

# **PTA STUDENT HANDBOOK**



**Wallace Community College**

**Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

**Class of 2027**

# PTA Program Faculty

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## Welcome

Congratulations on being accepted into the PTA Program at Wallace Community College. Your acceptance into the Program reflects your hard work and dedication to your education and chosen profession. The next two years should be exciting and rewarding in preparing you for a PTA career.

The faculty and staff of the College will do everything possible to make your education successful and enjoyable. We will strive to provide you with the educational opportunities necessary to become a PTA. You should take full advantage of these opportunities, remembering you only get out of an experience what you put into it.

The choice of a career is a personal decision. However, having chosen this profession, you must now assume the inherent ethics and responsibilities of the profession. You are now taking the responsibility for treating other human beings and influencing their lives. For this reason, the educational process for becoming a PTA will evaluate you not just on your knowledge, but on your work ethics and sense of professionalism, as well.

The next years of study will involve classroom, lab, and clinical work as well as a lot of outside study. The PTA Program has a highly structured curriculum and schedule. You will have limited choices of classes, times and schedules. You must be available for class or clinic when requested, including Fridays, Saturdays and evenings. Meetings outside of regular class times will be scheduled in advance, in consideration of working students; however, attendance will be mandatory.

There is a large component of clinical practice in the curriculum. Some of the clinical sites may not be within traveling distance of your home. You must provide your own transportation to the clinical sites, and you may have to live away from home for up to nine weeks during the program.

This handbook will inform you of policies and procedures particular to the PTA Program. You should keep this readily accessible. Please refer to the *Wallace Community College Catalog/Student Handbook* for other policies.

We welcome you and look forward to a lot of fun, hard work, and new friendships!

### **Mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

The mission of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Wallace Community College is to help students attain education to satisfy requirements of an Associate in Applied Science Degree. In so doing, we will graduate knowledgeable, competent, self-assured, adaptable, and service-oriented paraprofessionals. Graduates will be valuable members of the profession and the health care team, within their scope of work. Graduates of the PTA program at WCC will be qualified to sit for licensure in any state in which they wish to practice and will be prepared to uphold high standards of patient care while helping to meet healthcare needs in our community, state, and region. The program is committed to accomplishing this mission through the use of quality instructional methods, including both traditional and technology-based instruction, whereby students are assisted to achieve the academic knowledge and clinical skills necessary to serve the physical therapy health needs of the public.

### **Philosophy of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

Physical therapy is a dynamic profession with an established and scientific base and widespread clinical applications in the restoration, maintenance, and promotion of optimal physical function. Physical therapy is defined as the care and services provided by or under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist. Physical therapist assistants work under the direction and supervision of physical therapists to provide physical therapy interventions that require specialized knowledge and skills.

Wallace Community College accepts the responsibility for supplying students with opportunities to learn the necessary information and skills and to obtain clinical practice required for state licensure/regulation and entry-level competence in the field. As educators, faculty model the processes of learning, adapting, and changing as the environment and culture changes in accordance with sound scientific developments in education, instructional delivery methodology, medical science, and physical therapy science. We believe in providing our students with more than just manual skills. We believe that our students should know not only the “how to,” but the “why.” This should produce thinking individuals who will continue to grow and learn after they graduate and be able to demonstrate respect for the uniqueness of every individual.

It is the student’s responsibility, however, to fully utilize the opportunities provided by this educational program. Additionally, the choice of a career is a personal decision, and, having chosen a particular profession, the individual must assume the profession’s inherent responsibilities and adhere to established professional ethics and standards of practice. As students, individuals begin the process of becoming physical therapist assistants and must constantly learn and adapt to different situations, patients, treatment techniques, disease processes, and other conditions.

## **Objectives and Goals of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program**

The goals and objectives of the Physical Therapist Assistant Program reflect the mission and philosophy of both the College in general and the PTA program specifically. They are designed to encompass the educational outcomes, the program objectives and curriculum content, and needs of the health care community. The Physical Therapist Assistant Program is committed to students who, upon completion of the program, will:

- Possess entry-level skills as deemed appropriate for the physical therapist assistant by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education.
- Successfully complete the PTA National Licensing Examination as part of the licensure process for the state in which they chose to practice.
- Possess a broad general education background that includes humanities, mathematics, social sciences, biological sciences, and technologies.
- Work under the supervision of a licensed physical therapist in an ethical, legal, safe, and effective manner.
- Demonstrate an understanding of the Alabama Practice Act as it relates to the practice of physical therapy, as well as demonstrate an awareness of the existence of varying practice laws from state to state.
- Develop the skills necessary to pursue lifelong learning needed for personal and professional growth.
- Demonstrate appropriate critical thinking and problem-solving skills in the role as a physical therapist assistant.
- Become integral members of the healthcare team.
- Interact with patients, families, and co-workers in a manner that demonstrates an appreciation of cultural and socioeconomic diversity.
- Be aware of their responsibility in the promotion of the profession through membership in the APTA, attendance at local and national meetings and conferences, and participation in community events.

