



Northeast Texas Community College

Physical Therapist Assistant Program

Student Policy and Procedure Handbook

2021-2022

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Physical Therapy is an incredibly rewarding field. You have chosen a profession that is not only honorable and rewarding but exciting as well. We hope to provide you with the skills needed to become a valued and respected member of the physical therapy team and abilities to provide the highest quality patient care.

This Student Policy and Procedure Handbook is designed to be used as a source of information and a foundation for student behavior. This program handbook along with the Northeast Texas Community College Student Handbook and the Northeast Texas Community College Catalog are indispensable guides. The policies are subject to change as deemed necessary and will be published in future editions of the handbook.

If you need assistance in overcoming obstacles during your course of study, please feel free to meet with any of the program faculty. The PTA offices are located in the University and Health Science building first floor.

We hope you are excited and ready to face what the next 5 semesters has in store for you. It will be a difficult, yet fun and rewarding adventure.

## **MISSION STATEMENT**

Through exemplary learning opportunities at NTCC, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program strives to provide the community with responsible practitioners who are competent and professional in the provision of Physical Therapy services.

## **PROGRAM PHILOSOPHY**

In order for a person to be a vital part of society, he/she must function at a maximum level of independence. When disease or injury strikes, it is necessary to assist that person in efforts to return to his rightful place in society. As a member of the health care team, the Physical Therapist Assistant can participate in this effort under the direction of the Physical Therapist. The program at Northeast Texas Community College is dedicated to providing the student with the knowledge and the opportunity to gain proficiency in the procedures and treatment techniques necessary for their contribution to the improvement of one's health in the spectrum of life.

## **PTA PROGRAM GOALS**

1. The program will yield Physical Therapist Assistants who practice professionally within the community while providing quality patient care under the direction and supervision of the Physical Therapist.
2. The graduate will demonstrate competence in the delivery of entry-level physical therapy interventions under the supervision of a physical therapist and work effectively with colleagues, patients, families, and public.
3. The graduate will obtain licensure and employment in order to practice in a professional and ethical manner that is consistent with the profession and licensure regulations.


4. The graduate will exhibit professional behavior and employ communication styles that are sensitive to age, culture and socioeconomic diversity of individuals while interacting with patient, families, and colleagues.
5. The program faculty will provide students with exceptional learning experiences which reflect best contemporary physical therapy practices and cultivate professionalism.

## **STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The PTA student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate competent data collection techniques to measure patient progress within the POC.
2. Implement safe physical therapy interventions using appropriate problem solving skills to progress a patient or modify interventions within the POC under the supervision of a PT
3. Communicate effectively and appropriately with the PT, patient, families, caregivers, and healthcare team members while demonstrating respect for age, culture, and socioeconomic differences.
4. Document relevant information about PT interventions and corresponding data collection according to practice guidelines.
5. Demonstrate ethical behavior in the delivery of physical therapy intervention that is within the scope of practice of the PTA.
6. Participate in district and state activities that will enhance personal and professional growth when possible.

## **ACCREDITATION**

Northeast Texas Community College PTA program received accreditation in October 2007, by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association  . Reaffirmation of accreditation received October 2012 for 10 years. Northeast Texas Community College began serving students in August, 1985. Full membership in the Southern Association for Colleges and Schools was achieved in January, 1987.

## **LICENSURE PASS RATES AND EMPLOYMENT**

Pass rates as of 5/2021:

Class of 2018: 100% (first time) pass rate with 100% of graduates employed

Class of 2019: 100% (first time) pass rate with 100% of graduates employed

Class of 2020: 92% pass rate with 92% of graduates employed

## **STUDENT RETENTION AND GRADUATION RATES**

Due to the number of faculty and clinical placement limitations it is necessary for our program to restrict the number of students it accepts to 16. It is for this reason we have the program's selective process in place. Please understand that once accepted, program faculty want and expect students to graduate. The program has mechanisms in place to

provide the student with the support necessary to accomplish this goal. If students are having any difficulty personally or academically program faculty encourages open dialogue for guidance and assistance. In addition, the following services are provided for the student:

- The Special Support Services located on campus provides assistance to those individuals who have documented disabilities. Students receive assistance with tutoring, interpreters, classroom accommodations, study aids, alternative testing procedures, or counseling.
- The Student Success Program and NET tutor (online) provides assistance/tutoring to students in the areas of reading, writing, math and study skills.
- Open lab time is provided to program students for practicing techniques taught in all lab courses.

**Graduation rates as of 12/2020:**

Class of 2018: Matriculated 16; graduated 13

Class of 2019: Matriculated 16; graduated 14

Class of 2020: Matriculated 16; graduated 13

**ORGANIZATIONAL CHARTS**

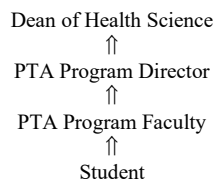
Please refer to the following links for the institution organization charts

<https://www.ntcc.edu/sites/default/files/2020-09/President.pdf>

<https://www.ntcc.edu/sites/default/files/2021-02/VP%20of%20Instruction.pdf>

<https://www.ntcc.edu/sites/default/files/2021-02/Dean%20of%20Health%20Science.pdf>

The following organizational chart shows the appropriate lines of communication and the administrative reporting of the institution:



**HONOR CODE**

It is the responsibility of students and faculty to help maintain scholastic integrity at the College by refusing to participate in or tolerate scholastic dishonesty. **Plagiarism** and other **forms of dishonesty** undermine the very purpose of the college and diminish the value of an education. Specific sanctions for academic dishonesty are outlined in the Northeast Texas Community College Student Handbook and in this manual. Personal and professional ethics are inherent in the field of physical therapy therefore; the highest standards of honesty and integrity must be adhered to. This Honor Code, in its simplest form means that you will neither give nor receive any unauthorized assistance from any person, paper, or object on any examination, lab practical, paper, or project. This includes talking about lab practical exams, regular exam questions, looking at copies of old tests from previous students, copying or allowing anyone to copy off of your test or assignment, and discussing any aspect of an exam or practical with a student who has not yet taken the test and/or practical (this includes the State Board exam).

With regards to research papers, in-services, group projects, etc. the use of another person's words or ideas must be cited and credit given to the source(s). Examples of plagiarism include:

- The inclusion of another person's exact words in a paper or assignment without placing quotation marks around the words to indicate an exact quote, *even if the source is cited*;
- Using **several consecutive sentences** written by another person, changing the words somewhat to keep the passage from being an exact quote, *even if the source is cited*;
- Presenting someone else's ideas without citing that person as the original thinker;
- Submitting a paper written in part or in whole by another person;

Violations of any portion of this policy will be brought to the attention of the student by the instructor. If there is suspicion of wrongdoing without corroborating evidence, the matter will be discussed with the student and a written warning/contract will be issued if warranted. If there is clear evidence that a violation has taken place, the student will receive a grade of "0" for that test/assignment in question; and the instructor will impose a penalty ranging from a written warning to dismissal from the course with a failing grade. If the student does not feel that the issue is satisfactorily resolved, the student should contact the PTA Program Director to discuss the matter. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the student may contact the Dean of Health Science, followed by the Executive Vice President for Instruction. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved at the end of this process, the student may initiate a formal grievance procedure outlined in the NTCC Student Handbook and in this manual.

#### **APA (American Psychological Association)**

APA is a specific format that is a guideline for every aspect of writing. It is used to determine authorship and aids in preventing plagiarism, as well as, constructing accurate reference citations. This format will be adhered to for all writing assignments specified by program faculty.

# Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant



**HOD S06-20-31-26** [Amended HOD S06-19-47-68; HOD S06-09-20-18; HOD S06-00-13-24; HOD 06-91-06-07; Initial HOD 06-82-04-08] [Standard]

## **Preamble:**

The Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant (Standards of Ethical Conduct) delineate the ethical obligations of all physical therapist assistants as determined by the House of Delegates of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). The Standards of Ethical Conduct provide a foundation for conduct to which all physical therapist assistants shall adhere. Physical therapist assistants are guided by a set of core values (accountability, altruism, collaboration, compassion and caring, duty, excellence, integrity, and social responsibility). Throughout the document the primary core values that support specific principles are indicated in parentheses. Fundamental to the Standards of Ethical Conduct is the special obligation of physical therapist assistants to enable patients and clients to achieve greater independence, health and wellness, and enhanced quality of life.

No document that delineates ethical standards can address every situation. Physical therapist assistants are encouraged to seek additional advice or consultation in instances where the guidance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct may not be definitive. The APTA Guide for Conduct of the Physical Therapist Assistant and Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant provide additional guidance.

## **Standards**

### **Standard #1: Physical therapist assistants shall respect the inherent dignity, and rights, of all individuals.**

(Core Values: Compassion and Caring, Integrity)

1A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in a respectful manner toward each person regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, religion, ethnicity, social or economic status, sexual orientation, health condition, or disability.

1B. Physical therapist assistants shall recognize their personal biases and shall not discriminate against others in the provision of physical therapist services.

### **Standard #2: Physical therapist assistants shall be trustworthy and compassionate in addressing the rights and needs of patients and clients.**

(Core Values: Altruism, Collaboration, Compassion and Caring, Duty)

2A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in the best interests of patients and clients over the interests of the physical therapist assistant.

2B. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapist interventions with compassionate and caring behaviors that incorporate the individual and cultural differences of patients and clients.

2C. Physical therapist assistants shall provide patients and clients with information regarding the interventions they provide.

2D. Physical therapist assistants shall protect confidential patient and client information and, in collaboration with the physical therapist, may disclose confidential information to appropriate authorities only when allowed or as required by law.

### **Standard #3: Physical therapist assistants shall make sound decisions in collaboration with the physical therapist and within the boundaries established by laws and regulations.**

(Core Values: Collaboration, Duty, Excellence, Integrity)

3A. Physical therapist assistants shall make objective decisions in the patient's or client's best interest in all practice settings.

3B. Physical therapist assistants shall be guided by information about best practice regarding physical therapist intervention.

3C. Physical therapist assistants shall make decisions based upon their level of competence and consistent with patient and client values.

3D. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in conflicts of interest that interfere with making sound decisions.

3E. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapist services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist and shall communicate with the physical therapist when patient or client status requires modifications to the established plan of care.

**Standard #4: Physical therapist assistants shall demonstrate integrity in their relationships with patients and clients, families, colleagues, students, research participants other health care providers, employers, payers, and the public.**

(Core Value: Integrity)

4A. Physical therapist assistants shall provide truthful, accurate, and relevant information and shall not make misleading representations.

4B. Physical therapist assistants shall not exploit persons over whom they have supervisory, evaluative or other authority (eg, patients and clients, students, supervisees, research participants, or employees).

4C. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in any sexual relationship with any of their patients and clients, supervisees, or students.

4D. Physical therapist assistants shall not harass anyone verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually.

4E. Physical therapist assistants shall discourage misconduct by physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and other health care professionals and, when appropriate, report illegal or unethical acts, including verbal, physical, emotional, or sexual harassment, to an appropriate authority with jurisdiction over the conduct.

4F. Physical therapist assistants shall report suspected cases of abuse involving children or vulnerable adults to the appropriate authority, subject to law.

**Standard #5: Physical therapist assistants shall fulfill their legal and ethical obligations.**

(Core Values: Accountability, Duty, Social Responsibility)

5A. Physical therapist assistants shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

5B. Physical therapist assistants shall support the supervisory role of the physical therapist to ensure quality care and promote patient and client safety.

5C. Physical therapist assistants involved in research shall abide by accepted standards governing protection of research participants.

5D. Physical therapist assistants shall encourage colleagues with physical, psychological, or substance-related impairments that may adversely impact their professional responsibilities to seek assistance or counsel.

5E. Physical therapist assistants who have knowledge that a colleague is unable to perform their professional responsibilities with reasonable skill and safety shall report this information to the appropriate authority.

**Standard #6: Physical therapist assistants shall enhance their competence through the lifelong acquisition and refinement of knowledge, skills, and abilities.**

(Core Value: Excellence)

6A. Physical therapist assistants shall achieve and maintain clinical competence.

