinical Seminar I (3 cr)

Course Description: Overview of the healthcare system and the specific roles of professionals in healthcare fields. Topics include medical terminology, psychosocial aspects of disability, medical documentation, professional growth and development, evidence based practice, and communication skills. Pre-requisite(s): PTA 107, PTA 112. Co-requisite PTA 224.

PTA 235 PTA Clinical Education II (4 cr)

Course Description: Supervised full-time clinical affiliation. Learners practice and apply skills learned in other classes and learn to become an integral part of a physical therapy department. Pre-requisite(s): PTA 210, PTA 211, PTA 224, PTA 226. Co-requisite: PTA 236.

PTA 237 PTA Seminar II (3 cr)

Course Description: This course focuses on teaching and learning, ethical and moral dilemmas in health care and preparation for licensure. It explores learning and communication styles and strategies for patient instruction and interacting with their PT supervisors. There are opportunities to observe prosthetic and orthotic fabrication and observe physical therapy practice in an inpatient rehabilitation setting. Pre-requisite(s): PTA 224. Co-requisite: PTA 235.

PTA 240 PTA Clinical Education III (5 cr)

Course Description: Supervised full-time clinical affiliation. Learners practice all of the techniques and procedures taught in the program, performing all of the activities normally expected of a physical therapist assistant. Participants are expected to conduct an "in-service" presentation to colleagues at the clinical site. Pre-requisite(s): PTA 213, PTA 235, PTA 236. Co-requisites: PTA 241.

PTA Program Academic Regulations

1. Learners must complete the PTA courses within 6 semesters of the acceptance date into the professional phase of the PTA Program. If the learner cannot successfully complete the course work within this time period, he or she will need to withdraw from the PTA Program and re-apply.
2. All applicant pools are considered to be equal and different. If a learner withdraws and re-applies he or she is **not** guaranteed re-acceptance into the professional phase of the PTA Program. Re-admission is based on academic merit and fulfilling all of the requirements.
3. Learners must pass all Mathematics courses with a grade of C or higher.
4. Learners must pass all Science courses with a grade of C+ or higher.
5. Learners must maintain a minimum cumulative grade point average (CGPA) of 2.5 to continue to enroll in PTA Program courses.
6. Learners are expected to be proficient in English for all reading, writing and oral communication skills.
7. PTA specific courses may only be attempted twice. There will be no exceptions.
8. All PTA program courses must be completed with a grade of "C+" or higher for progression within the program.

Leave of Absence

1. If a learner takes longer than the time allocated to complete the program and has a CGPA of at least 2.5, he or she must meet with the program coordinator and submit a letter requesting a Leave of Absence (LOA).
 - a. Forms requesting an LOA are available from the college Registrar's office in the Learner Center.
 - b. During the LOA, it is the responsibility of the learner to maintain contact with the PTA Program regarding potential plans to resume taking classes at Mercer.
 - c. An LOA is required if any learner will not be taking classes for 2 years at MCCC. Failure to do so would result in loss of his or her date of first matriculation
2. If there has been a lapse of time in the continuance of the Professional Phase of the PTA program curriculum, the learner will be expected to demonstrate competence through the successful completion of a re-entry practical examination encompassing all previously tested lab skills prior to being eligible to re-join the program.
 - a. Re-entry Practical examinations are scheduled by appointment with both the PTA program coordinator and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education and must take place prior to the start of the academic semester in which the petitioner is requesting re-admission into the program.

**Re-admission requests must be sent either by email or US Mail to the
PTA program Coordinator behrensb@mccc.edu**

Deadlines for Readmission Requests (*re-entry Practical Examinations*)
February 15th for August/September re-admission (*fall semester*)
October 1st for January re-admission (*spring semester*)

Transfer Credit

1. The maximum number of credits that can be transferred into the PTA Program is 23. *(See transfer credit form for specific course transfer information)*
2. It is the responsibility of the learner to obtain a copy of the college or university catalog that describes the course that he or she has taken, if he or she is applying for transfer credit and email the link with the course descriptions and/or course syllabi to the PTA Program Coordinator for consideration.
3. Anatomy & Physiology courses must have been successfully completed within 5 years of acceptance into the Professional Phase of the PTA program in order for them to be considered for potential transfer and all 8 credits must have been completed at the same academic institution and have been passed with grades of C+ or higher.
4. Psychology courses need to have been successfully completed within 10 years to be considered eligible for transfer unless the learner has earned a degree in Psychology.

Important Deadlines:

for Submission of the Application to Commence the Professional Phase of the PTA program

February 28 th	Initial admission consideration	Summer semester
February 15 th	for September readmission consideration	Fall semester
October 1 st	for January readmission consideration	Spring semester

PTA Program Completion

1. All learners must complete all the professional phase PTA program courses within six (6) semesters.
2. If a learner fails or withdraws from a PTA program course and is unable to complete the PTA program courses within the allotted six semesters, the learner will be dismissed from the PTA program.
3. A PTA prefixed course may be attempted only twice.

**Mercer County Community College
Academic Integrity Policy Statement
OMB 210**

Mercer County Community College is committed to Academic Integrity -- the honest, fair and continuing pursuit of knowledge, free from fraud or deception. This implies that learners are expected to be responsible for their own work and that faculty and academic support services staff members will take reasonable precautions to prevent the opportunity for academic dishonesty.

The college recognizes the following general categories of violations of Academic Integrity, with representative examples of each. Academic Integrity is violated whenever a learner:

- A. Uses or obtains unauthorized assistance in any academic work.
 - copying from another learner's exam.
 - using notes, books, electronic devices or other aids of any kind during an exam when prohibited
 - stealing an exam or possessing a stolen copy of an exam
- B. Gives fraudulent assistance to another learner.
 - completing a graded academic activity or taking an exam for someone else
 - giving answers to or sharing answers with another learner before, during or after an exam or other graded academic activity

- sharing answers during an exam by using a system of signals.
- C. Knowingly represents the work of others as his/her own, or represents previously completed academic work as current.
- submitting a paper or other academic work for credit which includes words, ideas, data or creative work of others without acknowledging the source using another author's words without enclosing them in quotation marks, without paraphrasing them or without citing the source appropriately presenting another individual's work as one's own submitting the same paper or academic assignment to another class without the permission of the instructor
- D. Fabricates data in support of an academic assignment.
- falsifying bibliographic entries submitting any academic assignment which contains falsified or fabricated data or results
- E. Inappropriately or unethically uses technological means to gain academic advantage.
- inappropriately or unethically acquiring material via the Internet or by any other means using any electronic or hidden devices for communication during an exam

Each instructor and academic support service area is authorized to establish specific guidelines consistent with this policy.

CONSEQUENCES FOR VIOLATIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

For a single violation, the faculty member will determine the course of action to be followed. This may include assigning a lower grade on the assignment, assigning a lower final course grade, failing the learner in the course, or other penalty appropriate to the violation.

In all cases, the instructor shall notify the Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee of the violation and the penalty imposed.

When two (or more) violations of academic integrity are reported on a learner, the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC) may impose disciplinary penalties beyond those imposed by the course instructors. The learner shall have the right to a hearing before the AIC or a designated AIC subcommittee.

APPEALS

The learner has a right to appeal the decision of the instructor or the Academic Integrity Committee. Judicial procedures governing violations of Academic Integrity are contained in the Learner Handbook.

Approved by the MCCC Board of Trustees March 18, 2004

Appeal of academic grade or decision received during the semester:

Grade Appeal (See MCCC Learner Calendar / Handbook) http://www.mccc.edu/academic_policies_grading.shtml

1. First **meet with the instructor** for review/discussion of grade appeal as soon as possible. The grade appeal must be filed 30 working days of the end of the semester.
2. If you are not satisfied after Step 1, write a statement describing the exact nature of the appeal. Give it to the dean of the academic division responsible for the course, in order to appeal the action. It is your responsibility to bring all relevant evidence which is in your possession to the division dean. If some materials needed as evidence have not been returned by the instructor during the semester or are unavailable, it is incumbent upon you to request that the division dean secure such evidence prior to the meeting. Appeal for a course grade should be made as soon as possible.

In a case involving the appeal of a course grade, the dean's authority, if the grading instructor is still employed by the college, is limited to reviewing the evidence and advising the instructor that a grade change may be in order. If the instructor is no longer employed, the dean may recommend a change of grade. Such a recommendation is then reviewed

by the Academic Integrity Committee (AIC), which reports its recommendation to the Vice president for Academic and Learner Affairs for final action.

Due Process and Grievance Procedure

Please refer to the college's learner handbook for an explanation of learner due process procedures. The procedures applicable to campus activities are also applicable to medical laboratory technology, nursing, physical therapist assistant, and radiography program clinical education.

Attendance for PTA program Courses

1. Mercer County Community College does not have a "cut system." **Learners in PTA program courses are required to attend all lecture, lab, competency testing, practical examinations and clinical affiliation sessions.** Attendance records will be maintained.
2. Notices of emergency closings are also announced on the college website at www.mccc.edu. They will also be announced on MAAlert which is why it is important for all learners to register through the college MAAlert system.
3. When the college issues a delayed opening and a class time is consequently shortened, it is expected that all learners will arrive for class at the delayed opening time, unless informed otherwise by the course instructor.
4. The college provides a final exam period at the end of each semester. While course instructors might not plan to utilize that time at the beginning of the semester (as indicated in the course handbook), schedules may change during the semester and each instructor has the right to adjust the course schedule, which includes utilizing during the final exam period. Therefore, making any plans that would preclude participation in required exams at that time is strongly discouraged.

Confidentiality Expectations

Classmates:

Periodically during the semester, other learners in the class may choose to share personal information with the PTA class. If an individual chooses to share this information with the class, it is to remain in the classroom. If an individual does not wish to share a personal diagnosis or history with the class, it is within the rights of the individual not to do so.

Volunteers are solicited for laboratory demonstrations. Information obtained is intended for demonstration purposes only. It is the right of every individual NOT to volunteer for a demonstration. However; all learners are expected to be a "subject" for their classmates during lab activities. This may involve the removal of minor articles of clothing. In the event that clothing is removed, draping techniques are employed to preserve the dignity of the individual.

Testing:

Under NO circumstances should any information regarding practical exam scenarios leave the classroom or laboratory. This will be considered a violation of academic integrity.

Faculty:

Any and all individuals who elect to allow him or herself to be the "subject" during class and lab activities can expect that all information gained during the activity will remain confidential. This extends to all MCCC faculty and staff members who elect to be "subjects."

Learner Expenses for the PTA Program Curriculum

As a learner in the PTA program, you are entitled to know the approximate costs associated with the curriculum, in addition to the tuition to the college. Costs are subject to change after the publication of this document; however, this should provide learners with a reasonable expectation for the amounts involved (*where known*).

1. Medical

Learners are responsible for all costs incurred while having a physical with a medical doctor for the purpose of completing the necessary health information worksheet. Each learner is also responsible for attaining and maintaining his or her own health insurance policy. The forms and proof of insurance are due to the ACCE on the first day of the fall semester in the professional phase of the curriculum.