## **Human Rights and Non-Discrimination**

Wallace Community College is committed to equal opportunity education. The College is guided in philosophy and practice by the principle that individuals will not be treated differently because of race, creed, religion, color, gender, age, national origin, disability, or marital status, and that legitimate and reasonable access to facilities is available to all. This principle particularly applies to the admission of students in all programs of the College and in their academic pursuits. It is also applicable in extracurricular activities, all student services, employment of students by the College, and employment of instructors and non-instructional personnel. Therefore, Wallace Community College is in compliance with *Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964*, as amended; the *Civil Rights Act of 1991*; *Executive Order 11246*; as amended; *Title IX of the Rehabilitation Act*; and *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990*. Wallace Community College is an Affirmative Action, Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity Institution.

*Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972*, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex. Sexual harassment is a form of discrimination that is illegal under *Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964* for employees and under *Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972* for students. Each campus of Wallace Community College has trained Compliance Officers.

### **Other Civil Rights and Title IX Compliance Coordinators**

#### **Employee's Contact:**

Keyashia Sheppard, Wallace Campus - (334) 556-2557

Email: [ksheppard@wallace.edu](mailto:ksheppard@wallace.edu)

#### **Student's Contact:**

Shaletha Barnes-Blackmon, Wallace Campus - (334) 556-2511

Email: [sblackmon@wallace.edu](mailto:sblackmon@wallace.edu)

#### **Office of Civil Rights for Alabama:**

Office of Civil Rights, Atlanta Office

U.S. Department of Education

61 Forsyth Street S.W., Suite 19T10

Atlanta, GA 30303-8927

Phone: (404) 974-9406

Email: [OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov](mailto:OCR.Atlanta@ed.gov)

*Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disabilities.

#### **Section 504 Compliance Coordinator:**

Ryan Spry, Director of Student and Campus Services - (334) 556-2587

Email: [rspry@wallace.edu](mailto:rspry@wallace.edu)

*The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990* (ADA) provides that no otherwise qualified person shall be discriminated against in the provision of an educational service or benefit on the basis of disability. Wallace Community College endeavors to provide reasonable accommodations to

qualified students with disabilities. Students needing disability services or information should contact the appropriate Compliance Coordinator on the appropriate campus or site.

**Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance Coordinators:**

Terri Ricks, Sparks Campus - (334) 619-1507; Email: tricks@wallace.edu

Ryan Spry, Wallace Campus - (334) 556-2587; Email: rspry@wallace.edu

**PTA Attendance/Tardiness\***

(\*Additional policies attendance for general academic classes can be found in the college catalog)

- A. Students are expected to attend all classes and clinical assignments as scheduled unless there is a serious, contagious illness or an emergency occurs. If absence or tardiness is unavoidable due to any of the above, the student **must** notify the instructor(s) by phone/voicemail or email for each course in which the absence will occur prior to the start of class or the workday; **and if applicable**, the clinical site to which he/she is assigned.

Students are expected to be in their seats, ready to start class at the assigned time. This means textbooks and notebooks open and ready to start.

Students should remember that instructors often serve as references for prospective employers. Dependability in terms of attendance is a big issue for employers. Performance in this area is an excellent indicator for future employers.

- B. Students are expected to complete assignments by their respective due dates. Late submissions or assignments will not be accepted unless there are extenuating circumstances; the instructor reserves the right to determine if late/missed work will be accepted. Missed quizzes/tests must be completed the next class period or a grade of zero will be issued.
- C. The program is evaluated based on the number of hours that students spend in supervised clinical practice. For this reason, students will be required to complete and submit weekly time sheets to the Clinical Education Coordinator while in clinic. Clinical education courses are professional courses, and the motivated student will strive for perfect attendance during all clinical education experiences. Students are granted one professional leave day during PTA 268, Clinical Practicum if approved by the clinical instructor and/or Clinical Education Coordinator. Professional leave days are designed for students to use if they need to attend a job interview or if a travel day is needed for the clinical education experiences. Program policy for absences during clinical education experiences must be followed. All missed clinical hours must be made up prior to the start of the next semester. Absences that result from attendance at college sponsored events (award ceremonies, etc.) will be made up at the discretion of the Clinical Education Coordinator. Missed clinical hours must be done at the convenience of the clinical instructor and the Clinical Education Coordinator. Any clinical absence will be penalized according to course syllabi. Students will receive an "Incomplete" in the course until the hours are made up. If the hours are not completed prior to the start of the next semester, students will be unable to progress in the program.

## Grading System Policies

A. The grading scale used by the PTA program is outlined below:

- A = 90-100
- B = 80-89
- C = 75-79
- D = 60-74
- F = 59 and below

Grades for full-time clinical practice will be calculated based on scores given by the Clinical Instructor, plus any outside work required for that course. A minimum of 75% average is required for successful course completion and progression in the program.

B. Examinations

Instructors will schedule final examinations based on the College's final exam schedule. Final examinations will be scheduled as closely as possible to the College's schedule for general education courses. A student must notify the instructor at least one week prior to finals, if there is a conflict in examination schedules or if they have more than three finals in one day. Unit examinations and quizzes are scheduled at the discretion of each instructor.

C. Laboratory Skills

Many courses require demonstration of learned skills and procedures. During these tests, students will be required to demonstrate skills and professional behaviors in patient simulated activities.