6B. Physical therapist assistants shall engage in lifelong learning consistent with changes in their roles and responsibilities and advances in the practice of physical therapy.

6C. Physical therapist assistants shall support practice environments that support career development and lifelong learning.

**Standard #7: Physical therapist assistants shall support organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients and clients and society.**

(Core Values: Integrity, Accountability)

7A. Physical therapist assistants shall promote work environments that support ethical and accountable decision-making.

7B. Physical therapist assistants shall not accept gifts or other considerations that influence or give an appearance of influencing their decisions

7C. Physical therapist assistants shall fully disclose any financial interest they have in products or services that they recommend to patients and clients.

7D. Physical therapist assistants shall ensure that documentation for their interventions accurately reflects the nature and extent of the services provided.

7E. Physical therapist assistants shall refrain from employment arrangements, or other arrangements, that prevent physical therapist assistants from fulfilling ethical obligations to patients and clients.

**Standard #8: Physical therapist assistants shall participate in efforts to meet the health needs of people locally, nationally, or globally.**

(Core Value: Social Responsibility)

8A. Physical therapist assistants shall support organizations that meet the health needs of people who are economically disadvantaged, uninsured, and underinsured.

8B. Physical therapist assistants shall advocate for people with impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and disabilities in order to promote their participation in community and society.

8C. Physical therapist assistants shall be responsible stewards of health care resources by collaborating with physical therapists in order to avoid overutilization or underutilization of physical therapist services.

8D. Physical therapist assistants shall educate members of the public about the benefits of physical therapy.

**Explanation of Reference Numbers:**

HOD P00-00-00-00 stands for House of Delegates/month/year/page/vote in the House of Delegates minutes; the "P" indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, HOD P06-17-05-04 means that this position can be found in the June 2017 House of Delegates minutes on Page 5 and that it was Vote 4.

P: Position | S: Standard | G: Guideline | Y: Policy | R: Procedure

Last Updated: 8/12/2020

<b>ESTIMATED COST FOR PTHA CURRICULUM</b>				
<b>First Year</b>		<b><u>In-District</u></b>	<b><u>Out of District</u></b>	<b><u>Out of State</u></b>
<b>Fall Semester</b>	Tuition (14 credit hours)	1,835.00	2,703.00	3,375.00
	Sim Lab Fees	60.00	60.00	60.00
	Textbooks	580.00	580.00	580.00
	CPR certification	54.00	54.00	54.00
	Drug Testing	20.00	20.00	20.00
	Hepatitis B vaccinations	225.00	225.00	225.00
	Supplies	35.00	35.00	35.00
	Lab Fees	100.00	100.00	100.00
	PTA Lab Scrubs/Polo/T-Shirt	160.00	160.00	160.00
	Computer and Internet service	1,500.00	1,500.00	1,500.00
<b>Total for Semester</b>		<b>\$4,569.00</b>	<b>\$5,437.00</b>	<b>\$6,109.00</b>
<b>Spring Semester</b>	Tuition (18 credit hours)	2,351.00	3,467.00	4,331.00
	Sim Lab Fee	30.00	30.00	30.00
	Additional (Lab) fees	200.00	200.00	200.00
	Textbooks	510.00	510.00	510.00
<b>Total for Semester</b>		<b>\$3,091.00</b>	<b>\$4,207.00</b>	<b>\$5,071.00</b>
<b>May Minimester</b>	Tuition (3 credit hours)	416.00	602.00	794.00
	Sim Lab Fee	25.00	25.00	25.00
	Textbook	94.00	94.00	94.00
	Drug Testing	20.00	20.00	50.00
<b>Total for Semester</b>		<b>\$555.00</b>	<b>\$741.00</b>	<b>\$963.00</b>
<b>Summer I</b>	Tuition (2 credit hours)	287.00	411.00	603.00
	Textbooks	250.00	250.00	250.00
	EXXAT Fee	30.00	30.00	30.00
	Professional Liability Insurance	25.00	25.00	25.00
	PTA MACS	60.00	60.00	60.00
	Travel expenses to Clinical Sites	700.00	700.00	700.00
<b>Total for Semester</b>		<b>\$1,352.00</b>	<b>\$1,476.00</b>	<b>\$1,668.00</b>
<b>Summer II</b>	Tuition (5 credit hours)	674.00	984.00	1,224.00
	Textbooks	250.00	250.00	250.00
<b>Total for Semester</b>		<b>\$924.00</b>	<b>\$1,234.00</b>	<b>\$1,474.00</b>
<b>Second Year</b>		<b><u>In-District</u></b>	<b><u>Out of District</u></b>	<b><u>Out of State</u></b>
<b>Fall Semester</b>	Tuition (7 credit hours)	932.00	1,366.00	1,702.00
	EXXAT Fee	60.00	60.00	60.00
	PEAT fee	100.00	100.00	100.00
	On- Line Course Fee	50.00	50.00	50.00
	Professional Liability Insurance	25.00	25.00	25.00

	Licensure fees	600.00	600.00	600.00
	PTA Misc. Dues	30.00	30.00	30.00
	Travel expenses to Clinical Sites	1,400.00	1,400.00	1,400.00
<b>Total for Semester</b>		<b>\$3,197.00</b>	<b>\$3,631.00</b>	<b>\$3,967.00</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR PROGRAM</b>		<b>\$13,688.00</b>	<b>\$16,726.00</b>	<b>\$19,252.00</b>

<b><u>Tuition estimate for Addition of Core Curriculum (17 hours)*</u></b>		
<b><u>In-District</u></b>	<b><u>1,797.00</u></b>	
<b><u>Out of District</u></b>	<b><u>2,851.00</u></b>	
<b><u>Out of State</u></b>	<b><u>3,667.00</u></b>	
<b><u>* Does not include course textbooks</u></b>		

**Revised 6/2020**

NOTE\* All costs are estimated. Tuition, fees and book prices are subject to change. Book prices are based on required texts only and are based on new book prices. Hepatitis B vaccinations and TB tests are required but you must get them through your own physician, therefore prices may vary.

## **GENERAL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**

### **CHANGE OF PERSONAL INFORMATION**

It is very important the program have current contact information for you. Any legal change of personal information such as your name, address, phone number, legal status must be reported to the Program Secretary, the PTA Program Director and the Office of the Admissions and Records on campus. Changes should be reported as soon as possible after a change occurs.

### **TRANSFER CREDIT**

Students attempting the transfer of credits earned at another institution are evaluated on an individual basis by the Registrar's office. Detailed information about transfer credit can be found in the NTCC student handbook online under the heading of Transfer Credit. If a student has transferred into NTCC, they are required to meet with one of the program faculty or program administrative assistant for review of transcript(s) and approval (by registrar) of transfer credit. It is the student's responsibility to confirm that the necessary **official** transcripts have been received by the Registrar's office. The student is strongly encouraged to periodically monitor their unofficial transcript by accessing the student services link and transcript request tab in the student portal to be sure that the NTCC transcript is up to date; this will help minimize the possibility of degree challenges at or near the time of graduation. PTHA credits earned at Northeast Texas Community College may transfer to other colleges at the discretion of that institution's admissions office. In general, PTHA technical courses may be transferable as electives only. NTCC PTA program has an articulation agreement with Texas A&M, Texarkana whereby the PTHA courses will satisfy requirements for the BAAS degree.

### **GRADING POLICY AND PROCEDURE**

Course grades are based on scores earned on quizzes, exams, special assignments, lab practical examinations and final examinations. Percentage breakdowns are listed in specific course syllabi. All exams are the property of Northeast Texas Community College and will not be retained by students. The course schedule of class topics and exams is subject to change as the need arises. Grades will be posted in the course gradebook accessible on Blackboard in each course. Clinic course grades are based on the use of the PTA MACS (Manual for Assessment of Clinical Skills) and other criteria as noted in the clinical course syllabi. Training on the PTA MACS will be provided prior to the student's first clinical affiliation.

A minimum overall grade of "C" is required in all PTHA courses before using that course as a prerequisite for the next course in sequence. In preparation for the State Board examination, the letter grade assigned to all PTHA courses shall be determined as follows:

A = 92 – 100

B = 83 – 91

C = 75 – 82

D = 66 – 74

F = 65 and below

Specific objectives are established for each of the PTHA courses. These may be found in the course syllabus provided to the student on Blackboard under the specific course

number. The student should refer to the specific objectives frequently throughout the course of study.

The PTA program designates 75% as the minimum passing level of achievement. **A student must have a 75% course exam average to be eligible to sit for the final exam. In addition, the student must have a 75% lab component average to be eligible to sit for the final exam.** Any student receiving a final course average below 75% will not pass the course and will be subsequently dismissed from the program. If a student does not meet either the exam average or the lab component average of 75%, they will not be eligible to sit for the final exam and will fail the course. Moreover, the PTHA 2339 Professional Issues (Capstone) course requires that the student pass (per score sheet) one of the two PEAT exams offered in order to successfully complete the course and proceed towards graduation. In the event a student is unable to pass either exam during the scheduled course timeframe, they will be given a conditional grade of “I” (incomplete). The student will be required to retake the review exams until proof of passing is provided. The results score sheet provided by the student will allow a grade change from “I” to a passing grade and proceed with graduation.

Course Outlines presented on each course syllabus include but are not limited to:

1. General description of the course
2. General objectives of the course
3. Breakdown of course content by units including subject area
4. Methods of presentation
5. Methods of evaluating students/Grading
6. Textbooks required
7. Attendance and Absenteeism Policy
8. Class Preparedness expectations
9. Civility Statement
10. ADA Statement

### **INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS**

The material will be presented in lecture/demonstration online and face-to-face format, frequently utilizing Power Point presentations with performance of specific technique in the laboratory following the lecture. Guest lecturers and field trips will be incorporated to enhance the classroom material. Audio-visual materials will be utilized whenever possible.

### **DIDACTIC ASSIGNMENTS**

Students are expected to complete all reading assignments, as outlined in the course schedule or assigned by the instructor, **prior** to class time. It is the student’s responsibility to turn in assignments on time. Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period. Late assignments received by the next class period will result in a maximum grade of 75. If assignment is not turned in by the next class period the student will receive a grade of “0” for that assignment. Students are expected to participate in and perform a variety of physical therapy procedures on each other in lab and the classroom for educational purposes; after practicing each laboratory skill, the student will be asked to present a return demonstration to the instructor at some point prior to the conclusion of the lab. This participation is vital to the learning process. The student’s consent is needed to participate in these procedures.

## CLASS ATTENDANCE

### ***TARDIES AND ABSENCES ARE STRONGLY DISCOURAGED***

The PTA faculty believes that the habits and work patterns established in school will be carried over to the work setting. Therefore, every effort should be made to establish patterns of good attendance and promptness. This applies not only to the technical courses but also the general education and support courses. Student attendance is addressed under student responsibilities in the school catalog. In addition, student attendance and participation is also addressed utilizing the Professionalism Development Rubric. This document provides the student a means to identify and track any area(s) of deficiency regarding professional behaviors; and, to improve in the area(s). For the PTA Program, the following guidelines concerning attendance will be enforced:

1. For every class period missed, one (1) absence is accumulated.
2. A student more than five (5) minutes late or leaving class early with or without instructor permission is considered tardy.
3. Three (3) tardies constitute one (1) absence.
4. After absences (excused or unexcused) in any 4 class periods per semester, the student will be placed on probation. Stipulations of probation will be developed based on the student's history and circumstances surrounding the absences; and conditions for dismissal in the event of a future absence will be included in the probationary contract.
5. Make-up work is required for all absences in order to ensure that the student acquires information and skills presented during their absence (see Make-up work section). It is the **student's responsibility** to meet with instructor(s) on the first day back to schedule make-up work and/or lab check-off.
6. Students must notify (voicemail, text, or e-mail) the PTA office in **advance** whenever excessive (>5 minutes) tardiness or absence is unavoidable. **Notification of the student's absence by classmates is not acceptable!**

\*Note: An absence will be excused by provision of a note written and signed by a medical professional; and by uncontrollable or unavoidable extenuating circumstances as documented below. All other absences/tardies will be considered unexcused.