2. Transportation Expenses

Learners are responsible for their own transportation costs **to and from** all scheduled classes, off-campus learning experiences and clinical affiliations. This includes any other expenses incurred for food, parking, tolls etc., while attending PTA program classes.

3. Tuition and Fees

Tuition and fees are established by the MCCC College Board of Trustees. Different rates apply to residents of Mercer County, other resident of New Jersey, out-of-state residents, and non-U.S. citizens. Tuition is charged based upon a credit (or credit equivalent) hour basis. The college has entered into an agreement with Bucks County College so that those individuals who reside in Bucks County PA, will be considered “out of county” and be charged accordingly for PTA prefixed courses. This also applies for those individuals who live in counties within NJ where their own county community college does not have a PTA program.

The college reserves the right to change tuition or fees at any time by action of the Board of Trustees. In addition to tuition and fees, learners are responsible for their purchasing their books and supplies for classes.

Tuition and Fee Estimates 2018-2019*

	Per credit	Tuition	Lab Supplies	Textbooks	Other	TOTAL
In county	\$175.25	\$11,741.75	\$100	\$1,600	\$1,250	\$14,691.75
Out of county	\$258.25	\$17,302.75	\$100	\$1,600	\$1,250	\$20,252.75
Out of state	\$348.25	\$23,332.75	\$100	\$1,600	\$1,250	\$26,282.75

These figures represent estimates that are subject to change and should be used only for planning purposes.

Key

- Tuition is based upon 67 credits in the curriculum and represents estimates that are subject to change and should be used only for planning purposes. Bucks County PA residents have been granted an “out of county” rate by special arrangement between MCCC and Bucks County Community College.
- Lab supplies include a lab coat, name-tag, patch, and 2 goniometers.
- Textbooks: estimate based upon the cost of new required textbooks for PTA specific courses
- Tuition includes: Credit fees and technology fees
- Other: includes lab course fees for lab courses and clinical liability insurance for clinical courses

3/18

Lab Coats

Lab Coats are required for Competency Testing, Practical Exams and Clinical Education courses. The lab coat must have a patch on the Left shoulder that indicates Mercer County Community College Physical Therapy, and learners must also wear a name tag that includes their full name and title “MCCC PTA Student”. These items are available through Belle Uniform who will have representatives on campus on

- Tuesday 6/12 noon- 6:00 pm in MS 334

Together, these items cost approximately **\$60.00**.

Memberships (optional)

Membership in the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) is strongly encouraged. Membership is available to learners who have entered the professional phase of the curriculum. National APTA dues for learner members are approximately **\$80.00**.

Fees Associated with Licensure:

Once a learner has successfully completed the PTA curriculum and graduated from the college, he or she is eligible for licensure in New Jersey (or another state of his or her choosing) as a Physical Therapist Assistant. It is the responsibility of the learner to request a licensure application from the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. There are different types of fees associated with licensure, taking the licensure examination and registration of the license itself.

Description of fee	Estimated amount
Application Fee to the NJ State Board of PT	\$125.00
Licensure Fee	\$100.00 <i>(per 2 year renewal period)</i>
Background Check & Fingerprinting Fee	\$70.00
Examination Service Application Fee	\$ 400.00
Test Taking Fee Due on Test Date	\$ 60.00

As previously stated, these fees are subject to change. This is an estimate. MCCC is not responsible for the changes that occur in the amounts that have been stated. They are provided for advisory purposes only.

These fees also represent amounts for New Jersey. If a graduate decides to apply for licensure in another state, the fees may vary. Further information is available through the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy (FSBPT) who may be contacted via their website at www.fsbpt.org

Policy Regarding: Medical Absences

Any absence due to a medical condition that requires treatment by a doctor will require a doctor's note to return to participation in the PTA Program, both on campus or in the clinical environment.

Policy Regarding: Pregnant and Parenting Learners in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program acknowledges that pregnant and parenting learners have the right to stay in school for the opportunity to meet their educational and career goals. The PTA Program does not discriminate based on sex, including pregnancy, parenting and all related conditions (*such as planned or unplanned early termination*). Pregnant and parenting learners will not be asked or told by PTA Program faculty members to drop out of a course or program due to pregnancy or parenting.

Absences Related to Pregnancy

The PTA Program excuses all absences due to pregnancy or any related conditions, as long as documentation is provided from the treating medical doctor or authorized licensed healthcare provider, which states that it is necessary for the learner to be absent. For those pregnancy related absences that have been deemed necessary by the treating healthcare professional, hereafter referred to as "doctor," the learner will not be penalized.

Any absence due to a medical condition that requires treatment by a doctor will require a doctor's note to return to participation in the PTA Program, both on campus or in the clinical environment.

Work Missed While Absent

Learners who have pregnancy related absences that have been documented as necessary by the treating doctor, will be given the opportunity to make up the missed coursework by the course instructor. Clinical education courses are the only courses that need to be taken within the given timeframe for those courses, due to the contractual agreements made between the PTA Program and each clinical facility. For example: PTA 224 Clinical Education I, is a course that is only offered in the fall semester, PTA 235 Clinical Education II is only offered in the spring semester and PTA 240 Clinical Education III is only offered in the summer semester. To meet the course objectives for these three clinical education courses, learners must complete the required hours within the timeframe of the course (160 hours within 4 weeks for PTA 224; 200 hours within 5 weeks for PTA 235 and 240 hours within 6 weeks for PTA 240). All learners who have a medical condition that requires treatment by a doctor will be able to participate in clinical education courses if the treating doctor provides documented medical clearance indicating that it is safe for the learner to participate.

Reference:

U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, Supporting the Academic Success of Pregnant and Parenting Learners Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, Washington, D.C., 2013.

For more information, please consult:

US Department of Education: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/pregnancy.pdf>

Title IX, which is a portion of the "Education Amendments of 1972" (renamed the "[Patsy Mink Equal Opportunity in Education Act](#)" in 2002), essentially states in part that:

"No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving federal financial assistance."

PTAP 2014

MCCC Title IX Coordinator

The college's Title IX Coordinator oversees compliance with all aspects of the sex/gender harassment, discrimination and misconduct policy. The Coordinator reports to the President of the College, and is housed in the Administrative Building office # AD 254A. Questions and complaints regarding Title IX may be directed to the Title IX Coordinator or the Office of Civil Rights at the following locations and or contact information.

Monise Princilus, Executive Director of Human Resources & Compliance
1200 Old Trenton Rd. – AD 101
West Windsor, NJ 08550
Mail to: PO Box 17202, Trenton NJ 08690
Voice Phone: (609) 570-3635 Email: princilm@mccc.edu

Safety During on-campus and off-campus educational experiences

1. Mercer County Community College has a student body, faculty, administrative staff and personnel, who all commute to either the West Windsor or Trenton campuses of the college. There are no provisions for dormitory facilities at either campus.
2. Whether learners are attending a class on one of the campuses or at an alternate location, every learner is individually responsible for his or her own transportation, and motor vehicle insurance coverage.
3. PTA program faculty members will not assume any additional risk by transporting learners to an off-campus activity. If a PTA learner requires minor medical assistance e.g. for a cut or abrasion, the PTA Lab MS 352 has a First Aid Kit, which contains bandages and first aid cream.
4. If a learner requires immediate medical assistance during a PTA program course on one of the MCCC campuses, then either a PTA program faculty member or designee will **call security at 570- 3503** or by picking up one of the

“red” telephones located in the middle of the long hallways of the academic buildings. Security will dispatch an EMT to the scene.

5. Mercer has a security Hot Line which can be reached by dialing 609-570-3200 from any telephone or just **3200** from any telephone on campus that is part of the Mercer extension system.

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS: Health Records

Please note: any delay in start dates for classes or clinicals caused by a learner may delay the graduation date for the learner!

The PTA program fax number is 609-570-3831 and anything faxed to the PTA program must indicate that it is for the PTA program.

All fees associated with the Learner seeking medical documentation of his or her status from a personal healthcare provider are the responsibility of the learner

Mercer County Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Policy:	<u>Informed Consent: Receiving Physical Therapy Interventions (Contraindications)</u>
Purpose:	To help ensure that learners know that they may opt out of receiving specific physical therapy interventions, as contained within the didactic, laboratory and testing portions of the PTA program curriculum.
Audience:	PTAP learners, Full and part time faculty members

Learners enrolled in the professional phase of the PTA program with a known contraindication to a specific treatment technique or intervention will NOT receive that treatment technique or intervention. Learners enrolled in the professional phase of the PTA program with a known precaution to a specific treatment technique or intervention will only be eligible to receive that treatment technique or intervention with full-time faculty approval. This policy is in effect to maximize the safety of PTA program learners.

Prior to the application or practice of any physical therapy intervention, the precautions and contraindications will be reviewed by the PTA program faculty course instructor. Prior to receiving physical therapy interventions, learners are required to review all precautions and contraindications to ensure their own safety by declining any physical therapy interventions that are listed as a precaution or contraindication. Filling out and signing the "Learner History Questionnaire" (*from the orientation session*) does not alleviate the learner of this responsibility.

While it is left to the discretion of the learner to *disclose* information pertaining to precautions and contraindications to the appropriate course instructor or competency tester, the learner maintains sole responsibility to decline treatment if he/she is aware of a precaution or contraindication. If information regarding precautions and contraindications to physical therapy interventions is not disclosed to the course instructor or competency tester and the learner fails to decline treatment, the PTA program faculty members are not responsible for any potential adverse response that may result.

All PTA Program faculty members, full-time and part-time, will ensure that learners who have disclosed any contraindications listed below **will not** receive the listed treatment intervention. For conditions that the learner chooses not to disclose, it is the learner's responsibility to decline being the subject in a lab. Treatment interventions for which a learner has disclosed a precaution, will not be administered to a learner without full-time faculty approval.

In addition to reviewing precautions and contraindications with learners prior to labs, and the ability for learners to decline treatment interventions in the PTA Program, the PTA Program has determined that the following contraindications will prohibit a learner from receiving specific interventions.