Lab skill practicals will be graded as Pass or Fail. Each student must earn a minimum score of 75% of points on the grading rubric and must correctly perform all identified critical elements to pass the lab practical. A student will receive remediation and may be required to re-test, depending on the reason identified for failure. Failure to successfully complete remediation requirements will result in an interruption of program progression. If a re-test of the skill is required, and the student does not pass the skill on the re-test, she/he will not be allowed to progress in the program. A student who is not allowed to progress in the program and withdraws in keeping with the College's deadlines for withdrawal will receive a "W" for the course. A student who fails to meet the deadline for withdrawal will receive a course grade of 74 or the actual course grade earned if lower than a 74.

\*Each laboratory skill has identified critical components. Failure to accurately perform a critical element will result in failure of the skill, regardless of how well the student performs the rest of the activity. Students will be provided a list of elements to be evaluated in the performance of each skill. Critical elements will be identified by "\*."

E. Clinical

The Clinical Education Coordinator is responsible for assigning grades for clinical performance based on scores given by the Clinical Instructor on the student evaluation form.

The APTA's *Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI)* will be used to assess student clinical education performance during PTA 266 and PTA 268 clinical education experiences. The CI and student will complete and review the *CPI* at completion of PTA 266 and at midterm and completion of PTA 268.

The Clinical Education Coordinator will use a formula to convert these scores to a letter grade, including any outside work required during the clinical practice. Students must score the minimum required score on the clinical evaluation tool which can be found in the course syllabus to progress to the next level regardless of grades received for other assignments in the course. If students fail to meet the minimum score on the clinical evaluation tool in a clinical course, arrangements must be made to repeat the clinical experience. Decisions regarding this repetition will be made on an individual basis. Consideration must be given to the student's overall progress and length of time for the clinical practice to be repeated. The Clinical Education Coordinator, Program Director, and Clinical Instructor will develop a plan of action for the student.

Evaluation forms for PTA 260 and PTA 261 will be disseminated to students prior to the clinical education experiences as this experience is graded differently from the others.

#### F. Professional Behaviors Grade:

Displaying professional behavior will reward the student with 30 points for the Professional Behaviors Grade in each PTA course. However, as in the workplace, unprofessional behavior does have consequences. The following are examples of unprofessional behaviors and consequences (list is not all-inclusive):

- Failure to notify instructor of absence: -5 (Notification must be received by phone/voicemail or email by the course instructor prior to start of the class. Remind messages are NOT acceptable for this notification)
- Failure to follow established classroom/program policies: -1
- Failure to participate in classroom activities: -1
- Failure to comply with dress code: -1
- Failure to demonstrate general professional behaviors (inappropriate language, respect for others, etc.): -1
- Failure to bring required materials to class (textbooks, notebooks, lab supplies, etc.): -1

#### G. General Academic Course Work

General academic course work is integrated into the PTA curriculum in order to better prepare students for PTA course work. For this reason, students must either take the general academic courses as outlined in the curriculum design or have completed the course work prior to the time it is required. In addition, failure to complete any of the academic course work with a "C" or higher will mean that the student cannot progress in the program. Students will be allowed to reapply for the program after that course is successfully completed.

All general academic courses must be completed prior to or within the required semester as

outlined in the PTA curriculum. Failure to complete courses by the required semester will require the student to withdraw from the program; readmission policies for the Program will be followed if the student desires to be readmitted to the Program. Students must have a 2.0 over-all GPA to graduate from the College. Students must follow the College's regulations for completion of all coursework and maintenance of GPA necessary to show progression.

#### H. Comprehensive Examinations

Comprehensive exams will be required at the end of each semester and will include material from the current semester as well as all previous semesters. The comprehensive exam will be weighted and placed in one course for the respective semester. The exam score will be weighted as follows based on semester:

1<sup>st</sup> semester = 20% (PTA 250)

2<sup>nd</sup> semester = 25% (PTA 232)

3<sup>rd</sup> semester = 30% (PTA 260)

4<sup>th</sup> semester = 35% (PTA 266)

5<sup>th</sup> semester = 40% (PTA 201)

#### Lab Participation

Students are expected to participate as a subject and as a PTA student in all lab activities unless there are **identified, valid** reasons why they cannot participate. Valid reasons are defined as those that would directly affect the health or safety of a student. This participation includes acting as a model, role playing as a patient, and performing lab activities in a group of students or on a partner. Physical therapist assistant students must practice and become competent in skills in the lab prior to performing the skills with patients. It is also important for students to "receive" therapy, so they will be more aware of the experiences and status of a patient and the effects of treatment. However, students should not participate in any activities that may be harmful or have high risk of injury to themselves or others.

#### A. The following procedures will be followed concerning student participation in lab activities:

1. Faculty will review Essential Functions and the student's physical history for admitted students.
2. All students will read and sign the lab disclaimer form (attached). If for some reason, the student does not want to sign the lab disclaimer form, he or she should make an appointment to talk to the instructor for the lab regarding possible limited and alternative activities. It is the student's responsibility to notify faculty if, for any reason, he/she should not participate in any activity. If a student has any concern about a topic, it is the student's responsibility to speak to the instructor on the first day that this topic is addressed in the laboratory.
3. Instruction in precautions, contraindications, and correct performance of activities will be given prior to students' participation in the lab, with the exception of problem-solving activities designed by the instructor.
4. The instructor will arrange alternative learning experiences, for identified valid reasons for not participating. The experiences will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor.
5. The student must complete the alternative learning experiences within the time frame

established by the instructor.