Further explanation of **excused absences** is as follows:

- "A student's serious illness" shall mean a condition such as pneumonia, surgery, hospital confinement, or valid documented medical reason. A physician's documentation verifying illness must be provided.
- "Death in the immediate family" shall be interpreted to mean mother, father, mother-in-law, father-in-law, spouse, child, brother, sister, grandparents, or significant other. Documentation must be provided.
- "Statutory government responsibilities" refer to such matters as jury duty or subpoena for court appearance. Documentation must be provided.
- Inclement weather – see policy below.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER/DESIGNATED HOLIDAYS**

Students scheduled for class during inclement weather conditions in which NTCC designates travel hazardous and closes the campus, will not be expected to attend class that day. However, in the event that NTCC remains open for classes, but the local school

district in which the student resides closes and the student deems travel as hazardous, the student will not be expected to attend class that day. The student will be responsible for notifying the instructor and program director of the absence. All class and lab work missed under these circumstances must be made up (refer to the Make-up work policy). If NTCC is open and the local school district in which the student resides remains open or has delayed opening, the student must attend class that day. If the student does not attend class under this circumstance, the course instructor and program director must be notified in advance as with any other absence. **The absence will be unexcused.**

Students will be excused from class for the following major designated holidays:

- New Year's Day
- Good Friday
- Memorial Day
- July 4th
- Labor Day
- Thanksgiving Day

### **MAKE-UP WORK**

#### **Due to Absence:**

Each student is responsible for all material and techniques presented in class and labs. If a class is missed, the student is responsible for obtaining from a classmate, information/ notes, handouts, and lab work covered during that absence. It is the **student's responsibility** to schedule a time with the instructor to complete lab check-offs for content missed. Lab check-offs must be made up within one week of the date absent. The student's grade will be lowered **10 points** on the corresponding lab practical for each lab session and check-off not made up within the allocated timeframe. If the student has not "checked-off" any missed lab material/techniques, they will **NOT** be allowed to take the corresponding lab practical and a grade of "0" will be assigned. If a test, lab practical, or special assignment is missed due to an **excused** absence, it is the student's responsibility to consult the instructor the next time the student is on campus about making up a test or turning in an assignment. The student must make-up the missed test or lab practical within one week from the date missed providing **appropriate notification of absence was made prior** to the original test time. Lack of notification prior to exam time will result in a grade of "0" for the missed exam; *notifying classmates to relay the student's absence is not acceptable!* Assignments due on the date of the excused absence must be turned in the next time the student is on campus; otherwise, the student will receive a "0" for the work missed. An **unexcused** absence will result in a "0" on a test, lab practical, or special assignment missed; the student will not have the opportunity to make up the work missed.

One make-up test and/or lab practical due to excused absence, per class, per semester is allowable without penalty. **It is the student's responsibility to set up a time with the instructor to make up the test or lab practical missed.**

#### **Remediation:**

In the event a student scores less than a 75 on a lab practical exam, the student **may be assigned remediation** for the previously failed practical components (based on specified course lab practical rubric). Failure to complete remediation satisfactorily (demonstration of proficiency) will result in failure of the course.

### **Due to failure of safety criteria on lab practicals:**

On lab practical exams several areas on each exam are considered to be patient safety criteria or “critical elements”. If a student **fails a patient safety element/criteria, they will be required to re-do the lab practical**. The re-do (2<sup>nd</sup>) lab practical cannot be taken on the same day as the failed lab practical. It is the **student’s responsibility** to schedule a time with the instructor to re-do the practical and must be scheduled and completed during the instructor’s office hours or other established time within the next week. The highest grade that a student can receive on the “re-do” is 75. If a student fails the safety criteria on the lab practical “re-do”, the student is given a grade of “0” and automatically fails the course. Only one lab re-do per course, per semester, will be permitted for failure of safety criteria.

### **WITHDRAWAL POLICIES**

A student must consult with the Program Director prior to withdrawing from any course in the PTA curriculum. The consultation will be documented, signed by both parties, and included in the student’s record. If a student withdraws without consulting the Program Director, they will not be allowed to re-apply to the program.

Students are responsible for recognizing and following the withdrawal policies as stated in the Northeast Texas Community College Catalog and in the Northeast Texas Community College Student Handbook.

### **RETENTION & CONDITIONS FOR DISMISSAL**

1. Dishonesty & Misconduct: Unlike many other professions, actions and behaviors as a PTA student directly affect the lives of others. For this reason, the highest honesty and ethical standards are mandatory. Dishonesty and unethical behavior(s) in any form will result in disciplinary measures and may result in dismissal from the program. Students will be monitored in this area. Any first violation will be reviewed by the PTA instructor, Clinical Instructor, Program Director, and/or Program Advisory Committee and appropriate action taken, possibly including dismissal. Any subsequent violations will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
2. Absences: Emphasizing the previously stated attendance policy, students who miss any 4 class periods will be placed on probation. The student may be asked to leave the program based on non-compliance of the probationary contract.
3. Failure to Maintain Academic Standing: Students must earn a minimum overall grade of 75 in all PTHA classes, labs, and core courses in order to remain in the PTA Program. Students are encouraged to access and monitor all course grades by utilizing Blackboard course gradebooks. *The course grades on Blackboard will be considered the **first level of notification** of possible impending failure of the course.* The student is responsible for seeking additional help from course instructors if grades fall below average. If a student earns a final grade below 75 in any of the PTHA courses, the student will not be allowed to proceed in the program and will fall under the Re-Admission Policy. All prerequisites must be met for the student to progress in the PTA curriculum.

The ***second level of notification*** of impending failure will be considered if a student's performance is weak or unsatisfactory (course average of 74 and below) at mid-term. The student will be formally notified via the "Early Concern Letter" and required to meet with the PTA Director and/or faculty to discuss areas of concern. At this time, the "Student Success Action Plan" will be developed and completed by the student and instructor(s) as a means to set goals meant to guide student remediation. In all instances, program faculty will be available for assistance upon student request. All discussion presented during the meeting will be documented and signed by all parties. The student's signature on the "Student Success Action Plan" indicates that the student contributed and agrees with the action plan, and requires all goals for success are met. All stated goals must be met by designated deadlines or student will be dismissed from the program. The action plan may be revisited at various times during the semester to ensure the student is progressing towards established goals. This document will be kept confidential and placed in the student's personal folder.

\*For questions regarding material in a specific PTHA course, the student should consult the instructor who is teaching that material.

\*For concerns dealing with clinical matters, the Clinical Instructor and/or Professor Moody Director of Clinical Education (DCE) should be consulted.

Students are encouraged to observe faculty posted office hours as much as possible. Students are encouraged to make appointments with PTA Program faculty when possible. Faculty should be contacted after hours (via Remind text) **only in case of emergency.**

## **READMISSION POLICY**

**Readmission** to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program is **not automatic**; re-application is required. Students applying for readmission to the first semester of the program will be considered along with all other applicants to the program according to the following criteria:

\*Submission of application materials by designated deadline for all applicants with the following changes:

1. Application materials must include updated transcript.
2. Essay topic requirement: Comment on your previous experience in the PTA program; elaborate on how that will influence future success including specific strategies to improve performance in the program.

*\*Note: Admission criteria for the re-applicant will be modified. Support course criteria (25%) will be replaced with PTHA course GPA. If the student withdraws from the program prior to the end of the semester, the grade at that point in time will be the grade for the class.*

Students re-applying to any other semesters of the program will be considered based on:

- Space availability
- Performance based on the Professionalism Development Rubric
- PTHA course GPA
- Reasons for non-progression
- Potential for success

Final decision regarding re-admittance will be made by the Program Director, DCE and Dean of Health Science.

Students who are re-admitted to the PTA program prior to successful completion of one or more didactic/clinical courses will be required to prove competency (re-entry level) in all previously completed PTA courses; this may include passing written and skills tests (with a minimum grade of 75 for each) as determined by NTCC PTA program faculty. Competency determination must be completed by the end of the semester prior to readmission semester. If the student does not demonstrate competence in course content, the course must be retaken (the most recent grade is computed in the GPA as per NTCC academic policy). Students who are re-admitted to the PTA program after successfully completing a clinical course may or may not have to prove competency in previously completed PTA courses, per the discretion of the PTA program director. **A single failed course may be repeated only once;** if a student fails a course after re-admittance, the student will be dismissed and will not be eligible for re-admittance. In addition, if a student fails more than one course in a semester, the student will not be eligible for re-admittance.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE/PROBLEM RESOLUTION POLICY**

It is the policy of the Northeast Texas Community College Physical Therapist Assistant program to work with students in finding a fair and just solution to problems, including any student grievance, question, misunderstanding or discrimination. Students are urged to take their problems to the instructor assigned to the course in which they are having problems. Usually this instructor will have direct knowledge about the subject and is best qualified to resolve the situation. Students experiencing problems should proceed through the following steps.

Problems of an individual nature should be handled in the following ways: A student may formally express dissatisfaction with their progress in the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. Grade disputes should be resolved at the lowest level possible (i.e., the instructor and student). Recognizing that this is not always possible, the following procedure has been adopted as policy for resolving grade and course progress disputes. The steps have been defined to facilitate resolution at the lowest level possible and in that interest, the order of steps WILL AT NO TIME BE VIOLATED. The grievance procedure must be initiated within five (5) business days of the incident.

- STEP 1: The student will present the problem directly to the appropriate course instructor or clinical instructor. If resolution is not reached, the student will make a record of this transaction by completing the document entitled; "Report of Grievance". The original form will be signed by the instructor, given to the student and a copy retained by the instructor. At no time does grievance data become part of the student's school record. Data regarding the grievance will be placed in a special file which will remain active throughout the grievance process. This must be initiated within five (5) business days of the incident.
- STEP 2: If resolution of the grievance is not reached with the faculty members, the student may make an appointment to discuss their case with the Director of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program within ten (10) business days of the original incident. Conferences deemed appropriate by the director will be recorded on a Grievance Conference Report form, a copy of which goes to the student and the original placed in the special file. If the Program Director is the instructor, omit this step and proceed to step 3. The program director must respond to the grievance within 5 business days of the report.

STEP 3: If resolution of the grievance has not been reached under the guidance of the director, the student may request an appointment with the Dean of Allied Health; at which time all information contained in the “Grievance file” will be provided to the Dean. The Dean must respond to the grievance within 5 business days.

STEP 4: If resolution of the grievance is not reached at the Office of the Dean, then the student may request review of the case and an appointment with the Vice President of Instruction to present their case.

STEP 5: The student may follow grievance procedures listed in the Northeast Texas Community College Student Handbook.

All students will have the option of appointing a person to accompany them during the grievance procedure.

### **MEDICAL CONDITIONS POLICY**

In the event that a student has surgery or experiences a significant change in medical status, the student must notify the PTA program director immediately. The director may request that the student have permission from their medical physician/specialist to participate in class, laboratory, or clinical experiences. If there is obvious decline in a student’s health, they will be asked to see a physician for precautionary purposes. In the event a student’s health becomes a barrier for success in class or clinicals, they may be advised to withdraw from the program. The student may petition for re-entry after resolution of health issues and acquisition of a physician’s release indicating their ability to participate (100%) in class, lab activities, and clinicals (without restriction). If, upon re-entry the student experiences a subsequent change in medical status, the student will be asked to withdraw from the program. The opportunity for a second re-entry will be determined by the Program Director, faculty, and the Dean of Health Science. Availability of space and the student’s academic/clinical standing, prior to withdrawal, will determine re-admittance.

### **PREGNANCY POLICY**

Students who are, or become, pregnant during their studies in the program must inform the program director of her status at the earliest possible time. Pregnancy is a condition that is a contraindication to the use of several physical therapy modalities and techniques; and as such, would limit the person’s ability to participate in certain lab situations which could impact the student’s grades. Pregnancy could also affect a student’s full participation in clinic courses. In the event the student’s pregnancy/delivery becomes a barrier for completion of course and/or clinical work, she may be advised to withdraw from the program. The student may petition for re-entry after resolution of health issues or delivery and acquisition of a physician’s release indicating her ability to participate (100%) in class, lab activities, and clinicals (without restriction).