Treatment Interventions...	Contraindications	Precautions
Heat (hot packs, paraffin)	Over acutely inflamed areas, in the presence of fever, malignancies, when diagnosed with peripheral vascular disease, over an area treated with radiation, during the 1 st trimester of pregnancy, in area of sensory deficits, over open wounds, over a pacemaker, over acute hemorrhage	Over closed/healed wounds, over a pregnant uterus during the 2 nd and 3 rd trimesters
Cryotherapy	When diagnosed with Cryoglobulinemia, Raynaud's disease, over an area with Frostbite	Sensory deficits, impaired circulation including peripheral vascular disease, cold sensitivities
Ultrasound	Over open wounds, over low back or abdomen during pregnancy, when diagnosed with peripheral vascular disease, over joint or metal implants (1MHz only), over area of impaired sensation, metastasis, over area of thrombus or abscess, over a pacemaker	Over any abnormal growth of unknown origin
Electrical stimulation	Pregnancy during the first trimester, over a pacemaker, electrical implanted stimulator, unstable cardiac arrhythmias, directly over malignancies (unless used for pain relief for hospice care), adjacent or distal to thrombophlebitis, or phlebothrombosis, tuberculosis or area of active hemorrhage, seizures (not in the cervical spine and not for motor level response) unstable fracture (no motor level but pain relief is permissible)	history of angina or myocardial infarction, diminished sensation, eczema, psoriasis, dermatitis, diabetes, peripheral neuropathy, spinal cord injury, seizure disorders (Motor levels of stimulation should be monitored carefully however sensory levels are not considered hazardous)
Mechanical Traction	Ehrlos Danlos Syndrome, rheumatoid arthritis, osteoporosis, spinal cancer, central disc herniation, spinal cord pressure or injury, recent ophthalmic surgery	Spinal joint hypermobility, pregnancy, acute spinal inflammation, claustrophobia, temporomandibular joint dysfunction, cardiac or respiratory insufficiency, when symptoms increase with traction, orthostatic hypotension or low blood pressure
Aquatic Therapy	fever, cardiopulmonary disease, acute phlebitis, renal failure, open wounds, incontinence or colostomy	Fear of water, unable to swim
Blood Pressure	On an extremity with current or history of lymphedema and/or mastectomy, over open wound, dialysis shunt, abnormal muscle tone	
Massage	Fever, malignancies, over areas of acute inflammation, skin conditions made worse with pressure (including burns and open wounds), over areas of bleeding and bruising, lymphedema	recent surgery or fractures, decreased sensation, cardiovascular disorders or osteoporosis
Intermittent Compression	Acute pulmonary edema, acute localized infection, congestive heart failure, deep vein thrombosis, on extremity with history of lymphedema or lymph node removal	

Please initial each of the three statements below and then print and sign your name at the bottom. *Thank you!*

Initials:	I understand that if I choose to disclose any of the conditions listed as a <i>contraindication</i> on this Informed Consent document, that I will not receive the intervention(s) correlated with it. I will have the opportunity to learn about the intervention(s) and administer it to a classmate.
Initials:	I understand that if I choose to disclose any of the conditions listed as a <i>precaution</i> on this Informed Consent document, that I may or may not receive the intervention(s) correlated with it. I have the right to decline receipt of the intervention(s) and the faculty members have a right to decline my

	receipt of the intervention(s). However, I will have the opportunity to learn about the intervention(s) and administer it to a classmate.
Initials:	I understand that if I choose NOT to disclose any conditions (<i>contraindications or precautions</i>) listed on this Informed Consent document, that I will be unable to decline receipt of the correlated intervention(s).

To be excused from receiving interventions in the PTA program, the learner must disclose the reason to the college in writing. The learner can either:

1. Inform the PTA Program directly to both the program coordinator and course instructor.
2. Contact Arlene Stinson in LB 216 or stinsona@mccc.edu

I certify that I am eighteen (18) years of age or older. (*If an individual is under the age of eighteen (18), this informed consent form must be signed by the individual AND his/her legal guardian.*)

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

PTAP 02/17, Rev 4/18

Competency Testing

The focus of all health-related professions is ***the patient***. As health care providers and educators, we are striving to assure that the safety of the patient is not compromised in any way by the actions of our learners. All PTA learners both administer and receive care with fellow classmates as both “clinicians” and “subjects.”

PTA laboratory courses include individualized competency testing for skills that have been identified as entry level skills that learners should possess. Competency testing presents a method of assuring the clinical community that the PTA learner is safe and competent to perform procedures and techniques with patients. Competency tests for these skills take place prior to the Practical Exam in each of the semesters, so that a minimal level of safety and competence can be established prior to the start of the next clinical education course.

1. What is a competency test?
 - a. an “appointment” made by the learner with a competency tester
 - b. an opportunity for the learner to demonstrate his/her skill level by performing the identified procedures on a fellow classmate in the presence of a competency tester
 - c. a method for the competency tester to assure safety and competence for entry level skills

Competency Tests consist of:

- i. course #
- ii. number of the test
- iii. skill demonstration items
- iv. critical safety indicators

2. How do learners “sign up” for Competency Tests?

- a. A binder labeled “PTAP Competency Testing” is located on the bookshelf inside MS352.
- b. The binder has a calendar of available testing times for learners to select from. Appointments may be made by other means at the discretion of the PTA Program faculty member.

- c. If a learner is absent during a competency test sign-up date, his/her name will be added to the last remaining slot. The learner will need to check the competency testing binder after an absence.
- d. If a learner is required to re-take a comp test, he/she should place his/her name in a slot labeled "re-take slot only."
- e. When there is only one comp test for the week, learners cannot sign up as clinician/subject back-to-back. When there is more than one comp test for the week, learners can only sign up back-to-back within the same column and only with the learner fulfilling the role of clinician first, followed by the role of subject.

3. What should a learner do if a true emergency prevents the ability to show up for a scheduled competency test?

- a. If a learner has a true emergency that causes him/her to have to cancel a competency test at the last minute, he/she needs to email Holly Kaiser and inform the classmate for whom he/she was scheduled to be the subject.
- b. If a learner does not take his/her Competency Test during the scheduled date and time, the learner forfeits his/her Initial Competency Test opportunity. The learner will re-schedule him/herself during a "re-take" slot and the highest score that can be earned is a 79/100.
- c. Learners who provide a signed doctor's note indicating that the learner cannot participate in the scheduled Competency Test will be able to take his/her *Initial* Competency Test during a re-take slot and have the opportunity to earn 100/100.

4. How do learners prove that they have been tested and are "competent" to perform a particular task?

- a. Learners have a "Comp Test Sign-Off Sheet (CTSOS) Packet" (blank copies are located in the back of the competency testing binder) that the competency tester must complete and sign at the conclusion of each comp test. It is the responsibility of each of the learners to obtain the signature of their competency tester.
- b. **It is NOT** the responsibility of the comp tester to remind the learner to supply the CTSOS packet to be signed.
- c. Once the **CTSOS** Packet is complete for a given course, it must be handed in to Holly Kaiser.
- d. Receipt of the completed **CTSOS** Packet by Holly Kaiser establishes eligibility to take the practical exam for a course.
- e. Failure to hand in the completed **CTSOS** Packet will result in penalties dependent upon the circumstances and discretion of the course director and PTA program coordinator.

5. There are two requirements to pass each competency test: the demonstration of safety and competency.

- a. **Safety:** The first requirement is that the learner demonstrates all Critical Safety Indicators (CSI) during the test. The first table contains a list of Critical Safety Indicators. All of these must be demonstrated by the learner to earn a "pass" on the competency test.

"✓" indicates demonstrated, "X" indicates not demonstrated, "N/A" indicates not applicable

- b. **Competence:** The second requirement is that the learner demonstrates competence by earning a minimum grade of 77% on the skill demonstration list. The second table contains a list of skills. A score will be calculated (using the percentages outlined in the scoring table) based on the number of skills

that were demonstrated during the competency test. A minimum grade of 77% on the skill demonstration list is required to earn a “pass” on the competency test.

- a. **How is a grade for competency testing calculated?** There are two requirements to pass a competency test.
 - 1) **Safety:** The first requirement is that the learner demonstrates all critical safety indicators (CSI) during the competency test.
 - 2) **Competence:** The second requirement is that the learner earns a minimum score of 77 on the skill demonstration list provided for each competency test.
- b. If a **second attempt** is required to successfully complete a competency test, the highest score possible for that competency test is a 79.
- c. If a **third attempt** is required to successfully complete a competency test, the highest score possible for that competency test is a 77.
- d. Five points will be deducted when learners arrive as the “subject” without appropriate attire already donned prior to the start of the competency test.
- e. The overall competency test grade for each course will be the average of all final individual competency test scores for that course.

No more than 3 attempts are permitted for competency tests. Failure to perform at a minimum level of safe and competent indicates that there is a problem and a need for program counseling.

6. What is the difference between a practical exam and a competency test?

During a competency test:	During a practical exam:
The competency tester may interact with the learner being tested.	The practical exam proctor does not interact with the learner.
The learner may ask for clarification from the competency tester.	The practical exam proctor provides no additional information to the learner being tested.
The documentation for summer and fall competency tests is due to the competency tester as soon it is complete. The documentation for spring competency tests is due within 15 minutes of the end of the treatment session.	The documentation for the <i>summer</i> practical exam is due at the end of the practical exam half-hour. The documentation for the <i>fall</i> practical exam is due to the proctor within 15 minutes of the completion of the practical exam. The documentation for the <i>spring</i> practical exam is due at the end of the practical exam hour.
Learners sign up for competency tests in advance.	Learners are assigned a specific testing time.
Learners are provided with a clinical scenario at the time of the competency test. Learners have 5 minutes to prepare for fall and spring competency test.	Learners are provided with a clinical scenario at the time of the practical. Learners have 5-30 minutes to prepare for the practical exam, depending on the semester.
Learners may “switch” spots with a classmate.	Practical Exam times are determined by program faculty and learners may not “switch” times with a classmate.

7. What are the responsibilities of the PTA learner?

- a. Signing up in advance to take a competency test
- b. Coordinating with a classmate to ensure that a classmate will serve as the “subject” for each scheduled competency test when appropriate.
- c. Preparing and cleaning up the appropriate treatment environment

- d. When scheduled to be the “subject”, the learner arrives in appropriate lab attire already donned.
- e. Providing the CTSOS Packet to the competency tester, for completion and signature.
- f. Contacting the course instructor if more than a second attempt is required for any one competency test.
- g. Submitting the completed & signed CTSOS Packet to Holly Kaiser by the due date listed on the CTSOS Packet.
- h. Any learners who have academic accommodations and wish to use the additional preparatory time must inform his/her competency tester in advance *on each day of every competency test*.

8. Where would a learner find information about competency tests for a specific course?

- a. Each semester, learners are given a Comp Test Sign Up Sheet (CTSOS) Packet, containing all of the competency tests for the semester.
- b. All competency tests can also be found in the course handbook.

9. What remedy is there for a learner who does not successfully complete a competency test on the first try?

- a. When time allows, competency testers work with learners to help them refine skills. Learners are encouraged to make use of open lab hours to practice skills, and to consult with the course instructor for additional assistance.
- b. In PTA laboratory courses, the learner may re-take the competency test up to 2 times as needed. However, points will be deducted for each unsuccessful attempt.
- c. Prior to the third attempt, the learner must first meet with the course instructor.
- d. If a learner is required to re-take a comp test, he/she should place his/her name in a slot labeled “re-take slot only”.

10. Are there additional guidelines for competency tests?

- a. The clinician MAY NOT ask the “subject” to roll up a pant leg, sleeve, tie something around an extremity, or in any other way identify an extremity.
- b. Clinicians must wear lab coats and name tags during all fall and spring semester competency tests.
- c. Once a learner receives a competency test scenario, s/he must sit in the last row to read it. The last row is reserved only for learners with competency test scenarios.