6. Students must follow all safety policies for the lab as listed in this *Handbook*.

### **Program Progression Guidelines**

The PTA Program will follow general College policies regarding probation, suspension, or dismissal from the College as indicated in the Wallace Community College Catalog. However, there are specific circumstances that can lead to the interruption of Program progression. Since all students in the Program have successfully completed for admission, steps will be taken to offer remediation before these actions are taken.

As the curriculum of the PTA Program is cumulative and the performance of the skills learned are dependent upon those learned in earlier courses, it is vital that standards be set to make certain that the students have made satisfactory progress in all areas before they are placed in the clinical setting as a student or as a physical therapist assistant.

#### A. Types of PTA Courses

The program faculty will provide students with reasonable opportunities to successfully complete the Program, while maintaining standards that will allow students to demonstrate competencies necessary to complete each clinical education experience, successfully complete the licensure examination and be competitive in the job market. Faculty will provide remediation activities for students to increase their demonstration of competency of knowledge and/or skills when students do not meet course progression guidelines. However, students must realize and acknowledge that he or she is an adult learner and accept responsibility for his or her own learning outside of learning opportunities afforded by Program faculty.

##### 1. Lecture Courses

- a. If a student's grade point average is less than that required for progression in the Program after the second examination, the instructor will schedule a counseling session and a Student Conference Summary Report will be completed.
- b. The Student Conference Summary Report Form will provide suggested activities individualized for the student to facilitate successful completion of the course.
- c. It is the student's responsibility to follow through on suggested activities.
- d. Failure to achieve a minimum 75% average in the course will result in an interruption of program progression.

##### 2. Skills Courses

- a. If a student fails to pass any single skills assessment during a lab practical with 75% or higher, the student will require remediation on that skill.
- b. If a student fails to complete any identified critical element in a skill, the student will require remediation in that skill.
- c. If skill remediation is required, the course instructor will determine the most appropriate remediation activity, which may include re-testing the skill.
- d. Failure to successfully complete remediation requirements will result in an interruption of program progression. If a re-test of the skill is required, and the student does not pass the skill on the re-test, she/he will not be allowed to

progress in the program.

- e. An unsuccessful second attempt on a lab skill will result in a letter grade of “D” being issued for the course, regardless of the grade earned in the theory component.
  - f. A student cannot fail more than 25% of all skills in one course on the first attempt. If the student exceeds that number or fails the same skill twice, program progression will be interrupted.
3. Clinical Courses
- a. If a student fails the minimum required score on the clinical evaluation tool, the Clinical Education Coordinator will meet with the student’s CI and discuss suggestions for remediation.
  - b. It will be the decision of the Clinical Education Coordinator to determine if remediation is needed and how the remediation will be accomplished.
  - c. The student will receive an “I” in that course until the remediation is successfully completed.
  - d. Remediation must be completed before the student can progress to the next level of training.
  - e. If remediation is required for the final clinical education experience, the student will not be allowed to graduate until the remediation is completed.
  - f. Students can only be remediated in one clinical course during the course of the Program.
  - g. The second failure will result in an interruption of program progression.

#### B. Interruption of Program Progression

1. A student’s progression in the program may be interrupted if 1) the student fails to meet program progression guidelines or 2) if Program progression is interrupted for any other reason (extended illness, personal reasons, etc.).
2. Faculty member(s) and the student will meet to discuss the reason(s) for interruption in program progression.
3. A written letter explaining the terms and processes to be followed will be given to the student.
4. When an interruption in program progression occurs, the student is **ineligible to enroll** in any additional courses in the PTA Program until readmission to the program occurs.
5. If the student wishes to appeal the suspension, he or she must follow the grievance procedure as listed in the *College Catalog Student Handbook*.
6. If, for any reason, program progression is interrupted during a student’s first semester of study, the student must reapply for admission to the program during the next application period. The student is **not** guaranteed acceptance into the program a second time.
7. If program progression is interrupted during any semester other than the first, the student can request readmission the following year for the point in the program in which the interruption occurred. Written notification of the intent to return to the program must be received by the Program Director between the first day and midterm of the semester prior to that which the student wishes to reenter. (i.e., If the student was suspended during Spring Semester 2023 and wants to re-enter the Program in Spring Semester 2024, the notice must be received between the first day and midterm of Fall Semester 2023). Admission will be determined by the PTA Faculty based on availability of space in the next class (not to exceed 30 students) and priority. Priority will be determined by

cumulative GPA for completed PTA courses.

8. Students who wish to re-enter the Program will be required to enroll in PTA 293, Directed Study for PTA, during their first semester of returning to the Program. This course is designed to increase students' opportunities for successful completion of the curriculum. Course content will be determined by Program faculty based upon the point in the Program that the interruption in program progression occurred.
9. If program progression is interrupted for more than 1 year or, if a student fails to meet Program progression guidelines a second time, the student will be required to reapply for admission to the program during the next application period if an attempt at Program completion is desired. The student is not guaranteed acceptance into the program a second time. If accepted as a new student, the student must take or retake all PTA program courses.
10. A student who has been unsuccessful in the PTA Program two times, due to grade deficiencies or withdrawal, will be ineligible for re-enrollment unless the Program Director determines there were extenuating circumstances impacting the reason(s) for unsuccessful completion.