The student who is pregnant **MUST** provide the program director with a physician’s diagnosis and release indicating her ability to participate in class, lab, and clinical activities **without restriction at 100%** (the student shall present the appropriate course objectives to the physician for his/her consideration).

While the pregnant student is attending her clinical rotations, she must provide each clinic with an updated Physician’s release indicating that she is able to participate at

100%, without restriction, as a student PTA. The release shall be based on the objectives of the clinical course and clinic facility policy and shall be updated as the student advances in her pregnancy.

Accelerated or delayed completion of required clinical hours may be requested by the student, but the final decision regarding the feasibility of such an alternative schedule rests with the DCE and the Program Director. The student may be advised to withdraw from the program and, based on the student's academic/technical standing, petition for re-entry after the birth of the baby. The program is not obligated to locate a clinical site for any person considered to be "at-risk" or at a less than 100% participation level.

Upon delivery of the baby and return to the program's activities, the student is required to submit a final clearance from the Physician allowing for a full return to all expected activities.

### **SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY**

The PTA Program follows the NTCC Policy on Sexual Harassment. The Sexual Harassment policy can be found on the NTCC website at [www.ntcc.edu](http://www.ntcc.edu) in the student handbook under *Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation*. While participating in clinical courses complaints of sexual harassment should be reported immediately to the Clinical Instructor and the Director of Clinical Education. The student should also follow the clinical facilities policy for reporting sexual harassment.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES**

According to the Merriam/Webster Dictionary, social media is defined as "forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content [such as videos and pictures]" (merriam-webster.com, 2015). Forms of electronic devices and communication may include computers, smartphones, texting, emails, and websites for blogs and social media formats. Examples of social media formats include but are not limited to LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook, Rumble, Parler, Second Life, Flickr, blogs, podcasts, RSS feeds, Allnurses.com, YouTube, Vine, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

In both the healthcare and educational fields, distribution of sensitive and confidential information is protected under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), whether discussed through traditional communication channels, video recording, text, or social media. Information that is communicated through these types of channels are circulated through social interaction using highly accessible publishing techniques that are web-based and may cross traditional boundaries between professional and personal relationships. Therefore, students should ensure that personal, professional, and institutional information is protected.

Sending information on electronic devices and publishing information on social media sites may become public for anyone to see and can be traced back to the author. Information garnered from social media sites include information that is shared and information that is gathered through electronic tracking (Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, 2015). These forms of communication provide little control regarding how this information may be used by others. Therefore, students should be aware that "private" social media sites do not exist because search engines can turn up posts years after the original publication date, comments can be forwarded or copied, and archival systems

save information, including deleted postings through a variety of authorized and unauthorized individuals and organizations (Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, 2015). If you identify yourself as a student of the NTCC Physical Therapist Assistant Program or a prospective/future student of the PTA program through posting, personal web pages, social media accounts, etc., you MUST ensure that ANY content you publish and/or acknowledge is consistent with your professional ethics and is compliant with all confidentiality and privacy laws. You should always consider the legal liability of each post you make and the posts that are made on your site, as well as on the sites of others. Additionally, students must also be aware of the electronic and social media policies of the institutions/entities that are contracted with NTCC for practicum/clinical so that these policies are not violated.

### **SOCIAL MEDIA AND ELECTRONIC DEVICES POLICY:**

As a Physical Therapist Assistant student, you must always be aware that you are building a reputation while preparing for a profession in public service. The public, along with your future employers, expect high standards of professional behavior. This suggests that you keep the private and intimate details (not appropriate for posting) of your life off of social media. Moreover, HIPPA guidelines must be followed at all times. Identifiable information concerning clients/patients, employees, and those institutions/entities hosting practicum/clinical students must not be posted in any online forum or webpage. Zero-tolerance applies to anyone posting comments that violate HIPPA guidelines or this policy. Any infraction of this Social Media and Electronic Devices Policy will result in probation on the first offense and dismissal from the Physical Therapist Assistant program on the subsequent offense.

As a Physical Therapist Assistant Program Student, it is your responsibility to:

Protect confidential, sensitive, and proprietary information; do not post confidential or proprietary information about the college, program faculty and staff, students, peers, clinical facilities, clients/patients, employees, or others you may come in contact with while in the role as an NTCC Physical Therapist Assistant student. ***Protect all private and confidential information related to you and to others.*** Be responsible for what you post and protect yourself and others!

Be aware that you are associated with NTCC, the Physical Therapist Assistant Program and the Health Sciences Department when engaging in online social networks. Regardless of how you identify yourself, be it personal or as a student, ensure that your profile and related content is consistent with how you wish to present yourself to colleagues, clients/patients, and potential employers. **Employers consistently conduct Web searches on job candidates before extending offers.** Be sure that what you post today will not come back to “inconvenience” you in the future.

Refrain from using NTCC or the Physical Therapist Assistant Program inscriptions/symbols, such as logos and graphics, on personal social media sites. Do not use NTCC’s name to promote a product, cause, or a political party candidate. NTCC and/or Physical Therapist Assistant logos and/or graphics may be used for School sanctioned events (posters, fliers, postings, or others) but must be **approved** by the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Director and Director of Student Activities and Multicultural Affairs.

Upon entering the classroom or the practicum/clinical site, all cell phones will be placed in the vibrate/silent mode. Cell phones/electronic devices for emergencies only must be used outside of patient areas. Any social use of cell phones/electronic devices will only be used at break times or before/after classroom or practicum/clinical hours. Computers located in PTA classroom and lab are for class use only. **Students observed accessing social medial sites during class time will have their final course grade reduced by 5 points for each infraction.**

**Violations of client/patient privacy with an electronic device will be subject to HIPAA procedures and guidelines.** Consequences will result in immediate dismissal from the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. Each student is legally responsible for individual posting and may be subject to liability if individual postings are found to be defamatory, harassing, or in violation of any other applicable law. Students may also be liable if individual postings include confidential or copyrighted information from music, videos, text, and any other media. Students who share confidential or unprofessional information do so at the risk of disciplinary action including failure in a course and/or dismissal from the program.

References: Privacy Rights Clearinghouse (2015). Fact Sheet: 35 Social Networking Policy: How to be Safe, Secure and Social. Retrieved from <https://www.privacyrights.org/social-networking-privacy>. Merriam-Webster Dictionary (2015). Retrieved from <http://www.merriam-webster.com/>

## **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY**

Reasonable accommodations will be made that will enable students with disabilities to enjoy equal educational opportunities. Reasonable accommodations to the declared and known physical or mental limitations of qualified students will be met through:

1. Acquiring or modifying equipment or devices when possible
2. Restructuring classes to accommodate specific needs
3. Making classrooms and other facilities accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities.
4. Consulting outside agencies or organizations for input or assistance
5. Allowing additional time for exams when timeliness is not a criterion of the task
6. Other modifications as indicated that are responsible and do not impose undue hardship on the program or college

Qualified students with documented physical or mental disabilities should declare diagnosis on the “Documented Disability Form” provided during the New Student Orientation. The requested accommodation(s) will be implemented at the earliest possible date. If consultation with the student and the College does not identify an appropriate or feasible accommodation, the student shall be notified in writing of the program’s inability to reasonably accommodate the student’s special needs.

## **ADA Statement**

It is the policy of NTCC to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified individuals who are students with disabilities. This College will adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations as required to afford equal educational opportunity. It is the student’s responsibility to request accommodations. An appointment can be made with the Academic Advisor/Coordinator of Special Populations at 903-434-8264. For more information and to obtain a copy of the Request for Accommodations, please refer to the Special Populations page on the [NTCC website - Special Populations](#).

## **COMMUNICABLE DISEASE POLICY**

All students will receive thorough instructional material on communicable diseases such as AIDS, Tuberculosis, meningitis, MMR, Hepatitis B Viruses, etc. throughout the program. It is the program's intention to inform all students of the possible potential for acquiring such conditions.

When or if a student is identified as being infected with any communicable disease, the following steps are to be taken to ensure the health of the NTCC community, and of the patients with whom the student would be in contact. This policy is also designated to protect the student who is infected.

1. The student must notify the program director in writing and verbally of the disease contracted and his or her physician's name and number. The student will not be allowed to attend class or clinical at this time.
2. The program director will contact the Health Service director of NTCC.
3. The Health Service director will confer with appropriate public health officials and/or current literature for guidance as to protocol concerning the disease report and inform the program director.
4. The program director will contact the student as to when the student may return to campus or clinical practicum. The program director will adhere to public health guidelines dictated by the Health Services Director.
5. The student will supply the program director and DCE documentation from the treating or advising physician stating that they may return to campus or clinical practicum.

Every effort will be made to work with the student to keep the student current with their classes or clinical practicum.

## **CLASSROOM REGULATIONS/GUIDELINES**

### **FACILITIES**

Classes will be held in the PTA lecture classroom and lab in the University and Health Science Building. Program lab equipment will be kept in the PTA Lab and in the PTA storage closet. Any student wishing to use lab equipment any time other than regular class or Open Lab hours must make arrangements with the PTA faculty.

Smoking and/or tobacco products are prohibited in all College controlled or owned buildings and vehicles. Tobacco use is restricted to the designated smoking areas on the NTCC campus.

### **EXPECTED CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE**

Northeast Texas Community College is committed to promoting a level of classroom etiquette conducive to optimal teaching and learning. Within this context, the following etiquette is expected:

1. Attend class each time the class meets.

2. Be on time for class and remain for the entire period. The student appears inconsiderate to classmates and the instructor with the actions of arriving late and leaving early.
3. Refrain from **talking** while the instructor *or* guest speaker is lecturing. Idle chattering and giggling are disruptive to the class and disrespectful to the instructor and classmates.
4. Be prepared, attentive, and participate in class.
5. Refrain from bringing non-students to class. This includes children, spouses, boyfriends/girlfriends and friends. Approval of the above to attend class must come from the program director.

### **CELL PHONE USE**

Use of cell phones is **prohibited** in class/lab. Phones are **NOT** allowed and will be kept in the “phones” container. If the student is observed using the phone (texting, calling) during class they will be asked to turn the phone off and surrender it to the instructor. If the student desires to use the phone to access course materials, the student is asked to inform the instructor prior to class for approval. If a student’s cell phone rings in class, the student will be required to turn off the phone immediately. If a student is expecting a very important call, they must notify the instructor prior to class regarding the nature of the situation. The student will be asked to keep the phone silent, and upon receiving the call they must step out of the room to answer.

### **SAFETY**

College faculty, staff, and students participating in clinical and laboratory experiences that require the handling of blood, blood products, or body fluids are required to observe standard precautions and safety guidelines prescribed by the U.S. Public Health Service.

To ensure safety of the student in lab and in clinical practicum, informed consent to participate will be appropriately documented upon entry to the PTA Program. All measures are taken to protect the health and welfare of students and faculty participating in laboratory and clinical practicum. To ensure safety during student interactions, students receive comprehensive information on indications, contraindications, precautions, physiological effects, potential risks, and the appropriate application of various modalities; and, techniques prior to laboratory practice or clinical practicum. Program faculty and lab assistants supervise all lab sessions. PTA students have the right to reasonable accommodations to allow full participation in laboratory and clinical practicum. Students also have the right to defer participation in select laboratory activities in the event that the student presents with a documented medical condition that would predispose them to negative effects (i.e. pregnancy, post-surgical, acute illness). Students have the right to terminate treatment applications received during laboratory sessions should they experience negative effects.

In the event of a minor accident, a small first aid box is located in the LAB room UHS 236. An incident/accident report is then completed by the student(s) involved and an investigation will be conducted by the program director or faculty member. The incident/accident report will be kept in the student’s file. In the event of a serious accident, NTCC utilizes the 911 system. NTCC has an Emergency Preparedness Flip Manual which is located in the PTA class and lab. A copy of this flip manual is also located in the offices of the PTA Program.