Terminology		
Term	Forms of use	Explanation
Competency Testing	Comp Tests, Comps	skills that will be tested for courses that have a lab component
Comp Test Check		This refers to the number of attempts for each competency test for each of the individual skills that have been identified by the course instructor. The skills must be demonstrated to a level of competence to pass the test in addition to demonstrating competence with each of the critical safety indicators
Critical Safety Indicators	CSI	minimum skills that must be demonstrated for patient safety during competency testing and practical exams and all interactions with patients
SOAP Notes	Documentation, SOAP Note	Documentation in a patient record to indicate the treatment intervention that took place. If the intervention was one that was done in a lab, then the SOAP note would be a mock SOAP note but would still be referred to as a SOAP note. The acronym refers to: S -subjective patient information, O -objective patient information (tests and measurements), A -assessment following the treatment intervention during that session regarding the potential change that might have taken place as a result of the intervention and P -plan for the next session based upon the "A" as it relates to the O and S from that treatment intervention for that patient and the overall plan of care.

Patient	pt.	The term “patient” refers to individuals receiving physical therapy services in various clinical environments outside of Mercer County Community College.
Subject		During competency testing and/or practical exams, the subject the person playing the role of the “patient”.
Clinician		During competency testing and/or practical exams, the clinician is a PTA program classmate who is currently enrolled in the professional phase of the PTA program.
Physical Therapist Assistant	PTA	Either the acronym or full spelling may be used however it is understood that this refers to the individual
Physical Therapist	PT	Either the acronym or full spelling may be used however it is understood that this refers to the individual and not to a department or to physical <u>therapy</u>

All previous Critical Safety Indicators (CSIs) from prior competency tests apply to each competency test within the program. While every single CSI from all prior competency tests are not listed for each fall and spring competency test, they still apply and if not demonstrated, the competency tester will indicate which previous CSI was not demonstrated and the learner will be required to re-take the competency test.

Practical Examination Policies & Procedures

Scenarios for Practical Examinations and the score sheets remain the property of the PTA program.

Failure to comply with these policies constitutes a violation of academic integrity and will be reported to the MCCC Academic Integrity Committee.

I. Establishing Eligibility for the Practical

1. Minimum eligibility for practical exams is established through Competency Testing for each of the courses in a semester. All Competency Tests for that semester must have been successfully passed and the Competency Testing Sign-Off Sheet (CTSOS) packet must have been submitted by the required date for the learner to be eligible to take the practical exam that semester. This establishes a minimum level of competence with the skills that have previously been identified in each of the courses so that the faculty can assure that learners are “competent” to perform them.
 - a. *If there is an emergency situation that precludes conducting Practical Examinations prior to the start of the Clinical Education component of the Curriculum, the Practical Examination could be delayed until after the Clinical Education course that semester, at the discretion of PTA Program Faculty.*

2. Practical examinations are a critical component of the grading for all Physical Therapist Assistant laboratory courses. Practical examinations involve individual learner integration and demonstration of the skills learned during the laboratory class(s) that semester. The following courses include a practical examination as a part of the course grade:

PTA 107 Therapeutic Measurement	PTA 211 Physical Agents
PTA 201 Therapeutic Exercise	PTA 213 Therapy Clinic
PTA 210 PTA Techniques	PTA 216 Orthopedics in PTA

3. The Practical Examination for the Fall semester is a combined activity dependent upon the courses that the learner has enrolled in. However, each course is graded separately following the objectives for each of the classes (PTA 201, 210 and PTA 211 in the fall). This allows the learner the opportunity to perform skills without attempting to segregate his or her knowledge. It also reduces the learner stress level and time commitment, by having to schedule only one Practical Examination instead of three in that semester.

4. A copy of the grading rubric for the practical examination is included in the handbook for each course that has a practical examination.
5. All learners are guaranteed an opportunity to take an *Initial* Practical Examination and a Practical Exam *First Re-Take*. An opportunity to take a Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* is not guaranteed for all learners. Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* opportunities are only available to those learners whose written Exam average is a minimum of 77 (for each of the respective courses) at the time of the Practical Exams **AND** who can attend the scheduled Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* session.

II. Before the Practical

1. To become familiar with the expectations of the practical examination, learners should review the practical exam grading rubric and Critical Safety Indicators for each of the courses involved in the practical.
2. Learners will receive written notification of the Practical Examination Test Schedule and instructions regarding what to expect for the Practical a minimum of two days prior to the actual test date. Practical Examination times are determined by PTA Program Faculty, not learners.
 - a. This notification includes the schedule indicating the time of arrival as both the clinician and “subjects.”
3. Learners need to be available for all days in which practical examinations are scheduled (from initial to final re-takes), if they need to come back for a re-take practical exam
4. The Practical re-take date will be provided prior to the initial practical examinations.

III. During the Practical

1. Learners will be assigned *fellow classmates as their “subjects”* for the Practical Examination each semester.
2. The amount of time that learners will be required to be available for Practical Examinations will be dependent upon the number of learners in the class and will be kept to a minimum.
3. Learners who are the clinicians will receive their scenario from one of the exam proctors upon entering MS 352 at their scheduled time from the choices available for the course.
 - a. “Subjects” are then assigned a given diagnosis to portray based on the scenario received by his or her clinician.
 - Once a scenario has been received, there can be no sharing of information with anyone, except between the “subject” and clinician, and only as it pertains to the portrayal of the scenario.
 - Those learners portraying “subjects” may not communicate with anyone except the clinician who will be working with them.
 - Information (written or verbal) regarding the scenario must not leave the test environment with a learner **under any** circumstances.

Please note that any “sharing” of information that pertains to the practical exam will be considered a violation of academic integrity.

4. The minimum passing score for all PTA program assignments is a 77 and categories 9 & 10 on the practical exam must have been safe, which is where minimal safety for the “subject” is established.
5. Self-Reflection: Part of the process for completing the Practical Exam includes self-reflection. Each learner will be provided with a set of questions to “reflect upon” at the conclusion of his or her practical exam. These questions pertain to the learner’s performance on the practical and how the he or she feels about what was just completed and if he or she feels that there was something that he or she would have changed. This is considered an important aspect

of the practical examination as it provides the learner with the opportunity to provide a narrative to the proctor and self-assess his or her performance and potentially explain something that didn't go as planned.

- a. This document is to be completed after the Practical and BEFORE leaving MS352. There is to be no discussion regarding anything that took place during the practical with anyone after the conclusion of the experience.

IV. After the Practical

1. At the completion of all *Initial* Practical Exams, all learners will be contacted by an exam proctor with the results. This contact may be made via telephone or email. If Practical Exam results are provided via email, only the learner's Mercer Email address will be used to provide Practical Exam Results.
2. If the learner did not pass the *Initial* Practical Exam, detailed feedback regarding his/her performance will be provided via email or telephone on the same date that all practical examinations were completed.
3. If the learner is informed via email that a re-take is required, the learner is required to "reply" to the email to confirm receipt of the information before midnight of the same day. This enables the exam proctor(s) to adequately prepare all learners and "subject" roles during re-take Practical Exams.
4. All Learners will have the opportunity to receive detailed feedback regarding their performance on the practical exam after all practical retake opportunities have concluded. This will include the opportunity to review the grading rubric with an exam proctor.

V. Retaking a Practical Examination

1. All learners are required to be present and ready to be the "subject" or clinician when re-take practicals are scheduled **to start** for the day (*which will be communicated via email or telephone the day before*).
2. Learners must be prepared to be both the clinician and the "subject" when they arrive for a re-take practical examination. Learners will **not** have the ability to utilize the same scenario that they used previously.
3. The PTA program will do its best to ensure that learners will **not** have the same proctor when re-taking a practical examination.
4. The Practical Examination Instructions provided in the course handbook are to be followed for any re-take.
5. Self-reflection summaries may not be used during practical examination re-takes.
6. All learners are to remain outside of the lab after practical examination **re-takes have been completed**. This will provide the opportunity for timely and in-person feedback regarding the results of their performance.
 - a. If a learner is required to take a Practical exam first re-take, the highest score that can be achieved is a **79**. If a learner is granted an opportunity to take a Practical exam final re-take, the highest score that can be achieved is a **77**.
7. A third and final attempt will only be offered to those learners whose written examination average is a 77 or higher at the time of the practical examination (for the respective course) **and** who are able to attend the scheduled practical examination final re-take session.

VI. After the Final Attempt at the Practical

1. If a learner does not pass his or her final practical examination attempt, the score for the practical exam will be graded as 0 since the learner was deemed unsafe, which is the minimum requirement to demonstrate competence and pass the practical exam.

2. If a learner has had a delay in his or her academic progress within the PTA program curriculum, and is planning on re-entering the program and continuing with clinical courses, additional criteria apply and he or she is strongly advised to schedule meetings with the PTA Program Coordinator (behrensb@mccc.edu) and the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (kaiserh@mccc.edu).
3. Those learners who do not pass the practical examination (or are not currently passing all PTA-prefixed courses) may not proceed to the next clinical education course (this will delay progression in the PTA program). More information is in the following sections of this Learner Handbook:
 - a. Re-Entry into the Professional Phase of the PTA Program
 - b. Repeating a PTA Professional Phase Course
4. The learner must withdraw from the clinical education course in which he/she is enrolled. Those courses that do not have a practical examination may be completed and any course in which the practical examination was passed, may also be completed.
5. Learners must pass all summer semester competency tests and practical exams for courses they are enrolled, to take any professional phase courses offered in the fall semester. Learners must pass all fall semester competency tests and practical exams for courses they are enrolled, to take any professional phase courses offered in the spring semester. Learners must pass all spring semester competency tests and practical exams for courses they are enrolled, to take any professional phase courses offered in the final summer semester.

VII. Absence Policy for Practical Exams

1. Initial Practical Exam Absence

If a learner does not take his/her *Initial* Practical Exam during the scheduled date and time, the learner forfeits his/her *Initial* Practical Exam opportunity. The learner will be scheduled during the Practical Exam *First Re-take* session and it will be considered a Practical Exam *First Re-Take* (meaning that the highest score that can be earned is a 79/100).

Learners who provide a signed doctor's note indicating that the learner cannot participate in the *Initial* Practical Exam will be able to take his/her *Initial* Practical Exam during the Practical Exam *First Re-Take* session and can earn 100/100.

2. Practical Exam First Re-Take Absence

If a learner does not take his/her Practical Exam *First Re-Take* during the scheduled date and time, the learner forfeits his/her Practical Exam *First Re-Take* opportunity. The learner will be scheduled to take the Practical Exam *First Re-Take* during the Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* session and it will be considered a Practical Exam *Final Re-take* (meaning that the highest score that can be earned is a 77/100).

Learners who provide a signed doctor's note indicating that the learner cannot participate in the Practical Exam *First Re-Take* will be able to take his/her Practical Exam *First Re-Take* during the Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* session and can earn 79/100. This would preclude this learner from having the opportunity for a Practical Exam *Final Re-Take*.

3. Practical Exam Final Re-Take Absence

If a learner does not take his/her Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* during the scheduled date and time, the learner forfeits his/her Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* opportunity.

Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* opportunities are only available to those learners whose written Exam average is a minimum of 77 at the time of the Practical Exams **AND** who are able to attend the scheduled Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* session. Inability to attend the Practical Exam *Final Re-Take* session for any reason precludes the learner from this opportunity.

VIII. Tardiness Policy for Practical Exams

1. Learners are assigned a specific time slot for each Practical Examination, which includes a specified number of minutes for preparation. If a learner arrives late for his/her Practical Exam, additional minutes **will not** be added to his/her Practical Exam time slot. A late arrival will result in reduced time for the learner to complete his/her Practical Exam.

Re-entry into the Professional Phase of the PTA program Policies & Procedures

Notification Dates for planned re-entry and submission of Applications for the PTA program

February 15 th	for August/September re-admission
October 1 st	for January re-admission

1. Learners must submit an Application to indicate his or her intent, schedule meetings with both the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education and the Program Coordinator to determine the necessary steps required to assure both competence and preparedness to ensure successful re-entry in the PTA program and potentially return to the clinical setting.
2. Competence must be demonstrated through the successful completion of a comprehensive re-entry practical exam that will be designed to encompass the curriculum that had been completed prior to that learner's departure from the PTA program. This is consistent with what is required of all learners to re-enter professional phase of the PTA program and potentially the next scheduled clinical education and lab courses.
 - a. Learners re-entering into the fall semester of the professional phase, will have 75 minutes to complete the re-entry practical examination.
 - b. Learners re-entering into the spring semester of the professional phase, will have 90 minutes to complete the re-entry practical examination.
3. Preparedness to resume the professional phase of the PTA program may involve repeating medical tests, First Aid, CPR and other health requirements or background checks that were initially established prior to the start of the Clinical Education component of the curriculum. All expenses involved in this are solely at the expense of the learner.
4. A re-entry practical exam must be passed prior to the start of the next academic semester in which the learner is planning on re-entering into the PTA program. There are no guarantees that a seat will be available for any individual. This is strictly based upon if there are open seats within the upcoming semester.
 - a. If there are more potential applicants for re-entry than open seats, then those who have higher scores on their re-entry practical examination **and** a higher GPA will be given preference
 - b. There will be 2 proctors for re-entry practical exams who will score candidates individually and independently
 - c. All critical safety indicators must be met to establish a minimum level of competence to return to the next class.
 - d. There are no re-takes for re-entry practical exams.
 - e. Learners are notified via email within one week with a summary of their performance on the re-entry practical exam and given the opportunity to meet with the PTA program coordinator to discuss the outcome both positive and negative for next steps.

The re-entry practical exam is required to ensure the safety of patients, classmates and PTAP faculty members.

These policies represent the decisions of the faculty of the Physical Therapist Assistant program. The decisions made reflect the best interest of the safety of current learners, future patients and the integrity of the program.

Revision Dates 2/03, 2/04, 11/04, 11/06, 1/07, 6/08, 4/11, 3/13, 3/14, 4/15, 7/15, 5/16

Repeating PTA Professional Phase Courses (PTA 107 or higher)

1. **Re-admission to a PTA Program course is not guaranteed.**
2. Permission will be granted on a space available basis after all continuing learners have been accommodated.
3. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of available slots, selection will be based on academic merit.
4. To potentially be readmitted, learners must satisfy the same academic eligibility requirements as all other learners (grades of "C+" or higher in science courses and overall GPA above 2.5, academic timelines apply).
 - a. Some learners may find it necessary to use the extra semester to improve their academic averages.
5. Passing a re-entry practical examination is required if the learner has previously passed courses within the professional phase of the PTA program in which there were practical exams. Please refer to the Practical Examination Policy.

Returning to the Professional Phase of the PTA program following a Withdrawal from the First Summer Semester

Once a Learner has been accepted into the Professional Phase of the PTA program, the faculty members of the PTA program have the expectation that course content in the following courses will be current so that it can be built upon and will act as a foundation for the curriculum of the PTA program. That foundation is expected to consist of a firm grasp and understanding of:

- Anatomy & Physiology I & II
- Pathology
- Intro to PTA

This has been represented by the requirement that Petitioners for the PTA program have grades of at least a C+ in each of their A&P, Pathology and the Intro to PTA course. Additionally, these courses are expected to be current. (*completed within the past 5 years, Intro to PTA has a 10- year retirement age*)

If a learner withdraws from the Professional Phase of the PTA program due to the academic demands of the summer courses, but plans to re-petition, he or she needs to satisfy the following criteria to assure that a firm foundation is in place upon which to build prior to being considered for re-admission:

1. Provide the PTA Program Coordinator with verification of a minimum of 120 hours of clinic hours to have taken place after the end of the summer when he or she was enrolled in the PTA program and prior to the re-submission of the petition. These hours could be in the form of verification of employment as a PT Aide but they must indicate that the petitioner has invested that amount of time within either one or more physical therapy settings by providing contact information, signatures & license numbers of PTs and or PTAs employed within the settings.

Rationale: This type of experience will help to strengthen one's resolve regarding the physical therapy setting and help to maintain a working knowledge of the medical terminology used within the workplace.

Lack of experience in a physical therapy setting may be one of the reasons that some learners become overwhelmed by the first summer semester. This requirement may assist him or her in determining that this is either the correct or incorrect career choice while also helping to strengthen previously learned skills in a professional environment.

Bjb, HA 06/11, Rev. BJB 08/11, 4/12, 11/13

MCCC Health Profession Programs Suspension/Expulsion Policy

Learner/ learners who are or have been subjected to disciplinary action for violation of the College's Policies regarding Academic Integrity which have resulted in suspension or expulsion by the Mercer County Community College Academic Integrity Committee are no longer eligible to participate in any of the Health Professions programs.

MCCC Health Professions programs: Nursing, Medical Laboratory Technology, Radiography, and Physical Therapist Assistant

STATUS

Suspension is a non-learner status during which a learner will not lose previously accrued academic credits but may not continue to participate in any of the Health Professions programs. Learners who have been suspended from the College will not be considered for re-admission or initial admission to any of the Health Professions programs.

4/09, Reviewed 4/18

Expectations for Lab Sessions

1. All Learners have access to towels and hospital gowns to be used during all lab sessions for the laboratory classes (PTA 107, 201, 210, 211, 213, and 216). Following the use of these linens, they are to be left in the locker room in MS 352 where they can be laundered. All linens are property of the PTA program and must be returned to the PTA program.
2. Learners are expected to come to lab sessions prepared to perform the lab activities assigned for that day.
3. Learners are expected to be appropriately attired to participate fully in the lab activities scheduled for that day.
4. Comfortable clothing that allows for full and unrestricted ease of movement, and dignity of the individual (e.g. clothing that does not compromise an individual's modesty nor expose unnecessary parts of the body) is strongly recommended.
 - a. This includes but is not limited to: sweat pants, gym shorts, tank tops, halter tops, sports bras, sneakers, and rubber soled closed toe shoes.
 - b. This clothing can be stored in the PTA program lockers in MS 352.
 - c. Learners will be asked to change his or her clothes and/or foot wear if they are not appropriate for the scheduled lab activities.
5. Hair must be kept clean, neat and away from the face. (secured and up)
6. Jewelry must be kept to a minimum. (no dangling jewelry e.g.: earrings, necklaces or bracelets)
7. Finger nails must be kept short*, neat, and clean. Nail polish must be neutral in color or clear. (**not extending beyond the end of the fingertips*)
8. Learners will have locker facilities available for storage of lab clothing and supplies.
 - a. Learners are responsible for providing their own combination lock for the lockers.
9. Learners are expected to participate as the clinician for each lab session and as the subject (*when no precautions or contraindications exist*) with their lab partner for each scheduled lab session.
10. Learners are encouraged to participate as subjects for demonstration purposes when asked by instructors to do so.
11. Lab partners may be randomly assigned throughout the semester to assure that all learners have had the opportunity to work with each of their classmates.
12. Depending on the times of scheduled labs, open lab hours may be available and such times will be posted on the bulletin board located outside the PTA Program lab MS 352.
13. Attendance will be taken at all scheduled labs and all learners are expected to read the instructions on the attendance sheet to determine what is expected for "signing in" (*if one is provided*).
14. Before using any equipment, all learners are expected to ask for assistance if he or she is unfamiliar with something prior to attempting to apply it to a classmate or themselves.

15. If the equipment or supplies that are needed are not available, learners are expected to ask the instructor for help.
16. Learners are expected to report any damaged or malfunctioning equipment to the instructor immediately so repairs or replacement can be made and the equipment can be appropriately labeled so that it will not be used by others.
17. No materials or lab equipment is to be removed from the lab without prior written approval from a lab instructor.
18. All equipment must be turned off after use and returned to its proper place. ***The lab must be kept neat and orderly by everyone who uses it. This is not the responsibility of the instructor.***
19. Whenever using the treatment tables (plinths) a sheet must be placed on the top to protect the surface. Sheets are located on the shelves above the hotpack unit.
 - a. Sheets are to be folded neatly and returned to the shelves after use unless they have been soiled during the lab. If soiled, then they need to be laundered in the lab's washer/drier.
20. Whenever moving the classroom tables, unlock the wheel locks before moving and secure them once moved. Stow tables with consideration for the legs so that they will not create a tripping hazard.
21. After each lab, everyone is responsible for assuring that tables, chairs and all equipment have been returned to their proper location for the next class.
22. Sheets, pillow cases, gowns and towels may be laundered when soiled.
 - a. Fill the washing machine, add detergent and make sure that someone will be there when the load is done.
 - b. If you hear either the washing machine or drier finish, you can load or unload the drier. Laundry is everyone's responsibility!
- 23. Learners may not make or receive text messages or personal telephone calls in the lab.**
 - a. If a call is received, that must be dealt with at that time, you may excuse yourself and leave the room to deal with it in the hallway where you will not disrupt classmates
24. For safety reasons, no minor age children are permitted in the lab or classroom.
25. Failure to observe lab expectations will negatively impact lab and class participation grades.
26. There is a refrigerator in the back of the lab however; it is for storage of:
 - a. Ice packs in the freezer
 - b. Electrodes in the drawers
 - c. Marked containers for personal items on the second shelf ONLY!
 - i. Any food items left on a Friday afternoon will be disposed of.
 - d. Bottled water on the refrigerator's top shelf which can be purchased for \$1 per bottle
 - i. This is a fundraiser to support the PTA Scholarship fund
 1. The money can be placed in the box on the front table in the lab
27. There is a Microwave in the lab which can be used for:
 - a. Heating up small items if it is kept clean (*please be considerate of others and refrain from heating items with strong odors*)
28. There is a Keureg in the back of the lab. Anyone with a Kcup is free to use.
 - a. All who use it are expected to clean up by emptying the base and disposing of the used Kcup.
 - b. If you use the mugs on the wall, then you are expected to wash, dry and then hang them up again.