### **Disciplinary Procedures** **Disciplinary Actions by Faculty Members**

With regard to a matter of academic dishonesty in taking a college course, the respective faculty members of the College are authorized to administer certain appropriate disciplinary action. If a given faculty member has substantial evidence of a student's having committed, attempted to commit, or solicited an act of cheating, plagiarism, or any other form of academic dishonesty, the faculty member shall have the authority to (1) impose a grade of *F* for the respective assignment or test; (2) impose an *F* for the respective course; (3) require that an assignment be redone or a test be retaken; or (4) impose other similar sanctions designed to preserve academic integrity. The faculty member shall not have the right to suspend or expel a student. That authority is reserved for the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus and the College Judiciary Committee. If the faculty member believes that the improper conduct should be subject to greater punishment, or additional punishment, then the case should be referred to the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus for disciplinary review. In any situation where a student is alleged to have committed academic dishonesty of any nature, the faculty member making the allegation shall within 3 working days after the alleged wrongful act or the faculty member's first knowledge of the act, give the student written notice of the allegation and give the student the opportunity to respond to each allegation made. The student shall have a maximum of 3 working days to respond to any allegation made. No disciplinary grade imposed by a faculty member shall be considered final unless and until the student has been given written notice of the alleged wrongdoing and the opportunity to respond. It is not necessary that the student give a response for a grade to be finalized, only that the student has been given an opportunity to respond and that the instructor give due consideration to any response that is made. Each instructor shall keep a confidential file of any and all written allegations of academic dishonesty and all actions taken with regard to such allegations. Any student against whom a sanction is imposed by a faculty member as a result of an allegation of academic dishonesty shall have the right to appeal the sanction to the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus. The appeal must be filed with the Dean within 5 working days after the student is first made aware of the date that the decision has been made to impose a sanction and must include: (1) a copy of the faculty member's written allegations of academic dishonesty; (2) a statement of the sanction imposed; (3) the dates on

which the student received the written allegation and on which the student responded to the allegation; (4) the nature of the student's response to the faculty member concerning the allegation; and (5) the rationale for the appeal of the sanction. The student shall have the option of admitting to the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus the act of academic dishonesty and proposing an alternative sanction or denying that academic dishonesty has been committed.

The Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus shall, within 15 working days after receipt of the appeal, issue a report by which the Dean will (1) affirm the sanction; (2) overrule the sanction; or (3) modify the sanction. The Dean shall not overrule or modify any sanction imposed by a faculty member except where a compelling and substantial academic or legal reason exists for doing so.

If the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus determines that the student or organization is not guilty, the student or group will be cleared of all charges. If the student or organization is found guilty, the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus will delineate appropriate sanctions on a Wallace Community College *Sanction Agreement*. Upon administration of the *Sanction Agreement*, the student or organization will be offered the opportunity to select one of the following options:

- Sign the *Sanction Agreement*, indicating acceptance of the sanctions imposed and waiving all rights to appeal; or
- Sign the *Sanction Agreement*, declining the opportunity to accept the sanctions imposed and request to appeal the decision before the Judiciary Committee. Appeal requests must be made in writing within 5 working days to the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus. Students who desire to request that academic integrity issues be heard by the Judiciary Committee must follow steps 7-11 of the next section (Disciplinary Procedures by Staff and Judiciary Committee). See the *College Catalog* for Disciplinary Procedures by Staff and Judiciary Committee.

Any student or organization who fails to sign the *Sanction Agreement* as stated herein shall be deemed to have waived all rights to further appeal, and the sanctions imposed by the Dean, Student Affairs and Sparks Campus will be final.

### **Academic Honesty Code**

All students enrolled in the PTA Program are expected to conform to the College's Code of Student Conduct as listed in the *College Catalog/Student Handbook* under the section entitled "Code of Student Conduct" which includes cheating.

A. Cheating: Cheating is defined as:

1. Dishonesty in completing academic assignments, such as having in one's possession materials other than those specifically approved by one's instructor during tests;
2. Submission of work that was prepared by someone else to an instructor as one's own work;
3. Plagiarism, representation of someone else's writing or ideas as one's own;
4. Assistance in the foregoing practices.

B. Plagiarism: Plagiarism is:

1. The act of using the words and/or work of another author and attempting to pass it on as one's own work.
2. An example of plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, a student submitting, under his or her own name, an essay, report, research paper, or some other assignment that has been written in part or in whole by another person.
3. Plagiarism also occurs when a pattern exists of failing to document and punctuate materials from research sources appropriately (as designated by the instructor and the research style that the instructor requires and publishes to his or her students) and/or the consistent failure to document accurately and in proper style any material that is not common knowledge, which the student has included in an assignment.

### **Clinical Assignment Policies**

In order for students to be exposed to a wide variety of clinical settings, it is the responsibility of the Clinical Education Coordinator to make clinical assignments. Once the assignment is given to the student, the only changes that will be made will occur if there is a cancellation by the clinical site or if the student feels there is a critical reason for changing the clinical education experiences and the Clinical Education Coordinator deems the change is necessary. The Clinical Education Coordinator will use the student's home address, as well as the student's learning needs, to determine placement. Students should be prepared to live away from home for no longer than nine weeks during the course of the two-year program. Student input will be solicited, but the decision of the Clinical Education Coordinator is final.

With the decreasing number of clinical sites available as well as the increasing number of students vying for the positions, it is important that changes in assignments be minimal and for critical reasons.