NTCC offers no health services and **is not responsible for costs for hospitalizations, special health care such as consultations with specialists, nursing care, surgical operations or dental treatment.** The student is responsible for obtaining and maintaining personal health insurance while in the program. The next of kin on record may be notified in uncertain or emergency situations or serious illness. Students may be transported to a general hospital (by ambulance at their own expense) when such action is deemed necessary by college officials.

### **SAFETY OF LAB EQUIPMENT**

All laboratory equipment used for skill development must be used under the supervision and/or approval of faculty members. This equipment is inspected and calibrated annually. In the event a student finds a piece of equipment in need of repair or identifies damaged equipment, they must immediately inform the program faculty. All relevant operating instructions and calibration reports may be found in the Equipment Notebook kept in the director's office.

### **LABORATORY POLICIES**

The PTA laboratory will be the students' "second home" for the next 17 months. A few lecture sessions and the majority of laboratory sessions will be held in the lab. In addition, open practice/lab time will be allowed at the discretion of the program faculty; the lab key can be obtained from program faculty or from the program secretary. Rules regarding unsupervised "open" lab times are as follows:

1. The student must sign-in and sign-out
2. No student is to work alone in the laboratory
3. No horseplay or rough-housing is allowed in the laboratory
4. No use of electrical equipment, except through simulation, is allowed when a faculty member is not available
5. All equipment should be cleaned and returned to its proper place, the area cleaned after use, lights turned off, and the door locked by the last person to leave
6. Safety guidelines are to be followed at all times.

### **CLEANLINESS IN THE PTA LAB AND CLASSROOM**

Thank you in advance for your cooperation and participation in keeping our facilities neat and attractive. At the end of each semester, faculty and students will perform a thorough cleaning of the lab and equipment. In order to maintain a clean and orderly work environment for all students using the PTA lab, the following outline of student responsibilities is provided and should be followed by all.

It is essential that **all** students work together to maintain an optimal learning environment so that time is not wasted during lab classes. While the housekeeping department handles the floors and the garbage, they do not clean specific equipment in a specialized labs; this will be the students' responsibility.

#### **General Lab Rules:**

1. All shoes, pens, and pencils must be removed when utilizing the plinth cushions.
2. Do not use the plinths as a writing surface without a clipboard (the ink does not come off).
3. Food will be eaten at the desks only.

4. Please use trash containers to dispose of all drinks, food and related trash.
5. Food placed in the refrigerator must be labeled with your name and date. Food that is in the refrigerator for **more than one week** should be disposed of by anyone deeming the food “harmful” for consumption.
6. Clean out the microwave and surrounding area after each use.
7. The lab room must be put back in its original condition after each lab.
  - All stools must be placed out of high traffic areas.
  - All equipment must be placed back in its original storage area after each lab session - this includes wheelchairs, BP cuffs, ADL equipment, ultrasound gel bottles, exercise equipment, etc.
  - The storage areas/practice areas must be left neat

### **DRESS FOR CLASS AND LABORATORY**

Students should be dressed appropriately for lab **prior to the beginning** of each lab session **unless specified differently**. Students not dressed properly for lab will receive a “0” for any lab work for that lab period. Students **not dressed properly** for lab practical testing will **not be permitted to take the lab practical test and will receive a “0” for that test**. If appropriate attire is not available, a student may be asked to wear a patient gown for that lab period and will receive a “0” for that lab period. \*Remember, when not dressed properly for lab one deprives themselves and a partner of valuable learning opportunities.

- Option 1: NTCC PTA Program Polo, khaki pants and appropriate closed-toed shoes  
 Option 2: NTCC PTA Program Scrubs and appropriate closed-toed shoes  
 Option 3: NTCC PTA Program approved class t-shirt, black athletic shorts and appropriate closed-toed shoes

\*Instructors will determine appropriate options per class/lab period.

Additional clothing requirements:

**WOMEN:** Back-fastening halter-type tops (jog bras) are required for some labs. Tops must allow for the back to be fully exposed. T-shirts will be worn when practicing on a partner. Black exercise pants.

**MEN:** Tanks or bare torso are required for some labs. Black exercise pants.

**HAIR & NAILS:** Nails must be short, clean and void of nail polish. Nails should be shorter than the fingertips when observed from the palm side. Hair should be clean and out of the way with hair bands or hair clips as necessary.  
**Personal hygiene is very important since many of the lab techniques require close contact.**

### **LINEN**

A limited amount of linen is available for use in the laboratory; and, conservative use is strongly encouraged. This linen includes sheets, towels, pillow cases, and patient gowns. NTCC does not have a laundry service or laundry facilities available therefore, it is the responsibility of the students in the program to maintain clean linen. Each student will have the responsibility of taking the linen home and washing it 1-2 times during each semester. If a student does not have laundry facilities, they may pay another student to take their place; however, **the student is ultimately responsible for making sure the**

**linen gets cleaned, folded, and restocked during their designated time.** All first year students are responsible for doing the laundry created by the PTA program.

### **GENERAL SAFETY RULES**

1. Learn and be familiar with the evacuation procedures and the location of fire extinguishers and emergency defibrillators.
2. Immediately report hazardous conditions, broken equipment, and defective tools to instructors, or the PTA program secretary.
3. Do not overload electrical circuits.
4. College property is no place for horseplay, fighting, teasing, and/or practical jokes; therefore, refrain from initiating or participating in any of the previously mentioned behaviors.
5. Do not use chairs, carts, tables, counters, boxes, rolling stools, or other substitutes for ladders or work platforms.
6. Disconnect all electrical cords by grasping the plug and carefully disengaging; **NEVER** yank the cord. Report any equipment that is damaged or in immediate need of repair to program faculty or program secretary.
7. Wipe up all spills immediately, regardless of who caused the spill. If unable to completely clean up the spill or if the floor remains slick after cleaning, report the area to the program secretary so that she may contact Plant Services for clean-up.
8. Use proper body mechanics at all times. Instruction in proper body mechanics will be introduced in the first semester and strongly encouraged to begin implementing these practices throughout.
9. The use of alcoholic beverages, narcotic drugs, or derivatives thereof on college property or at a college and program function is strictly prohibited; therefore, do not partake!

### **FIRE SAFETY**

When a fire is discovered in any building on campus, take the following steps immediately:

1. Warn others and activate fire alarms. Fire alarms in the University and Health Science building are located at either end of the hall adjacent to the Exit signs on the second floor and at the north and east entrances of the building adjacent to the Exit signs on the first floor.
2. Call 911 and the Northeast Texas Community College Security Department at 903-434-8173 or 8175 or have the building secretary contact these people and describe the problem and location.
3. If the fire is localized and small, attempt to safely put the fire out with one of the building fire extinguishers. Fire extinguishers are located on each floor.
4. Evacuate the building. Recommended evacuation routes are posted in each PTA classroom and laboratory.
5. Stay clear. Everyone should remain at least 500 feet away from the burning building and out of the fire department's way. The fire department will ascertain when/if it is safe to re-enter the building.

### **TORNADO PROCEDURES**

In the event of a tornado or any other weather related emergency occurring, persons should seek shelter as soon as possible. Immediately go to an interior room or hallway,

preferably on the first floor. Stay away from glassed areas. The designated area in the UHS Building in case of a Tornado warning is on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, interior classrooms. Additional information regarding emergency procedures is available in the NTCC Emergency Preparedness Flip Manual. This manual is available in the PTA classroom and faculty offices located on the first floor in the University Health Science Building.

### **SERIOUS INJURY OR ILLNES PROCEDURES**

Report or have the building secretary or other college personnel report the injury/illness to the NTCC Security Department at ext. 8173 or 8175 or call 911. If trained, apply emergency first aid following universal precautions in handling body fluids including wearing of gloves and disposing of supplies properly. The first aid kit is located in the PTA Lab room 236.

### **OFF CAMPUS INJURY OR ILLNESS**

In the event of injury or illness while on clinical assignment, students should be provided with access to health services such as access to the emergency room or dialing 911 services. The student is responsible for the cost associated with receiving the health care services. The agency is not responsible for any health care costs of the student. All accidents occurring while in clinic that results in patient, hospital personnel, or personal injury and/or damage to equipment must be reported to the clinical instructor immediately. Students may be required to fill out an incident report. Students are required to fully understand the safety methods of properly performing treatment procedures and operation of equipment before undertaking them. Students will carry *their own liability* coverage through Northeast Texas Community College and are responsible for any personal medical charges incurred. Students are strongly encouraged to obtain and maintain personal health insurance.

### **HEALTH SERVICES**

NTCC offers no health services and is not responsible for costs of hospitalizations, special health care such as consultations with specialists, nursing care, surgical operations or dental treatment. The next of kin on record may be notified in uncertain or emergency situations, or in case of serious illness. Students may be transported to a general hospital by ambulance at their own expense when such action is necessary in the opinion of college officials.

### **HEALTH INSURANCE**

NTCC does not provide student health insurance coverage. Special sickness and accident insurance policies are available from private insurance vendors and are particularly valuable to students whose coverage under family policies is void or terminated. The student will be responsible for paying the premiums on such policies. **All Physical Therapist Assistant students are required to have personal health insurance.** Some clinical facilities may not allow students to rotate through their facility unless proof of health insurance can be provided. If students do not have health insurance they may not be able to complete the clinical education component. If this component cannot be met, the student will not graduate from the PTA Program.

## **PHYSICAL PLANT/BUILDING PROBLEMS**

For any building or physical plant problem, notify the building secretary and they will notify the correct department. This would include plumbing problems, spills, blown fuses or other electrical problems, heating/air conditioning malfunctioning, and ventilation problems.

## **CLINICAL REGULATIONS AND GUIDELINES**

### **PERSONAL APPEARANCE**

A student is expected to set an example of cleanliness, tidiness, and professionalism in the clinical assignment area. Personal appearance is regarded as an important aspect of a student's overall effectiveness. Students are expected to be neat and clean at all times (this includes time in class and lab). Special attention should be given to personal hygiene and uniform in the clinic areas. One's appearance is indicative of personal pride in the profession and a reflection on themselves and the NTCC Physical Therapist Assistant Program.

Hair must be clean and neat at all times while in clinic. Hair must be worn back away from and out of the face. Beards and mustaches must be short and neatly trimmed. All tattoos that are easily noticeable must be covered by clothing or other means. Nails must be clean, short, and void of colored polish. Nails should be shorter than fingertips when viewed from the palm side. The only jewelry which should be worn in clinic areas are watches, wedding rings, and stud type earrings of limited number in the ears only; this is for your safety and the safety of the patients.

### **PERSONAL HYGIENE**

Since students work very closely with patients, Physical Therapy staff, and other hospital personnel; it is imperative that the student maintains a high standard of personal hygiene in the clinic and lab. Poor personal hygiene will cause an unpleasant environment for everyone. Observe such basic habits as daily bathing, regular shampooing, use of deodorants, and good oral care. Avoid anything that causes bad breath, such as smoking, strong food, garlic, onions, etc. Avoid wearing strong perfume, cologne or after shave; Instructors, patients, staff, and classmates may be allergic.

### **UNIFORMS**

Students are expected to comply with the dress code for each clinical facility. All uniforms will be neat and clean. Unless otherwise noted by the facility's dress code, students' uniforms consist of professional attire including khaki pants, a collared shirt, comfortable closed – toe shoes, lab coat (optional), and name badge. Athletic shoes are acceptable if they are clean, neat and professional looking. Jeans are not acceptable unless allowed by a facility on a specified casual day.

### **NAME BADGES/TAGS**

A Northeast Texas Community College name badge will be worn by all students at all times while in the clinic area. Wearing the name badge assures proper identification for security purposes and entitles the student access to the premises. The students are required to introduce themselves to each patient, facility personnel and staff. The name badge serves to designate students, which is necessary for liability insurance coverage

provided through NTCC. In addition, some facilities will require that the student also wear a facility name badge. To a patient, the name badge is instant identification of a member of the health care team and is a means of establishing good rapport.