Capstone Exams

Capstone exams are administered to learners to assist in gaining test taking skills in preparation for the National Physical Therapy Examination (NPTE). The NPTE is the exam that is used to establish minimum competence to practice as a Physical Therapist Assistant and passing this exam is required to be considered eligible for licensure. The NPTE is a multiple-choice exam that is taken at a testing center and is comprised of over 200 test items. Graduates have commented that they have had limited opportunities to practice taking tests of this magnitude. The PTA program faculty members developed a plan to address this concern. This includes a series of Capstone or cumulative exams that will be

administered throughout the senior year of the curriculum and encompass the entirety of the material covered to the date of each Capstone Exam administered.

These exams are administered through Blackboard, the college’s Learning Management System.

Capstone Exam Completion Policy

The overarching goal of the Capstone Exams is to provide learners with the opportunity to gain more experience with cumulative exams, so that they can learn how to become more successful under stressful testing conditions and thus perform better on the licensure examination which is both stressful and cumulative.

All learners are required to take three Capstone Exams throughout the PTA program curriculum. These examinations will be available after each of the Clinical Education class meetings through Blackboard. Learners who do not achieve the 77% passing score on each of the Capstone Exams will be required to review his or her performance, and if necessary, participate in guided instruction remediation. Learners may retake the exams if he or she wishes to do so prior to the end of that semester until a passing score is achieved.

After the PTA program, after all the didactic, clinical education and laboratory classes have successfully been completed with grades of C+ or higher, learners are also responsible for passing the third Capstone Exam. This will indicate that he or she has fulfilled all the requirements for the PTA Program Curriculum.

Guided Instruction Remediation

The specific format for Guided Instruction Remediation (GIF) will be mutually agreed upon by the learner, the Program Coordinator and/or Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education. Formats may include the following:

1. The learner reviews the exam, provides explanations for the questions that were answered incorrectly and then locates the correct answers and cites the sources in textbooks.
 - o This is then followed up by re-taking those portions of the exam within 2 weeks, where he or she was previously unsuccessful.
2. A learner-centered review of the test taking strategy to help determine where errors were made and why and help develop test taking skills.
 - o This is then followed up by re-taking those portions of the exam within 2 weeks, where he or she was previously unsuccessful.
3. A combination of 1 & 2

Adopted 8/2010

PTAP Advisory Panel & Faculty members Rev 11/13, Reviewed 4/18

Capstone I

Administered following the Fall Clinical Education meeting during the first month of the fall semester.

Courses completed:

Anatomy & Physiology I	Intro to PTA (PTA 101)	Therapeutic Measurement (PTA 107)
Anatomy & Physiology II	Kinesiology (PTA 105)	Pathology (PTA 112)

Capstone I Pass/Fail Consequence

Pass- continue within the curriculum and use the test as a learning experience.

Fail- continue within the curriculum and use the test as a learning experience.

Capstone II

Available in Blackboard in the course shell for PTA 237 after the Clinical Education class meeting in the first month of the second spring semester

Courses completed:

Intro to PTA (PTA 101)	Pathology (PTA 112)	Physical Agents (PTA 211)
Kinesiology (PTA 105)	Therapeutic Exercise (PTA 201)	PTA Clinical Ed I (PTA 224)

Therapeutic Measurement (PTA 107)	PTA Techniques (PTA 210)	PTA Seminar (PTA 227)
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Capstone II Pass/Fail Consequence

Pass- continue within the curriculum and use the test as a learning experience.

Fail- continue within the curriculum and use the test as a learning experience.

Capstone III

Available in Blackboard in the course shell for PTA 237 during and following Clinical Education III and until the end of the summer semester

Courses completed:

Anatomy & Physiology I & II	Therapeutic Exercise (PTA 201)	Ortho for PTA (PTA 216)
Intro to PTA (PTA 101)	Motor Development (PTA 205)	PTA Clinical Ed I (PTA 224)
Kinesiology (PTA 105)	PTA Techniques (PTA 210)	PTA Seminar (PTA 227)
Therapeutic Measurement (PTA 107)	Physical Agents (PTA 211)	PTA Clinical Ed II (PTA 235)
Pathology (PTA 112)	Therapy Clinic (PTA 213)	Professional Development (PTA 237)

Capstone III Pass/Fail Consequence

Pass- continue within the curriculum and use the test as a learning experience

Fail- continue to review content and re-take the test until it is successfully completed.

PLEASE NOTE:

The PTA program requires that all graduates pass the third Capstone Exam with a score of 77 to be able to have the PTA program coordinator sign that the learner has successfully completed all program requirements for the PTA program. An official MCCC transcript from the Registrar's Office with the MCCC seal as proof of graduation from the PTA program is a requirement to "sit for" the NPTE and apply for licensure.

Revision Dates: 11/04, 1/05, 11/06, 1/07, 8/11, 1/12, 11/13, 3/14, 4/15/, 4/18

**Mercer County Community College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Introduction Position Statement

In the state of New Jersey, licensed physical therapists (PT) and physical therapist assistants (PTA) must post their license in a public area of the clinic in which they practice. The state of New Jersey also requires the licensed PT and PTA to wear a nametag containing the first name, last name and professional designator.

In addition to these requirements, a verbal introduction to the patient is still necessary. This verbal introduction is just a component of the transparency required by all licensed health care providers to provide their identity so that patients can ensure that their health care providers have appropriate credentials.

Each patient has the right to decline treatment by a physical therapist assistant learner, with no risks or repercussions to the patient. Learners are to treat all patients with respect, regardless of their decision to participate or decline participation in clinical education. Therefore, a patient introduction takes place to inform the patient of who is treating them. The learner's introduction must include that they are a physical therapist assistant learner. This allows the patient to make an informed decision and provide verbal informed consent to be treated by a learner. Introductions are

also necessary for the patient to know who to ask for if he/she needs assistance during treatment or has a follow up question after treatment.

If the learner's nametag (containing first and last names) is clearly visible, then the learner can choose to include only their first name or both first and last names in his/her verbal introduction. When a learner usually uses a "nickname," a proper verbal introduction would include the original name along with the nickname. For example, if a learner's name is "Yarema" and everyone calls him "Jeremy," and if his nametag is clearly visible, he could introduce himself like this:

"Hi, my name is Yarema, but everyone calls me Jeremy because it's much easier to remember. I am a physical therapist assistant student from Mercer County Community College and I will be working with you today."

Patient safety, courtesy and respect are the values guiding this position statement.

Policy: Computer Skill Expectations

As a member of the health care team and a member of a society that is placing a greater reliance on technology, learners in the PTA program will be expected to be able to demonstrate competence with a limited number of competency skills. Although the faculty do not expect that learners will be completely computer savvy, there are some basic skills that all PTA program learners are expected to be able to do, or learn to do. These include:

- Basic use of a word processor and the ability to save a file either to a flash/thumb drive, hard drive or cloud drive (and the ability to retrieve that file).
- Accessing one's email from a location other than a home address
 - Opening an email from a remote location
 - Sending an email from a remote location
- Opening a file that has been attached to an email
- Saving a file to be attached to an email in one of the following formats:
 - .pdf file
 - .rtf file
 - Word document (.doc, .docx)
 - .html
- Performing an Internet search using key terms
 - Saving a site address from the Internet and pasting it into an email
 - Opening a web address within an email and exiting back to the email
 - Working with bookmarks

Skills that are considered "nice to have" that should be learned:

- PowerPoint or a similar form of presentation software

4/13 bjb

Mercer County Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Policy: Volunteer Opportunities for PTA Learners
Purpose: To ensure that the PTA learners, program and college is protected
Audience: PTAP learners, faculty and clinical faculty

- I. Volunteer Opportunities will be shared with PTA Learners only with facilities in which a current clinical affiliation contract is on file.

- II. All requirements as outlined in the clinical affiliation contract must be followed, including but not limited to:
 - A. A licensed clinician supervises the PTA learner(s) at all times
 - B. A licensed clinician remains fully responsible for the care of the patients/clients
 - C. Each volunteer opportunity is related to a specific PTA course

III. The following shall be included in each course manual for PTA professional phase courses:
 Volunteer opportunities for PTA learners are occasionally presented to the PTA Program. If and when volunteer opportunities pertaining to a course become available during the semester, the following guidelines apply:

1. Learners must remember that they have been invited to participate and are the guest of the host PT/PTA. During the volunteer opportunity, learners are considered ambassadors of the MCCC PTA Program and are expected to practice the professional behaviors that have been defined within the Learner Handbook. These include, but are not limited to:
 - a. demonstrating behaviors that reflect respect
 - b. conducting themselves in a manner that invites communication with others
 - c. refraining from texting and cell phone use during classroom labs, lectures or other PTAP related activities on or off campus
2. These opportunities are voluntary and not required
3. No preference will be provided to one learner over another
4. Participation in a volunteer opportunity will not affect the learner's grade
5. A licensed PT or PTA will supervise PTA learner participants at all times
6. A licensed PT or PTA will remain fully responsible for the care of their patients/clients
7. All MCCC PTA program learners involved in off campus activities must have an active liability insurance policy. Evidence of this must be on file with Mercer's Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education.

PTAP 12/2017, 3/18 PTAP

PTA Program Contact Information		
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PTA Program Coordinator	Barbara J. Behrens PTA, MS <i>NJ License # 40 QB 00015400</i> Behrensb@mccc.edu MS 350	Email only please
Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education	Holly Kaiser PT, DPT <i>NJ License # 40QA01114200</i> Kaiserh@mccc.edu MS 157	609-570-3478
Dean, Division of Health Professions	Robert J. Schreyer, PT, DPT Schreyer@mccc.edu MS 131	609-570-3384
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Executive Assistant Division of Health Professions	Barbara Pieslak pieslakb@mccc.edu MS 126	609-570-3383
Fax: 609-570-3831 "To the attention of" Must be included with the use of the Fax number and then include the name of the individual you want your fax delivered to. <i>The fax is in MS 128, not the office of either faculty member.</i>	mailing address: Physical Therapist Assistant Program Mercer County Community College PO Box 17202 West Windsor, NJ 08550-3407	Shipping Address: Physical Therapist Assistant Program Mercer County Community College 1200 Old Trenton Rd. West Windsor, NJ 08550-3407

Topic Area	Page
Academic Integrity Policy Statement	16
Academic Requirements	7
Accreditation	5
ADA Information	5

Attendance for PTA Program Courses	17
Capstone Exams	35
Clinical Education Course Grading	8
Communication Expectations & Skills	8
Compassion	3
Competency Testing	24
Computer Skill Expectations	38
Confidentiality Expectations	18
Contact Information Page	39
Courses Completed at other Colleges	10
Courses required in the PTA Program	9
Equal Opportunity & Americans with Disabilities Information	5
Expectations for Lab Sessions	34
Goals & Objectives for the PTA Program, Program Outcomes	6
Index	40
Informed Consent: Receiving Interventions & Contraindications	22
Lab Safety & Open Lab time	49
Learner Introductions	37
Leave of Absence	15
Legal Requirements for Licensure as a PTA	7
M-Alert & MercerMail	12
MCCC Academic Integrity Policy Statement	16
MCCC Health Profession Programs Suspension/Expulsion Policy	34
MCCC Policy for Learner Conduct	9
Methods of Instruction	10
Practical Examination Policies	28
Practical Examination Re-Take Policy & Procedure	30
Pregnancy & Parenting	21
PTA Program Academic Regulations	14
PTA Program Course Descriptions	13
PTA Program Mission Statement	5
Re-Entry Into the Professional Phase of the PTA Program	32
Repeating a PTA Professional Phase Course	33
Returning to the Professional Phase following a Withdrawal from the 1 st Summer	33
Safety During On-campus and Off-campus Educational Experiences	21
Learner Expenses	18
Suspected Learner Substance Abuse Policy	11
Testing	11
Transfer Credit	16
Volunteer Opportunities for PTA Learners	38

Forms

Mercer County Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Privacy Waiver Form

Learners have certain privacy rights under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (*FERPA a.k.a "Buckley Amendment"*). These rights relate to who may have access to an individual's "educational records". These records are intended for internal college use and are available to faculty, professional staff and accreditation agencies on a need-to-know basis.