A. The following procedures will be followed concerning clinical assignments:

1. During Spring Semester, the Clinical Education Coordinator will distribute a clinical site request form to the students.
2. The Clinical Site Information Form Notebook and the Clinical Survey Forms Notebook are available for review. These notebooks provide general information about each site, as well as previous student evaluations of the site.
3. On an assigned date, prior to spring break, the students will turn in the completed form to the Clinical Education Coordinator, making certain to include notification concerning scholarship to any facility listed in the Clinical Site Information Form Notebook and sites of employment and volunteer hours. Students will not be placed at any site where they have worked, or have a scholarship.
4. The Clinical Education Coordinator will have the assignments for each clinical education experience to the students at least one month prior to the beginning of the experience.
5. If a student feels there is a critical reason for changing a clinical education experiences, a meeting should be scheduled with the Clinical Education Coordinator. The student will need to prepare a letter that outlines the reason a change is justified.
6. The student should not make any attempt to change the schedule on his/her own by contacting another facility or student.
7. The Clinical Education Coordinator will make a decision within 24 hours and inform the student in writing of the decision. This letter will include the reason for the denial if that

is the decision or action that the student must take to facilitate the change.

8. The decision of the Clinical Education Coordinator is final. If the student still feels that he/she is unable to complete the clinical education experiences as assigned, three options are available:
  - a. Complete the clinical education experience at another time, which would mean that the student could not progress in the Program until the experience is completed.
  - b. Complete the clinical education experience at the next time the course is offered, which is only once per year.
  - c. Withdraw from the Program.

### **Dress Code**

#### **A. Lecture Classes**

First impressions are important. You are representing the school and your profession even while attending class. It is expected that you dress in a professional manner. All healthcare students at Wallace Community College are expected to wear designated uniforms to class based on their program of study. All PTA students are expected to wear the black WCC PTA polo shirt and khaki slacks to lecture classes, as well as off campus professional activities. (No hats or any type of head coverings are to be worn in lab or classroom)

#### **B. Laboratory Classes**

A professional appearance is essential for students in the PTA program. The following dress code applies to PTA lab classes:

1. Shorts must be solid black. Solid black pants must be worn over shorts anytime outside of the lab.
2. Black bicycle shorts must be worn under all shorts to preserve student modesty.
3. Lab shirts are available for purchase in the WCC Bookstore. This is the only approved shirt for PTA lab classes.
4. Females must wear black sports bras with back closure under t-shirts to all labs. A black tank top with thin straps that shows the shoulder and upper back is also recommended. Males may wear a tank top style undershirt if desired.
5. Athletic shoes and socks must be worn except when necessary to be removed during practice.
  - a. Flip-flops, clogs, crocs, and bedroom slippers are not allowed.
6. A water-resistant watch that counts seconds is required.

Laboratory dress for all labs is expected unless otherwise indicated by the instructor. Failure to dress in proper attire will result in loss of points from the Professional Behaviors grade. Clinical dress code regarding hair, nails, jewelry, perfume, etc., applies to the laboratory as well. No gum chewing is allowed in lab.

#### **C. Clinical Practice**

The status of each individual is reflected by the initial image portrayed to others. Studies have shown that professional competency is judged initially on the outward appearance and manner of health care professionals. Trust and acceptance by patients are important factors in how well they respond to instruction and treatment. Dress regulations, in many instances, serve to protect the patient and the professional, as well as identify the professional to patients and other health care practitioners. Standards for clinical dress have been

established for the well-being of all students participating in clinical educational settings.

1. WCC PTA Program polo shirt and khaki/beige slacks is considered full uniform dress and must be worn at all time when in the clinical setting or representing the college, along with the clinical name tag. Students must wear their uniform at all times so that patients are aware of the fact that a student is treating them.
  - a. Joggers, scrub pants, jeggings, leggings, and cargo style pants are not permitted. Pants should be loose fitting, not tight, to allow for bending, squatting, stooping, etc.
2. A solid black athletic style jacket is allowed, if needed, for individual temperature control. A solid white or black long sleeve shirt may be worn under the PTA Program polo in lieu of a black jacket.
3. Socks or neutral-colored stockings are to be worn at all times while in the clinic.
4. Shoes are to be low heels with rubber soles. Athletic shoes or walking shoes are appropriate. It is the student's responsibility to maintain an appropriate appearance of footwear. Shoes must be neutral without bold colors or distinguishing marks.
5. No clogs or sandals are allowed.
6. Extravagant jewelry is not allowed. This includes no more than one necklace and no bracelets. Small earrings only are allowable. Nothing that dangles is acceptable. Jewelry for body piercings is not allowed in the lab or in the clinic (tongue, nose, belly button, eyebrow, etc.).
7. Hair must be tied back if longer than shoulder length. Hair, of any length, should be kept out of the face and eyes. Hair should be of a natural tone. Beard or mustache must be neatly trimmed. Male students without a beard or mustache are expected to shave daily.
8. Nails should be clean and neatly trimmed so that tips of nails do not show beyond fingertips. Nail polish must be intact and not be chipped or "wearing off".
9. A water-resistant watch that counts seconds is required.
10. Students should have a small notebook and pen with them at all times in the clinic.
11. Each student must be identified by an approved nametag--obtained from an appropriate vendor of the college.
12. Strong perfume, deodorant, hair spray, coffee, and cigarette smoke are offensive to many patients. Therefore, students must ensure against being offensive.
13. No gum chewing is allowed.
14. Students must abide by policies of the Program and clinical facility. If policies are different, students are expected to follow the more restrictive policy.