### **INFORMED CONSENT**

Facility guidelines on the use of human subjects for educational purposes should exist at each facility. These guidelines should describe the risk-free right of each patient to refuse to participate in treatment given by a student. Prior to and during their clinical education, each student is instructed of the patient's risk-free right to refuse participation in any area of clinical education. These policies should be reviewed with the students affiliating at that facility. All clinical facilities are expected to have policies on the confidentiality of records and other personal information. Additionally, all NTCC students are required to introduce themselves to patients as student PTA. The DCE (Director of Clinical Education) recommends that all CI's (Clinical Instructor) introduce students and the purpose of their presence.

### **CLINICAL PLACEMENT POLICY**

The PTA Program DCE (Director of Clinical Education) appoints clinical assignments. Clinical placements are designed to expose the student to as many areas of Physical Therapy practice as possible and thereby facilitate the attainment of the basic skills needed for the daily practice of Physical Therapy as a Physical Therapist Assistant. The decisions of the Program DCE regarding clinical placement are final. Any questions/comments should be directed to the Program DCE.

All students will complete three full time 5-6 week clinical affiliations, one in the first summer session and the remaining two in the last fall semester. Students are provided with at least one rotation that includes inpatient treatment experiences and one rotation that includes outpatient care experiences. The use of multiple clinical settings allows students to obtain proficiencies required of the entry level PTA. The student's driving distance to site, prior experience, personality, interests, and skill levels are also given consideration.

Clinical assignments are determined by the academic faculty in close collaboration with the clinical faculty. **Students may NOT rearrange clinical assignments.** Special situations should be discussed with the DCE. Students should not contact the clinical facilities to obtain a clinical assignment. Students will be placed only in facilities in which there is a current, unexpired written contract in place.

### **CLINICAL TRAINING/FACILITIES**

Practical training working with patients is a major part of the Northeast Texas Community College PTA program. This part of the program is scheduled for the first summer session after the first year and the mid to late fall of the second year.

The following is a list of clinical facilities who participate in PTA affiliation agreements with Northeast Texas Community College's PTA program as of 5/2021:

- Arkadelphia Physical Therapy Center
- Benchmark - multiple sites in DFW area
- Carriage House- Sulphur Springs
- Chambers Home Health Care

- Choice Rehab – Colonial Lindale and other locations
- Christus Good Shepherd Medical Center -Longview and Marshall
- Christus St. Michael Health System - Texarkana
- Christus Mother Frances Hospital- Sulphur Springs
- Mother Frances Hospital of Winnsboro
- Christus St. Michael Hospital - Atlanta
- Hallmark – various locations
- Diversicare Therapy Services – various locations
- UT Health -Pittsburg, Tyler, Mineola, Quitman
- East Texas Physical Therapy – Sulphur Springs
- East Texas Treatment Center - Kilgore
- Encompass Rehabilitation Hospital of Texarkana
- Christus Rehabilitation Hospital-Tyler
- Hulsey Therapy Services –Commerce and Greenville
- Hunt Regional Medical Center - Greenville
- Jordan Health Services Pediatrics
- Kinetic Physical Therapy - Mount Pleasant, Gilmer, Paris, Mt. Vernon
- Little River Memorial Hospital – Ashdown, AR
- Longview Regional Medical Center
- Center of Rehabilitation Excellence (CORE) - Longview
- Matrix Rehabilitation - Frisco, Plano, McKinney, Garland
- Nacogdoches Medical Center
- Neurorestorative - Tyler
- Paris Regional Medical Center
- Physical Therapy Clinic of Paris
- Pleasant Springs Healthcare Center
- Texas Health Presbyterian Hospital Rockwall
- Rehab Pro - Heritage Plaza and Reunion Plaza (Texarkana), Treviso (Longview), and other sites
- Rehab Synergies -Clarksville Nursing, Advanced Healthcare of Garland, Greenville Health and Rehab, Heritage House of Paris, and other sites
- Reliant Rehabilitation - various locations
- Rule Pediatric Therapy Services
- Select Medical Rehabilitation Services, Inc.
- Select Specialty Hospital - Longview
- Shriners Hospitals for Children - Shreveport
- Titus Regional Medical Center
- Trinity Mother Frances Hospitals & Clinics -Tyler
- University of Texas Health Center at Tyler
- Wadley Regional Medical Center - Texarkana
- Wood Memorial Nursing Center- Mineola
- Xzact Therapy - Paris

## **EVALUATION OF CLINICAL PERFORMANCE**

Performance in the clinic is assessed by the clinical instructor assigned at the site of the affiliation, as guided by the **PTA MACS**. This document allows for an objective assessment of the student's skills as performed at the clinical site. Progress Reports are made at the midpoint of the affiliation and again on the last day of the affiliation. These Progress Reports are returned to the PTA faculty for review and discussion during the course of the semester. Following procedure for turning in paperwork is the responsibility of the student.

The CI can solicit input from other staff as needed to adequately evaluate the student. It is however, the final discretion of the CI to determine mastery of a clinical skill for their facility. Each student must provide their **PTA MACS** with documentation of prior clinical mastery on the first day of the rotation.

Clinical grade compilation is based on a combination of skill attainment in the **PTA MACS** and other clinical assignments. Attendance, professionalism and adherence to policies and procedures are also considered during the final grade assessment.

## **ATTENDANCE AND ABSENTEEISM IN THE CLINIC**

Student hours will be the assigned hours of the clinical instructor. Each student is required to be at their assigned clinic ready to work when the clinical instructor indicates. Students may be asked to work additional hours and/or weekends with their CI. Each clinical rotation week is defined as 40 hours. Any week that a minimum of 40 hours is not reported will require CI and DCE approval. It is recognized that clinics are not always open 40 hours a week. If your facility can only provide a certain number of hours per week, please make note of that on the time record.

**Student absences and tardies are strongly discouraged. Students are encouraged to make every effort to avoid missing clinical time.**

Absences and tardies will be monitored in two ways:

1. Communication between the clinical instructor and DCE
2. Time cards

Time should be entered into the time log using the current electronic clinical system daily. Each student is to "clock in" upon arriving at the clinic and "clock out" when leaving the clinic. In addition, any time the student leaves the clinic or treatment area, such as for lunch, that student must "clock out" and then "clock in" upon returning. The time recorded should not include lunch except in rare instances when department meetings are required during that time. The time log must be sent to the CI (reviewer) once per week (after completion of hours for that week) through the electronic clinical system for approval. Submission of the time log by the student for review occurs on Friday. The CI approves the time by e-mail. It is the student's responsibility to remind the CI to approve the time as needed by Monday.

Absences are strongly discouraged. A student who fails to be present at their scheduled clinic for any reason will be considered absent. A student is responsible for notifying their CI and DCE about all absences at the times established by the CI and DCE (phone or Remind messages must be received by the DCE no later than 7:30 AM on the day the student is absent). The CI must be notified prior to the beginning of the work day as established by the CI. The student is responsible for obtaining confirmation that the CI received the message if sent by text. If the student is unable to reach the CI, the student

should attempt to contact the next person in line of authority. The student should then convey their message to the person contacted and ask that the message be relayed to the instructor upon their arrival. The student must obtain the name and position of the person contacted about the absence.

If the student fails to contact the DCE by Remind, voicemail at the college, or on the DCE's cell or fails to appropriately contact the CI in advance of the absence, the absence will be considered unexcused and the student will lose 1 point per hour missed off the final course grade. This will be strictly enforced.

If a student misses clinical time for any reason, a *Student Leave Report* must be completed by the student in the electronic clinical system. It should be completed as soon as the student is aware that an absence is required (in advance for an appointment and the day of occurrence for an illness for example). Absences require approval by the DCE through the electronic system. It is the student's responsibility to check for approval of the absence and to schedule appropriate make-up time. Failure to complete a student leave report prior to a scheduled absence or on the day of an illness/unexpected absence will result in an unexcused absence.

Students are required to make up hours lost on days absent. All make-up time must be documented on the time log as time made up for a specific date.

Tardiness is not an accepted practice during practicum experiences. Failure to notify both the DCE and CI by the designated time (7:30 AM for the DCE) for any tardy >30 minutes will result in a two point deduction in the final grade for each incidence. Any tardy < 30 minutes should be reported to the CI prior to the start of the work day and noted as tardy on the comments section of the time card. If the CI is unable to be reached, the procedure for contacting the next person in line of authority, as stated above, should be followed.

### **CELL PHONE POLICY**

Personal use of cell phones are prohibited in clinical practicum. If a student's cell phone rings during clinical practicum hours, the student will be required to turn off the phone immediately. If the clinical instructor prefers the student to use a cell phone for work related communication with physicians, other therapists, etc., then the CI may allow cell phone use for these purposes only. Unless the CI has specifically asked the student to use the cell phone for work related issues, the cell phone shall be off during work hours.

### **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE/PROBLEM RESOLUTION IN THE CLINIC**

It is the policy of the Northeast Texas Community College PTA program to work with students in finding fair and just solutions to problems, including any student grievance, appeal, question, misunderstanding or discrimination. Students are urged to take any problems regarding their clinic to the CI assigned. However, should a student have valid reason not to discuss a grievance directly with the assigned CI, they may wish to present the problem to the PTA Program DCE, Program Director, Dean, or Vice-President directly.

Step 1 The student should first take any problems or questions to the assigned CI. Usually the CI will have direct knowledge about the subject and is best qualified to resolve the situation.

- Step 2 If the student and CI are unable to find a solution or answer within a reasonable time frame, the student may then bring the matter to the attention of the CCCE. The student should feel free to discuss the matter fully.
- Step 3 If the student, CI and CCCE are unable to find a solution or answer within a reasonable time frame, the student may then bring the matter to the attention of the PTA DCE. The student should again feel free to discuss the matter fully.
- Step 4 Should a satisfactory and impartial solution not result from the above steps; the student may pursue the matter through other channels. These would include the PTA Program Director, and Dean of Health Science. The Student Grievance Procedure can be found in the NTCC Catalog and in the PTA Student Handbook.

All students will have the option of appointing a person to accompany them during the grievance procedure.

### **REMOVAL FROM CLINIC**

If the student's performance in the clinic setting is not consistent with prudent Physical Therapy practice and jeopardizes the patients' right to safe care, the CCCE in conjunction with the Director of Clinical Education may remove the student from the clinical area. This action indicates that the student is failing the clinical component of the course. The DCE or Program Director will meet with the student within twenty-four hours face-to-face or by phone to explain the reasons for removal from the clinical area and to inform the student that they are failing.

Following this action, an informal meeting with the student, DCE, CI and/or CCCE, and Program Director will be convened as soon as possible to discuss the student's status. If the removal from the clinical setting is upheld as a result of this meeting, the student receives a failing grade in the clinical component of the course and will be dismissed from the program.

Furthermore, if a student is not removed from a clinical, failure to meet the standard clinical objectives by the end of the semester can also result in failure of that clinical education course if a student makes below a "75". Frequent communication with the CI and the DCE helps to prevent this.

A current list of affiliating facilities with their phone numbers, addresses, and contact person, are available in the DCE's Office.

### **INCLEMENT WEATHER/ MAJOR DESIGNATED HOLIDAYS**

Students scheduled for clinical education during inclement weather conditions in which NTCC designates travel hazardous and closes the campus, will not be expected to attend clinic that day. Time missed when NTCC is closed does not have to be made up. The CI should be notified in advance as with any other absence. However, in the event that NTCC remains open for classes, but the local school district within the clinical site area or the district in which the student resides closes and the student deems travel as hazardous, the student will not be expected to attend clinic that day. Time missed in this situation must be made up. Lastly, if NTCC is open and the local school district within the clinical site area or the district in which the student resides remains open, the student must attend clinic that day. If the student does not attend clinic in the event that NTCC

remains open, both the DCE and the CI must be notified in advance as with any other absence.