Instructions:

By signing below, you are indicating that your educational records may be used for internal and accreditation purposes consistent with FERPA. (Buckley Amendment)

Please initial the statement which applies to you and sign the form below. If you grant unlimited "third parties" access to your records, initial **Statement 1**. If you grant conditional third-party access, initial **Statement 2**. Otherwise, initial **Statement 3**. **Initial only ONE statement.**

Statement 1 _____

I grant the physical therapist assistant program officials permission to release my educationally related records to third parties without restriction. Third parties may include, but are not limited to, schools and potential employers.

Statement 2 _____

I grant the physical therapist assistant program officials permission to release my educationally related records to all but the following: _____

Statement 3 _____

I do not grant permission to the physical therapist assistant program officials to extend access of my educationally related records to third parties.

Learner Name (*please print*) _____

Learner Signature

Date

**Mercer County Community College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Photography/Videotape Consent Form

Periodically throughout the semester PTA faculty members utilize photography to capture individuals from the MCCC learner body, faculty, and staff who are involved in classroom demonstrations that deal with experiences with a particular diagnosis. These individuals consent to sharing their experiences via film, willingly and without monetary compensation from the PTA program or the college. The participation (via film) of these individuals represents a unique perspective that can be utilized in the classroom for teaching and promotional purposes. This participation is considered to be a valuable asset to the PTA program and to the college. *(The film and images remain property of the PTA program and the college.)*

Consent Statement

I _____ do consent to the use of my image in either video or still photography for teaching and learning or promotional purposes for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program or to share my experiences with PTA learners.

Signed: _____ Witness: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

I _____ do ***NOT*** consent to the use of my image in either video or still photography for teaching and learning or promotional purposes for the Physical Therapist Assistant Program or to share my experiences with PTA learners. **My image would then not be included in any PTA program photographs or publications.**

Signed: _____ Witness: _____

Name: _____ Date: _____

Policy: Informed Consent

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is an academic and didactic program that has been designed to prepare learners to become practicing members of the physical therapy team. Physical therapy is a highly personal form of healthcare that involves close interaction between the clinician physical therapist assistant (PTA) under the supervision and direction of the Physical Therapist (PT) and the patient. Many of the skills involved require manual touching which is a skill that requires demonstration and practice to develop the required level of competence for clinical practice. Learners involved in the professional phase of the PTA program will utilize their fellow classmates as subjects and are also expected to be subjects for the PTA program faculty so that they can learn the required techniques.

Techniques are first presented in the didactic portion of each class and then practiced in lab classes where instructors have structured activities to foster attainment of each of the required skills. Instructors may demonstrate techniques on learners and will expect that learners practice the techniques with each other under the supervision of the instructor during class/lab time.

- There is a potential risk to learners when fellow classmates are learning techniques however; fellow classmates are encouraged to provide feedback at all times regarding what they feel which should minimize the potential risk of injury.
- Additionally, each lab class has a ratio of no more than one instructor to 14 learners and
 - Prior to the start of the Professional Phase of the PTA program, each learner has completed a form that indicates potential contraindications to techniques and the individual is responsible for updating that form prior to each lab course or as his or her condition necessitates an update.

Consent Statement:

I have read the above statements, have had the opportunity to ask questions and agree to the contents therein indicating that I understand what will be expected of me as a learner in the Professional Phase of the PTA program.

I understand that there is minimal risk of harm to myself and that my participation as a learner is key to my success in the PTA program.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Witness: _____ Name: _____

**Mercer County Community College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Learner History Questionnaire

Learner Name:
Date:

Throughout the course of the Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Program, learners will oftentimes fill the role of the “subject.” In order for the faculty members to maximize safety during various classroom and laboratory activities, learners will fill out this History Questionnaire. It is the responsibility of the learner to inform the course instructor of any additional situations as they arise throughout the course of the program or to update this form as needed. This information will be kept in the learner confidential file and will be made available only to (PTA) program faculty members, competency testers and practical examination proctors.

To the best of your knowledge, do you currently have (or have you had in the past), any of the following conditions:		
Condition	Yes	No
Are you pregnant?		
Do you have any current pain? If so, where?		
Ligament Tears		
Dislocations/Subluxations		
Herniated Disks		
Fractures		
Sprains		
Hernia		
Artificial Joints		
Musculoskeletal surgery		
Any significant orthopedic medical history?		
Latex allergies		
Other allergies		
Areas of decreased sensation		
Have you ever had frostbite? If so, where?		
Skin diseases or conditions		
See Reverse Side		
To the best of your knowledge, do you currently have (or have you had in the past), any of the following conditions:		

Condition	Yes	No
High blood pressure		
Low blood pressure		
Chest pain / Angina / Heart Attack		
Pacemaker		
Any other metal implants?		
Seizures		
Vertigo / Dizziness / Fainting		
Cancer or Tumors? If so, explain:		
Diabetes		
Stroke		
Anti-coagulant medication		

If you checked "YES" for any of the above conditions, please provide further explanation on the appropriate line above.

Is there any additional information that you wish to share with your course instructors, competency testers and practical examination proctors with regard to your ability to fulfill the role of "subject" and clinician?

YES / NO

If Yes, please provide here:

Learner Name

Learner Signature

Date

HB, 6/13

The faculty members of the PTAP believe that consistent with best practices, learner safety is one of the most important considerations during PTAP lab use. PTAP faculty members have established several policy statements that encompass lab safety that all PTAP learners must abide by. These include:

1. Absence from Lecture Prior to a Lab

- A. Learners who are absent for a lecture are not allowed to participate in the laboratory activities which apply to the missed lecture material, unless they have discussed the content covered during the lecture and been "cleared for participation in lab" by the lab instructor before the lab session.
 - i. "Cleared for participation" may be defined as any or all of the following at the discretion of the lab instructor:
 - 1. Submission of predetermined materials by the lab instructor prior to the start of the lab class
 - 2. Successful completion of a quiz that covered the content from the lecture that was missed during the absence
 - 3. Demonstration of a technique that had been demonstrated during the lecture when the learner was absent from lecture

2. Two are Required, not just One

- A. For safety reasons, there must be at least **two PTA learners in the lab MS 352**, at all times in case an emergency situation arises.
- B. The PTAP lab, MS 352 will only be open to PTAP learners if at least two PTAP learners are present.

3. Practicing treatment techniques/interventions

- A. Physical therapy treatment techniques must be performed only on learners who are currently enrolled in the professional phase of the PTAP.
- B. Friends and family, who are not PTA learners, could potentially have a medical contraindication and become injured from learners practicing a treatment technique with them.

4. Open Lab Policy

- A. During the professional phase of the PTAP, the lab (MS 352) may be available for learners to practice skills and/or study. Learners are only allowed to practice skills which have already been taught and practiced in lab within the Physical Therapist Assistant program curriculum.
- B. Learners are not allowed to utilize any electrical devices (those that plug into a wall outlet) without a PTA faculty member being on site and present **IN MS 352**. This includes paraffin, all forms of electrical stimulation, laser, traction and ultrasound.
- C. Learners are responsible for leaving the room in the condition in which they found it, which includes putting all desks, chairs, and lab equipment back in the appropriate location so that the next classroom activity can take place.
- D. Open lab opportunities will only be provided when a PTA faculty member is in the Math, Science Building on the West Windsor Campus and has agreed to open the lab for this purpose.

If any portion of this policy is violated, open lab hours for all learners will be suspended for the remainder of the week in which the policy has been violated.

My signature acknowledges that I agree to abide by the policies stated above and understand their intent.

Printed Name

Signature

Date

PTAP 12/2016

Essential Functions of a Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) Learner

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program (PTAP) has established minimum essential requirements (separate from academic standards for admission), which every learner must meet, with or without reasonable accommodations, in order to fully participate in all aspects of the training and educational program.

Prior to Admission: candidates should review this list to become familiar with the expectations of a PTAP learner/learner herein after referred to as “Essential Functions.”

Following admission into the professional phase of the program, each PTAP learner will be required to submit a signed copy of the Essential Functions for PTAP Learners form. Completed forms will be maintained in the individual learner’s file located in the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education’s office (MS 157).

If after admission into the PTAP any learner experiences a change in his or her ability to fulfill the Essential Functions requirements, the learner is required to inform the PTA Program Coordinator in writing.

Essential Functions for Physical Therapist Assistant Learners

Those individuals applying to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program (PTAP) should consider the following skills which have been identified as essential for all PTAs to be able to perform.

- Physical therapist assistants are technically trained individuals in physical therapy and provide certain physical therapy interventions after the physical therapist has examined and evaluated a patient and established a plan of care.
- The PTA follows the plan of care established by the physical therapist regarding the treatment interventions and patient care to be provided.
- The following standards indicate reasonable expectations of the PTA learner for the performance of common physical therapy functions and include:

Physical	Psychomotor
Cognitive	Environmental factors
Behavioral	Affective and communication functions
- The expectations for each of these functions will vary depending upon the clinical environment and specialty area of physical therapy practice. *(This list is not intended to be specific for use by an employer of a PTAP graduate since that would be determined by the specific employer and setting.)*

The PTAP adopted these Essential Functions in recognition of the patient’s right to safe and quality health care by our PTA learners and PTA graduates. The PTA learner must be able to apply the knowledge and skills required to function in a wide variety of clinical settings and situations, while providing the spectrum of physical therapy interventions. Each candidate in Mercer’s Associate of Applied Science degree program must be able to perform, with or without reasonable accommodations, each of these essential functions in order to fully participate in our PTA program and successfully complete the requirements for the AAS degree in PTA.

Adoption of these Essential Functions by the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is integrated with the patient’s right to safe and quality health care by our learners and graduates.

Instructions: Each essential function is described with specific examples provided. Place a check in the appropriate box if capable of meeting the requirement or not capable of meeting the requirement. The last page of this form requires completion and signature.