### **General Class Procedures**

- a. Breaks are provided between and during classes as necessary. No eating or drinking is allowed in the lab.
- b. Family and friends are not allowed in class or practice sessions in the laboratory. This includes students' children of any age.
- c. There will be scheduled times for students to practice lab skills. These times will be provided by the course instructor each semester. Practice times must be scheduled at times when a faculty member is on duty. All safety rules must be followed during these times. The rules will be distributed prior to the start of the first lab class.
- d. No materials may be removed from the lab and all must be returned to their proper place.
- e. Students are expected to be on time and ready (i.e., appropriately dressed) at the beginning of

class.

- f. Students should demonstrate respect for the rights and dignity of fellow students and faculty at all times. Failure to do so can result in loss of points from Professional Behaviors grade.

### **Faculty Advisement**

Each student will be assigned a faculty advisor. The program encourages an open-door policy with respect to student-faculty communication. Faculty will post office hours in the College's learning management system (Blackboard) during which they are available for counseling. Because of heavy faculty schedules and commitments to clinical sites, students are encouraged to make appointments when they want to speak with their advisor.

### **Emergency Messages**

In an emergency, it may become necessary for your family to contact you while you are attending class. If your family member knows your specific class schedule, this task is much easier. For emergencies only, they may call the Allied Health Secretary, (334) 556-2388, who will make a valid attempt to locate you. However, no guarantees can be made. Cellular phones must be turned to silent mode or off during class.

### **Confidentiality**

Students have a right to be kept up to date on their performance, both academically and clinically. The faculty of the PTA Program will make certain that students are informed of their grades in all academic courses and will make certain that any problems encountered during clinical education experiences are made known to the student in time for corrective action to occur. Conferences pertaining to students' performance will be held in an office that offers privacy for the student.

During the course of the PTA Program, students will have access to information about patients as well as other students, therapists, and faculty that could be damaging to that person personally and/or professionally. For that reason, anything that occurs or is discussed during class or clinicals is considered privileged information. Clinics operate under strict rules and regulations regarding patient privacy and confidentiality (HIPAA). Students will be instructed in generalized rules, but **MUST** follow clinical rules regarding patient privacy and confidentiality.

Confidentiality extends to include any information that may be shared via social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, etc.). Violation of these rules is considered a breach of ethics and can result in disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.

### **Library Resources**

The College Library is a major resource center for support, research, and educational media. Consult the *College Catalog* for Library service policies and procedures. Hours are posted each semester.

## Health Records Policy

Validation and documentation of required health records must be received by all students enrolled in an allied health program. **Students who fail to submit required records will not be allowed to continue in the program until all records are received.** *If you have questions concerning this process, contact Pamela Flowers, 334-556-2388, email [pflowers@wallace.edu](mailto:pflowers@wallace.edu)*

All students are required to have a completed Essential Functions form signed by a physician. A completed Essential Functions form, which has been verified by a physician, protects the student by identifying any potential or real health problems that may be exacerbated by the demands of the laboratory and clinical portions of the program.

Health professions are strenuous, both physically and psychologically. The student's ability to handle these demands must be established. It is also imperative that students do not expose clients or agency personnel to communicable disease, or risk their safety due to the inability to handle the physical or psychological stress of client care.

**NOTE:** Updates to health records such as TB or CPR may be required while a student is enrolled in the program. **Any updates will be due at the beginning of the semester in which they expire.** *For example,* a TB skin test is required annually. If it expires in March of the spring semester, the update will be due no later than the first week of class, in January. Failure to remain current for any health requirements will prohibit a student from attending a clinical site.

The following are required for ALL students:

1. **PHYSICAL EXAMINATION** – A **physical examination**, completed within the past year, is required for all new students. The physical must be signed by a licensed physician, physician assistant or nurse practitioner. The examination must be documented on the Program's Essential Functions Form. New students and any student returning to an allied health program after an absence of one (1) year must submit current completed health forms.

2. **IMMUNIZATIONS / TITERS** – It is the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to keep all health records current. **Documentation of any required updates should be submitted to the allied health secretary as soon as possible.** The following are required:

- **T-dap Vaccine**

Students entering an allied health program must provide documentation of an **adult Tdap vaccine** (tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis). If the documented Tdap vaccine is over ten (10) years old, documentation of a Td (tetanus and diphtheria) or Tdap booster that is less than ten (10) years old is also required. An update is required every ten (10) years.

- **TB Skin Test**

The Two-step TB Skin Test is required at the beginning of the program. This consists of one test followed by a second test 7-21 days later. The results cannot

be more than four (4) weeks apart. An annual one-step TB Skin Test is required each following year and is the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to provide to the allied health secretary when due. If you have had a positive TB result, submit proof of that result as well as proof of a clear chest x-ray. TB QuantiFERON Gold lab test may be substituted for a two-step TB skin test initially, a repeat test will be required annually. Completion of a TB Questionnaire must be completed annually for students who submit results from a chest x-ray.

- **MMRV (Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella) Titer**

A MMRV - Measles, Mumps, Rubella (German Measles), and Varicella (Chicken Pox) titer is required to enter an allied health program.