Students will be excused from clinical for the major designated holidays which are as follows: **New Year's Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, July 4<sup>th</sup>, Labor Day, Thanksgiving Day, and Christmas Day.** In addition, a student may be excused from one day of clinical to attend the TPTA Student Conclave. Any request for time off must be made to and approved by the DCE and CI. Student request for time off, other than the major holidays, will be determined by the CI and DCE. If excused absences need to be made up, a designated time will be determined by the CI and student. Notification of make-up work to the DCE is required by both the CI and student. Make-up time should be documented as such on the time record by the student and signed by the CI. All time off must be made up except to allow for attendance at the TPTA Student Conclave.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is not ethical to share information with other individuals regarding patients/clients, facilities, clinical instructors, or classmates. This includes placing the patient's name or other identifying item on case reports, class presentations, twitter, Facebook, etc., failing to obtain written permission to utilize pictures or videos of a patient in presentations, or talking about patients to your classmates. Violation of this ethic by the student may result in probation or withdrawal from the PTA Program. All students are expected to follow HIPAA guidelines for confidentiality. HIPAA training is received in the didactic portion of the program.

### **Confidentiality in Clinical Facility**

All clinical facilities are expected to have policies on the confidentiality of records and other personal information. Additionally, policies concerning the informed consent of patients seen by the student and facility guidelines on the use of human subjects for educational purposes should exist at each facility. These guidelines should describe the risk-free right of each patient to refuse to participate in treatment given by a student. These policies should be reviewed with the students affiliating at that facility. In addition, students are required to introduce themselves as a Student Physical Therapist Assistant to each patient.

### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)**

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education. FERPA gives parents certain rights with respect to their children's educational records. These rights transfer to the student when he or she attends a school beyond the high school level. Students to whom the rights have transferred as considered "eligible students." In essence, a parent has no legal right to obtain information concerning the child's college records without the written consent of the student. In compliance with FERPA, information classified as "directory information" may be released to the general public without the written consent of the student unless the student makes a request in writing.

Directory information is defined as: the student's name, permanent address and/or local address, telephone listing, dates of attendance, most recent previous education institution attended, other information including major, field of study, degrees, awards received, and participation in officially recognized activities/sports.

## MEDICAL AND OTHER REQUIRED FORMS

Students are responsible for providing to the DCE or Program Director, the following items, by the appointed dates:

### First day of class of first fall semester:

- Completed PTA Program Report of Physical Exam signed by physician (submit to Program Director to be maintained in official student records)

### May 1<sup>st</sup> of clinical year by upload to current electronic clinical system:

- Criminal background check completed during the clinical year. Some clinical sites may refuse admission due to their specific criteria. If a clinical site refuses to allow a student, the student will have to withdraw from the program due to inability to progress with clinical courses (submit for review to Program Director followed by student upload to current electronic clinical system).
- Documented proof of personal health insurance (student upload front and back of document to current electronic clinical system)
- Documented Immunization support for Varicella (2 immunizations, or a positive blood titer, or a copy of the physician's diagnosis at the time of the illness; "had disease" written on an immunization list is not sufficient).
- Documented Immunization support for MMR (2 immunizations)
- Documented Immunization support for Tdap (within the last 10 years)
- Documented Immunization support for Hepatitis B: proof of completion of the vaccine series (3 immunizations) or declination form (declination only accepted for religious or medical reasons)
- TB test results completed within the past year (must be regularly updated so as to be current during clinical courses)
- Current American Heart Association CPR card [Health Care Provider Basic Life Support (BLS) or HeartCode BLS only]

### Provided to the student by the DCE or Program Director prior to the first clinical:

- Proof of drug screen (drug screening provided through NTCC)
  - Proof of liability insurance (provided by NTCC)
- Students may NOT attend clinical courses without the completion of all required paperwork.
- Each student is responsible for uploading all required documentation to the current clinical system in use by the NTCC PTA Program. Each student is also responsible for maintaining his/her own file with **copies** of above items for personal records and to be shown to each clinical site if requested.
- Late submission of above items will negatively impact clinical course grade.

## CRIMINAL HISTORY CHECK

If a student checked "Yes", regarding criminal history on the PTA application, the student must complete the Criminal History Evaluation Form available at [www.ptot.texas.gov](http://www.ptot.texas.gov) and submit the form to the Texas Board of PT Examiners for review. As mandated by the Legislature, the review will cost the student \$50.00. Upon completion of investigation, the Texas Board of PT Examiners will determine eligibility

for licensure. Any history of criminal activity may prevent the student from obtaining licensure from the State Board of Physical Therapy Examiners.

Students will be required to have a criminal history/background check at the beginning of the spring semester enrolled. The PTA program will designate the agency to perform the certified background check and provide instruction for the initiation of the criminal history/background check. Some clinical sites may refuse admission due to their specific criteria. If a clinical site refuses to allow a student, the student will have to withdraw from the program due to inability to progress with clinical courses.

### **DRUG SCREENING**

Students are required by the Northeast Texas Community College PTA program and clinical agencies to undergo random urine drug screens. Students who fail this drug screen will NOT be allowed to continue in the program or practice clinically (and in effect fail the course). A waiver stating understanding of this policy will be signed and placed in the student's permanent file. A failure is a positive testing of an illegal substance, prescription medication with no prescription; prescription or OTC medication in **excess** of therapeutic levels by dose that could significantly alter thought and behavior.

### **SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program of Northeast Texas Community College is aware of and concerned about the problem of substance use and chemical dependency in our society. It is recognized that allied health students may be affected by this disorder to the same extent as the general public. Because of the nature of physical therapy and the responsibility to public safety, it is imperative that individuals dependent on chemicals receive treatment or be removed from positions where safety and decision-making are critical. The following policies apply:

1) Northeast Texas Community college supports a **zero** tolerance policy for illegal and/or unauthorized drug use. Students are required by clinical agencies to undergo random urine drug screening. Students who present with a positive drug screen will not practice clinically and will be withdrawn from the course/clinical. Students will be given an opportunity to withdraw prior to a failing grade being assigned.

2) NTCC has adopted the following definitions:

Dependency: An illness characterized by reliance on and preoccupation with, or loss of control of drug use (prescription or nonprescription) and/or alcohol. This may include physical and psychological symptoms.

Substance use: Use of chemicals to the extent that behaviors and/or judgment may alter.

3) A failure of a drug screen is defined as a positive testing of an illegal substance in any amount, or testing for prescription medication with no legal prescription or presence of prescription or OTC medication in excess of therapeutic levels. Clinical facilities may accept the results of this testing or may require a test provided by their facility. A waiver stating understanding of this policy will be signed and placed in the student's permanent file.

- 4) All students will be tested at least twice during the academic year or duration of the program. Students may also be tested at any time for behaviors or suspicion of impaired practice while in the clinical setting. When requested, students must go immediately for the testing and must be escorted to the site of testing. Once present at the site of testing, students may not leave the area until a specimen is obtained. Specimens are observed during collection. Refusal to test on demand will be considered a failure.
- 5) Random drug screening may be done at any time during the program.
- 6) If instructors notice unusual behaviors and suspect the student may be impaired, then the instructor has the responsibility of removing the student from the clinical or academic area and if possible obtaining immediate drug testing. If the student wishes to prove that behaviors are not due to substance use, they may **immediately**, upon confrontation, submit himself/herself to a subsequent supervised urine collection and test. Drug screens performed at a later date or by other method will not be accepted.
- 7) If testing shows no proof of substance use (prescription or nonprescription), then the student may return to the clinical setting when the suspicious behavior clears. If testing shows substance use, the student will follow the policies for identified substance users.
- 8) When recurrent suspicious behavior that is associated with chemical dependency occurs even in the presence of negative testing, it will be determined that the behaviors may endanger client safety and the student will be withdrawn from the program. Any single action by the student that is determined to endanger client safety may be cause for removal from the program.
- 9) **Identified substance users** are students who have tested positive for chemical use or who have admitted to chemical use. They will be counseled to seek treatment for the dependency or substance use. Students will be withdrawn from all PTA classes. Students who are withdrawn for substance use may **not re-enter the program**.
- 10) It must be reiterated that prescription medications may also impair behaviors and judgments. If students are taking medication causing such behaviors, they should seek out assistance from their physician regarding alternative medications at the discretion of the physician. If pharmacologic treatment is not compatible with safe clinical behaviors and safe chemical levels in the urine, then all the above rules will apply.

#### **Resources for treatment for the student**

Alcoholics Anonymous	903-537-2867
AA hotline	800-560-1059
NETECADA (youth and adult intervention)	903-588-2817
Personal Physician	

#### **Accidents**

In the event of injury or illness, students should be provided with access to health services such as access to the emergency room or dialing 911 services. The student is responsible for the cost associated with receiving the health care services. The agency is not responsible for any health care costs of the student.

All accidents occurring while in clinic that result in patient, hospital personnel, or personal injury and/or damage to equipment must be reported to the clinical instructor immediately. Students may be required to fill out an incident report. Students are required to fully understand the safety methods of properly performing treatment procedures and operation of equipment before undertaking them. Students will carry

*their own liability* coverage through Northeast Texas Community College and are responsible for any personal medical charges incurred. In the event of an accident, please have the student complete an incident form and notify the DCE of the incident. For a claim form please contact the DCE.

## **MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION**

### **SPECIAL SERVICES**

Academic advising may be obtained from PTA faculty and the NTCC academic advisors. The advisors care available to students in the Student Services Building. The student or instructor, or both, may initiate conferences regarding learning and/or progress in a course. Such academic advising is considered a central part of the learning experience. Sometimes concerns or problems of a personal nature interfere with a student's learning. When this occurs the student should initiate or be encouraged to initiate counseling with an appropriate professional. Instructors may require a student to see college advising staff as a component of their course work or probation.

### **CARS, PARKING, AND TRANSPORTATION**

Students should place the Northeast Texas Community College parking sticker on the rear window driver side of their vehicle. Parking is available on the Northeast campus behind the academic buildings. Do not park in fire lanes, on sidewalks, or on grass.

At the clinical facility, rules governing parking and cars will be made known during orientation to each facility.

Students are expected to arrange their own transportation to and from clinical sites and designated field trips. Clinical assignments cannot always be arranged to correspond with carpools.

### **TOBACCO USE**

The use of tobacco products including smokeless tobacco, smoking tobacco, and any legal smoking preparation is prohibited in all College buildings, enclosed facilities, inner campus, or near College building entrances.

#### **Tobacco use is prohibited in:**

1. All enclosed buildings and facilities, including but not limited to classrooms, offices, food service areas, lavatories and residence halls
2. All exterior areas in the inner campus and parking lots.

#### **Tobacco use is permitted in:**

1. Personal vehicles
2. Designated smoking huts located in various areas of campus.

### **LEARNING COMMONS:**

The Northeast Learning Commons has been designed for student use. There are a variety of learning experiences available for varied course work.

Within the Learning Commons, the student will find a general assortment of textbooks covering diverse areas, a current selection of physical therapy journals and materials to compliment learning objectives. Occasionally, classroom instructors will require viewing of audio-visual materials but usually these will be used as enrichment tools to be viewed

on the student's own time. These materials may be looked up on the Library web page: [www.ntcc.edu](http://www.ntcc.edu) under the Learning Resource Center link.

The library features WEB-CAT, an online catalog and various e-references. The library also features the Cumulative Index for Nursing and Allied Health for use in finding literature. The library also has a database system with several medical and governmental health publications. Students may find the use of inter-library loan helpful for research papers. Please request materials several weeks in advance. Access to internet resources is also available in the Learning Commons. Further information will be provided in a library orientation scheduled in the fall semester.

The Learning Commons is equipped with machines to view the materials that are currently available. Keeping noise levels to a minimum and maintaining an environment conducive to learning will be expected. The area is for students use and it is highly recommended that advantage be taken of these learning opportunities.

### **PERIODICALS**

The faculty strongly recommends that each student regularly read one professional magazine. As a student member of the American Physical Therapy Association you will receive all publications of the association. Publications are also available in the library and in the faculty offices.

### **VIDEOTAPING/AUDIOTAPING AND DIGITAL PICTURES**

As students, you will be simulating a work environment and will practice on one another and may be videotaped. Digital pictures of students performing techniques may also be taken for posting on the website. **The videotapes and digital pictures are used for teaching and grading purposes only.** Students will be required to sign a permission form to allow videotaping/audiotaping and digital photography. Any student concerns regarding this policy will be dealt with on an individual basis.