- **This form should be reviewed prior to applying to the Professional Phase of the PTA program.**
- **The completed form must be submitted no later than the first day of the summer semester of the Professional Phase after being accepted.**

1. Mobility and Psychomotor Skills: The applicant must be able to have sufficient motor capabilities to perform the movements and skills required for providing safe, reliable and effective physical therapy interventions for patients across the lifespan. These include but are not limited to:

Specific examples for mobility and motor essential functions		<i>I am capable of meeting these requirements</i>	<i>I am not capable of meeting these requirements</i>
a.	Ability to move or position patients and equipment which involves bending or stooping freely to floor level and reaching above the head.		
b.	Ability to exert 25-50 pounds of force when lifting, carrying, pushing, or pulling.		
c.	Ability to move or adjust patients and equipment which involves lifting, carrying, pulling, pushing, and guiding weights up to and including 50 lb.		
d.	Ability to safely and efficiently transfer a 150 lb. patient from the bed to the wheelchair using maximal assistance.		
e.	Ability to bend, twist, stoop, and balance safety.		
f.	Coordination, speed and agility to assist and safely guard (protect) a patient who is walking, exercising or performing other rehabilitation activities.		
g.	Ability to guide, resist and assist a patient or to provide emergency care, which may involve the activities of standing, kneeling, sitting, walking or crawling, for 90 minutes with no rest.		
h.	Appropriate body mechanics for all skills related to physical therapy and react safely and appropriate to sudden and unexpected movements of patients/classmates.		
i.	Ability to endure and successfully complete a 40-45 hour work week during clinical education courses, which includes standing, walking and stair climbing		
j.	Ability to provide for the patient's safety in all physical therapy activities		
k.	Manipulate and operate PTA equipment and demonstrate the ability and dexterity to manipulate the devices used in physical therapy which involves adjusting gauges, dials, small nuts/bolts, goniometers, equipment settings, tape measures, printouts, etc.		
l.	Ability to administer/perform CPR and emergency first aid safely and reliably without assistance.		
m.	Ability to observe and practice standard precautions.		
n.	Ability to work in an environment that requires significant physical activity and mobility throughout the workday in a way that does not compromise patient, classmate or therapist safety.		
o.	Ability to use arm muscles frequently and for extended periods of time		
p.	Ability to use leg muscles frequently and for extended periods of time		

2. Sensory: the applicant must have the ability to observe and participate in demonstrations and in physical therapy treatment interventions applied to patients. This includes the ability to obtain information in classroom, laboratory or clinical settings through observation, auscultation, palpation, and other measures including but not limited to:

Specific examples of essential functions for sensory		<i>I am capable of meeting these requirements</i>	<i>I am not capable of meeting these requirements</i>
a.	Visual ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language, identify normal and abnormal patterns of movement, to read or set parameters on physical therapy equipment, to discriminate color changes, and to interpret and access the environment.		
b.	Visual ability (corrected as necessary) to gather information from medical records and professional literature.		
c.	Auditory ability (corrected as necessary) to recognize and respond to soft voices, auditory timers, call bells, equipment alarms, and to effectively use devices for measurement of blood pressure and breath sounds.		
d.	Ability to effectively use a telephone.		
e.	Ability to palpate a pulse and to detect changes or abnormalities of surface skin texture, skin temperature, body segment contour, muscle tone and joint movement.		
f.	Adequate and functional positional, and movement, and balance sensations to assist and safely guard (protect) patients who are walking, exercising or performing other rehabilitation activities.		

3. Communication Skills: The applicant must be able to utilize effective and efficient communication with peers, faculty, various clinical medical practitioners, patients and their families. This includes but is not limited to the following:

Specific examples for essential functions of communication		<i>I am capable of meeting these requirements</i>	<i>I am not capable of meeting these requirements</i>
a.	Ability to communicate effectively using standard English (interpret and express) both verbally and in writing. Able to correctly follow and interpret verbal instructions.		
b.	Ability to communicate effectively (interpret and express) information regarding the status, safety and rehabilitation of patients verbally and in writing		
c.	Ability to effectively and efficiently communicate verbally and in documentation with patients, families, health care professionals, community, and with reimbursement payers. Correct spelling required.		
d.	Ability to communicate and document effectively via computer or paper.		
e.	Ability to recognize, interpret and respond appropriately to nonverbal communications from patients, self and others. .		
f.	Ability to modify communications (verbal and written) to meet the needs of different audiences such as patients, families, peers, physicians and other health care personnel.		
g.	Ability to work effectively as part of an interdisciplinary team.		
h.	Ability to prepare medical documentation using prescribed format and conforming to all the rules of English punctuation, grammar, diction and style.		
i.	Ability to effectively use a computer and operate other software programs for billing, documentation or scheduling.		
j.	Ability to apply and communicate principles of logical or scientific thinking to define problems, establish facts and draw valid conclusions.		

k.	Ability to manage several abstract and concrete variables.		
l.	Ability to engage in respectful, non-judgmental interactions with individuals from various lifestyles, cultures, beliefs, races, socioeconomic classes and abilities.		
m.	Ability to develop and maintain effective, respectful working relationships with professional colleagues, peers, patients, families, and the general public.		
n.	Ability to establish trustworthy professional, empathetic relationships with individuals from a variety of backgrounds, ages and needs.		
o.	Ability to apply teaching and learning theories and methods in the healthcare and community environments.		
p.	Ability to graciously admit mistakes and accept constructive criticism.		

4. Environmental Aspects: The applicant must be capable and able to adhere to infection control environmental aspects as related to exposure to blood-borne pathogens.

Specific examples for essential functions of the environment		<i>I am capable of meeting these requirements</i>	<i>I am not capable of meeting these requirements</i>
a.	Willingness to treat patients regardless of health condition or infectious state of patient.		
b.	Ability to adhere to standard precautions.		

5. Behavior and Psychosocial Skills: The applicant must demonstrate good judgment, and the ability to develop empathetic and therapeutic relationships with patients and others. The applicant must have a tolerance for close and direct physical contact with a diverse population. This includes individuals of all ages, races, socioeconomic, ethnic backgrounds and a variety of people with weight disorders, physical disfigurements and medical or mental health problems. This includes but is not limited to:

Specific examples for behavioral and psychosocial essential functions		<i>I am capable of meeting these requirements</i>	<i>I am not capable of meeting these requirements</i>
a.	Ability to recognize and respond appropriately to potentially dangerous situations.		
b.	Ability to uphold the APTA Code of Ethics.		
c.	Ability to maintain patient confidentiality.		
d.	Ability to simultaneously work with multiple patients, families and colleagues.		
e.	Ability to work with lab partners, patients, families and others during stressful conditions, including but not limited to medically or emotionally unstable individuals, and providing CPR or other emergency interventions.		
f.	Ability to encourage cooperation and collegial relationships with classmates, instructors, other health care providers, patients and families.		
g.	Ability to prioritize multiple tasks integrates information and makes appropriate decisions.		
h.	Ability to cope with heavy workloads, patient demands and changes in schedules. Flexibility important.		
i.	Ability to practice professional and respectful physical touch across genders.		
j.	Ability to maintain professional demeanor in all clinical interactions.		
k.	Ability to interact appropriately with individuals of all ages, genders, ethnicity, socio-economic, religious and cultural backgrounds.		
l.	Ability to motivate and positively influence patients and others.		

m.	Ability to work effectively with challenging and terminally ill patients.		
n.	Ability to delegate appropriately to others.		
o.	Ability to appropriately receive direction and collaborate with supervisors, academic and clinical instructors, physicians and other designated health professionals.		
p.	Ability to consistently display professional behaviors.		

6. Critical Thinking/Problem Solving:

The applicant must be able to critically think and problem-solve, calculate, reason and be able to comprehend and process information within the time frame of a session of physical therapy interventions. The applicant must be able to organize, prioritize and attend to tasks and responsibilities efficiently and effectively. This includes but is not limited to:

Specific examples for critical thinking and problem solving essential functions		<i>I am capable of meeting these requirements</i>	<i>I am not capable of meeting these requirements</i>
a.	Ability to collect, interpret and analyze written, verbal and observed data about patients. This requires basic math and algebra computation skills.		
b.	Ability to prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information and make appropriate decisions. Able to do this with just verbal instructions/directions if necessary.		
c.	Ability to act safely and ethically in the physical therapy classroom, lab and clinical settings.		
d.	Ability to communicate the rationale or reasoning to justify decisions made.		
e.	Ability to consult with others to clarify information and to problem solve.		
f.	Ability to recognize potentially unsafe situations and react in an appropriate and timely manner.		
g.	Ability to apply knowledge of principles, indications and contraindications for physical therapy interventions. This includes therapeutic interventions related to human pathology and disability, therapeutic modalities, therapeutic massage, pulmonary hygiene, physical and functional measures, and therapeutic exercises.		
h.	Ability to educate PTA learners, aides, volunteers, patients, families and caregivers.		
i.	Comprehend, retain and retrieve complex information from the liberal arts, basic sciences, mathematics, psychological sciences and clinical sciences applying that information to professional course work.		
j.	Participate in the process of scientific inquiry.		
k.	Procure evidence-based information and apply it to the practice of physical therapy.		
l.	Comprehend, synthesize and integrate information from written materials, demonstrations, lectures, class discussions, laboratory practice sessions, and real and simulated patients.		
m.	Apply information obtained from classroom, laboratory and written materials to the examination, assessment and intervention of real and simulated patients.		

Clinical education courses occur throughout the two year program and each course increases in the number of weeks in the clinical setting starting with 4 weeks in the first fall semester, then 5 weeks in the spring and the final clinical experience is 6 weeks during the summer semester. PTAP learners provide physical therapy interventions in clinical

settings under the direction and supervision of physical therapists. Applicants must arrange their personal schedule and have the ability to compete (40-45 hours/ week) for each of these clinical courses.

Individuals with disabilities who are otherwise qualified will not be denied admission to the program, if they can perform these essential functions with reasonable accommodations. (*Individuals with Disabilities Policy*)

Applicants to the PTA Program who have questions or concerns about these requirements are encouraged to contact the PTA Program Coordinator, Professor Barbara Behrens via email: behrensb@mccc.edu

I _____ have been provided with a copy of the Essential Functions and have had the opportunity to ask
(Initials) questions.

I _____ can perform the Essential Functions identified by the PTAP.
(Initials)

Please check one of these options:

- I **need** reasonable accommodations to fully participate
- I **do not need** any accommodations to fully participate

I _____ am aware that I need to inform the PTAP Coordinator in writing if my ability to fulfill the
(Initials) Essential Functions of a PTA requirements changes.

Printed Name: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Sources:

AASIG Technical Standards, Essential Functions Document. Section on Education, September, 1998.
Ingram, D. (1997). Opinions of Physical Therapy Program Directors on Essential Functions, *Physical Therapy*, 77(1).
Simmons College Essential Functions, Boston, MA. University of Rhode Island Essential Functions, Kingston, RI.
Northeastern University Essential Functions, Boston, MA. Illinois Central College, Peoria, IL

**Mercer County Community College
Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

I have received a copy of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Learner Handbook. By signing below, I acknowledge that I have read, understand, agree with and have had an opportunity to ask questions about the information presented. There were a total of ____ pages in the handbook.

Name: _____
(Printed name)

Signature: _____ Date: _____

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