### **CLOSED CLASSES**

NTCC students are provided information regarding school closing by calling the college's main telephone number 902-434-8100. NTCC attempts to provide this information as early as 6:00 a.m. Students may also sign on to the emergency alert system available on the campus portal to receive text alerts/messages and email notifications. Other ways to access school closings may be announced on the following radio stations: KVNE 89.56; STAR COUNTRY FM 96.6; KLAK – FM 97.7; KIMP – AM 960

### **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES/ORGANIZATIONS**

Throughout this handbook and, indeed throughout the PTA Program, we teach and encourage *professional standards and behavior*. Our national professional organization, the American Physical Therapy Association, was set up to assist members in continuing their own professional growth. Students will be eligible to join the APTA as a “student member”. The program faculty strongly encourages students to take advantage of this opportunity.

Program students are also invited to attend meetings of the Texas Physical Therapy Association and of the East Texas District of the TPTA which meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, quarterly at many area clinics. The student will be notified of the exact

dates, times, and locations of these meetings through postings. The PTA faculty firmly believes in supporting and actively participating in these professional organizations. Students may attend these meetings even if they are not members of the TPTA.

Northeast Texas Community College PTA Program sponsors the Physical Therapist Assistant club which participates in fundraising events, professional growth, and community service.

### **GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS**

It is the student's responsibility to confirm that the necessary **official** transcripts have been received by the Registrar's office. The student is strongly encouraged to periodically monitor their unofficial transcript to be sure that the NTCC transcript is up to date; this will help minimize the possibility of degree challenges at or near the time of graduation. When the student has successfully fulfilled all of the course and credit hour requirements for the PTA curriculum, they will be prepared to apply for graduation with an Associate of Applied Science degree. The student will be reminded to apply for graduation through school email and publications but it is **ultimately the student's responsibility** to file an application for graduation and to make sure that all the requirements have been completed.

### **STUDENT RECORDS**

The PTA program complies with the same legal guidelines as the college in governing the release of student educational records. A file on each current PTA student's academic and clinical skills progress will be maintained in a locked file cabinet in the office of the PTA Program. It may be released only to a PTA faculty member and/or Dean upon request. A student may have access to his own file. Students, 18 years or older, must authorize, in writing, their permission to share information with parents or other individuals outside the NTCC faculty or administration. Following graduation, student files will be kept for 5 years and subsequently destroyed. The only record maintained beyond 5 years, is an official transcript, which may be requested through the Office of Admissions and Records.

### **PROFESSIONAL LICENSURE**

Licensure under the provisions of the Physical Therapy Practice Act 4512E is required in the state of Texas. Licensure is required before the candidate may practice physical therapy. Licensure in the state of Texas is the responsibility of the Texas Board of Physical Therapy Examiners. The Practice Act and the Rules of the Board will be made available to the student and discussed in detail during the first semester. The procedure for obtaining licensure as a Physical Therapist Assistant in Texas will be reviewed closer to graduation.

### **EMPLOYMENT AS A PTA**

The PTA Program regularly post notices of job openings received from prospective employers on the classroom bulletin board.

Employment opportunities for the PTA are still good in the United States. The U.S. is presently the only country which recognizes the PTA. Despite frequent changes in Medicare and the initiation of the Affordable Care Act, the job outlook for East Texas remains stable.

## COMPLAINTS

Complaints regarding the program or the program graduates should be addressed to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program Director. Unresolved complaints or complaints about the Program Director should be addressed to the Dean of Health Science. All complaints will be documented, including the projected outcome, and kept on file at the program facility. Complaints regarding Accreditation of this program should be directed to the Commission for Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education. The commission is located at 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria Virginia, 22305-3085.

## PTA PROGRAM CURRICULUM

<b>Summer I</b>		<b>Credits</b>
BIOL 2401	Anatomy and Physiology I	4
	Language, Philosophy and Culture studies ( <i>Phil 1301 or Phil 2306 preferred</i> )	3

**Total Credits** 7

<b>Summer II</b>		
BIOL 2402	Anatomy and Physiology II	4
ENGL 1301	English Composition	
	<i>or</i>	
ENGL 2311	Technical and Business	<u>3</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>7</b>

**First Year** **Credits**

<b>Fall Semester</b>		
PTHA 1413	Functional Anatomy	4
PTHA 1301	Profession of Physical Therapy	3
PTHA 1405	Basic Patient Care Skills	4
PTHA 1321	Pathophysiology for the PTA	<u>3</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>14</b>

<b>Spring Semester</b>		
PTHA 2535	Rehabilitation Techniques	5
PTHA 1531	Physical Agents	5
PTHA 2509	Therapeutic Exercise	5
PTHA 2301	Essentials of Data Collection	<u>3</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>18</b>

**Second Year** **Credits**

<b>May Intersession</b>		
PTHA 2305	Clinical Neurology	<u>3</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>3</b>

<b>Summer I</b>		
PTHA 1266	Practicum I	<u>2</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>2</b>

<b>Summer II</b>		
PTHA 2531	Management of Neurological Disorders	5
PSYC 2314	<i>Lifespan Growth and Development</i>	<u>3</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>8</b>

<b>Fall Semester</b>		
PTHA 2266	Practicum II	2
PTHA 2267	Practicum III	2
PTHA 2339	Professional Issues	<u>3</u>
<b>Total Credits</b>		<b>7</b>
<b>Curriculum Total Credits</b>		<b><u>66</u></b>

## **PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT (PTHA) COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

### **PTHA 1301 – Hybrid: The Profession of Physical Therapy**

Three credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture each week

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the program

Introduction to the profession of physical therapy and the role of the PTA including the historical and current scope of physical therapy.

### **PTHA 1321 – Hybrid: Pathophysiology for the Physical Therapist Assistant**

Three credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture per week

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the program

Study of the pathogenesis, prognosis, and therapeutic management of diseases/ conditions commonly encountered in physical therapy.

### **PTHA 1413 – Face to Face (F2F): Functional Anatomy**

Four credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hours of lecture and six hours of lab each week

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the program

The relationship of the musculoskeletal and neuromuscular systems to normal and abnormal movement.

### **PTHA 1405 – Hybrid: Basics of Patient Care**

Four credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hours of lecture and six hours of lab each week

Prerequisite(s): Admission to the program

Introduction to the theory and application of basic patient handling, functional skills, communication, and selected data collection techniques

### **PTHA 2509 – Hybrid: Therapeutic Exercise**

Five credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture and six hours of lab each week.

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Critical examination of principles, concepts, and application of techniques related to therapeutic exercise and functional training.

### **PTHA 2301 – Hybrid: Essentials of Data Collection**

Three credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hours of lecture and four hours of lab each week.

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Data collection techniques used to prepare the Physical Therapist Assistant to assist in patient/physical therapy management.

### **PTHA 2535 – Hybrid: Rehabilitation Techniques**

Five credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture and six hours of lab each week

Prerequisite: Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Advanced course integrating previously learned and new skills/techniques into the comprehensive rehabilitation of selected diseases and disorders.

**PTHA 1531 - F2F: Physical Agents**

Five credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture and six hours of lab each week

Prerequisite: Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Study of the biophysical principles, physiological effects, efficacy, and application of therapeutic physical agents.

**PTHA1266 – Clinical: 224 hours: Practicum I**

Two credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hundred twenty-four clinical hours Prerequisites:

Successful completion of PTHA courses in curriculum up to this point.

Practical general workplace training supported by an individualized learning plan developed by the employer, college, and student.

**PTHA 2305 – Hybrid: Clinical Neurology**

Three credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture each week

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Study of neuroanatomy and neurophysiology as it relates to commonly encountered neurological conditions.

**PTHA 2531 – Hybrid: Management of Neurological Disorders**

Five credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Three hours of lecture and six hours of lab.

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Comprehensive rehabilitation techniques of selected neurological disorders.

**PTHA 2339 – Online: Professional Issues**

Three credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hours of lecture and four hours of lab each week.

Prerequisite(s): Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Discussion of professional issues and behaviors related to clinical practice; preparation for transition into the workforce.

**PTHA 2266 – Clinical: Practicum II**

Two credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hundred twenty-four clinical hours

Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Practical general workplace training supported by an individualized learning plan developed by the employer, college, and student.

**PTHA2267 - Clinical: Practical III**

Two credit hours. Lecture/Lab/Clinical: Two hundred twenty-four clinical hours.

Successful completion of all PTHA courses up to this point in the curriculum.

Practical general workplace training supported by an individualized learning plan developed by the employer, college, and student.

## STATEMENT OF UNDERSTANDING

As a student in the PTA program, I am aware that I:

1. May be photographed, audiotaped, or videotaped as part of class, lab, or clinical activities.
2. Will be expected to participate as a “patient” during class or lab activities. Precautions and contraindications for the procedure will be discussed prior to such participation. (Any student has the right to decline participating as a patient with prior notification of the instructor).
3. Will be responsible for uniform, travel, meals, and other expenses related to clinical courses.
4. Will be working with patients during each clinical practicum and may be exposed to illness, blood, and other body fluids.
5. Will be required to undergo a drug screen (allocated in lab fees), and a criminal background check, at my own expense in order to participate in each clinical practicum.
6. Will be required to obtain and maintain personal health insurance.

I acknowledge that I have read and understand the policies and procedures of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program. I agree to abide by all rules, policies and procedures contained herein. I consent to allow the Program Director to maintain a copy of my medical health records in my personal folder kept secure in the offices of the PTA Program. I also agree to participate in designated field trips and follow all safety procedures and maintain a professional demeanor to the best of my ability. I am also aware that this handbook is intended as a guide; and policies and procedures described herein may be changed without notice.

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Student name (print)

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Student signature

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Date

## **STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY**

It is not ethical to share information with other individuals regarding patients/clients, facilities, clinical instructors, classmates; i.e. placing the patient's name or other identifying items on case reports, class presentations, projects, social media, etc. Failing to obtain written permission to utilize pictures or videos of a patient in presentations or on social media, and talking about patients to classmates will be considered a breach of confidentiality and result in immediate dismissal from the PTA program.

I \_\_\_\_\_ understand that all information about the client's condition is confidential and should not be discussed in any public area inside or outside the facility/school. I will comply with this statement of confidentiality.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Name (Print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## **Physical Therapist Assistant Lab Practical and Lecture Exam Confidentiality Contract**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, agree to not discuss with any student, by any means (i.e. Twitter, Facebook, Text Message, Flickr, YouTube, Vine, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.) the content of lab practical exams and lecture examinations. Content includes, but not limited to, questions, scenarios, instructor comments/feedback, or any relevant content that may aid in the advancement of other students. I understand that discussion of any portion of the lab practicals or lecture exams prior to completion by all students is a violation of the Academic Integrity/ Honor Code Policies of the program and this institution and will result in immediate dismissal from the program.

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Student Name (Print)

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Student Signature

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Date

## Learning Contract

A positive class environment is conducive to learning. This contract includes the behaviors that the PTA Program Faculty consider important in contributing to the goal of achieving a **positive environment**.

- Class preparedness – Be prepared for class by reading assignments, reviewing lectures, and completing assigned projects on time.
- Attendance – Obtain any material missed from classmates. (There is no way to recreate class discussion missed; and, there is no guarantee that there will be opportunities to revisit topics covered during class).
- Tardiness – Arrive on time for class and clinicals and remain until the class, lab, clinical day is over. (Interruptions of any kind disrupt the learning process).
- Respect – Make an effort to learn about my classmates and be sensitive to cultural values and diversity especially with regard to expression of ideas and feelings that may differ. Display a positive and respectful attitude toward peers, professors, and guest speakers.
- Professionalism – Understand that work/skills will be evaluated constructively and that specific suggestions will be made by the faculty to assist in learning to become a competent professional; welcome new ideas and approaches to learning and demonstrate flexibility and willingness to consider them.
- Self-Regulation – Arrange with the faculty in advance at mutually convenient times for the purpose of seeking help.

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Student Name (Print)

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Student Signature

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Date