If any results are negative or non-immune, the student must sign the *MMRV Waiver Form* and submit it with the negative or non-immune results. The student is advised to consult with a physician regarding precautions to prevent infection.

- **Hepatitis B**

A Hepatitis B titer is required to enter an allied health program. If the results are negative or non-immune, the student must sign the *Hepatitis B Waiver Form* to be submitted with these results. The student is advised to consult with a physician regarding precautions to prevent infection.

- **CPR Certification**

Students must provide proof of certification in Basic Cardiopulmonary Life Support (BCLS) prior to the fourth week of semester one. This may be obtained at the College by enrollment in EMS 100 or at any other approved agency or facility. A copy of successful completion must be presented, and certification must remain current during the entire program of study. On-line certification without hands-on skills sessions is not acceptable.

- **Clinical Site Training Documents**

Students must complete online training in the College's learning management system for all health care/clinical facilities used by the Program. Evidence of completion (quiz scores of 100% and all associated documents) must be submitted to the Allied Health Secretary.

- **COVID-19 Survey Form**

Students must submit a completed COVID-19 Survey form at the beginning of the program indicating if the COVID-19 vaccine has been received. If the vaccine has been administered, the student is required to submit proof of vaccination to the Allied Health Secretary. The PTA Program follows the clinical facilities' policies regarding the COVID-19 vaccine. Clinical site placement is not determined by vaccination status. Students must comply with requirements of the health care facility/clinical site or an interruption in program progression may occur.

- **Flu Survey Form**

Students must submit a completed Flu Survey form annually to indicate if the flu vaccine has been received. If the vaccine has been administered, the student is

required to submit proof of vaccination to the Allied Health Secretary. The PTA Program follows the clinical facilities' policies regarding the flu vaccine. Clinical site placement is not determined by vaccination status. Students must comply with requirements of the health care facility/clinical site or an interruption in program progression may occur.

**3. CONTINUING HEALTH STATUS** – It is the STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY to notify program faculty of any changes in his/her health status, i.e. pregnancy, surgery, injuries, etc. Students who have a change in medical status, whether temporary or permanent, while enrolled in the program must provide an updated Essential Functions form signed by a physician indicating the student can perform all duties required of the program, to include clinical work.

**4. PROFESSIONAL LIABILITY INSURANCE** – Students in an allied health program are required to pay a fee for professional liability insurance (malpractice insurance) through the College. The fee is added to the course registration and is to be paid at registration each applicable semester.

**5. HEALTH INSURANCE** – Wallace Community College and the allied health programs do not provide health insurance coverage for students. Students are responsible for costs incurred as a result of an accident/injury in the clinical or college laboratory. This may include follow-up testing and/or treatment mandated by the program/clinical agency. Students are not entitled to any Workmen's Compensation benefits from agencies. Health insurance coverage is strongly recommended.

### **Substance Abuse and Background Screen Policies**

Every student enrolled in a health sciences program at Wallace Community College is required to undergo substance abuse and background screens. Copies of the substance abuse and background screen policies were included in the Program acceptance paperwork.

### **Safety and Maintenance**

The following is a list of safety rules for the laboratory:

1. Locate all safety equipment and supplies in or near the lab. Be familiar with all College safety procedures as listed in the College Catalog and PTA Program Student Handbook. Safety equipment and materials provided on campus include:
  - a. MSDS booklet
  - b. Fire extinguisher
  - c. First aid kit
  - d. Disinfectant for lab equipment
  - e. Hand sanitizer
  - f. Hand washing soap
  - g. AED
2. Wear closed-toe shoes and proper lab attire while working in the lab.
3. Frequent hand washing should be practiced. Hands should be washed:
  - a. After completion of all work and before leaving the lab,

- b. Before and after all activities which entail hand contact with another person,
  - c. Before and after eating, drinking, smoking, applying cosmetics, changing contact lenses, and using lavatory facilities.
4. Eating, drinking, smoking or use of any tobacco product, applying cosmetics or lip balm, and handling contact lenses are prohibited in the lab.
  5. All skin defects on the hands and arms, as well as any other health conditions, will be called to the attention of the lab instructor. Depending on the defect or condition, appropriate action will be taken to protect the student, as well as others in the lab. This may include such things as use of gloves and/or mask during the performance of lab activities.
  6. Never work in the lab without an instructor on duty and at least one other person present in the lab.
  7. All electrical equipment, except those on thermostat, must be unplugged when not in use.
  8. All electrical equipment will be checked by a biomedical specialist annually and should not be used if the date on the machine has expired.
  9. Students will be given specific rules as they are needed for dealing with particular areas of work and study. It is the student's responsibility to read and follow these directions, as well as any additional safety rules and requirements that apply to each PTA course. These rules are in effect at any time the student is in the lab, and consequences for failure to follow these rules can be found in the *PTA Program Student Handbook*.
  10. Notify instructor immediately if any type of injury occurs. College policies for incidents and emergencies will be followed.
  11. Notify the instructor of any observed health or safety hazards or potential hazards, such as defective equipment, frayed electrical cords, or needed supplies.
  12. Children of any age are prohibited in the lab at any time.
  13. Visitors should not enter the lab at any time without permission of a faculty member and must be accompanied by a student or member of the faculty

## B. Incident/Accident Report

In case of an unusual incident involving faculty or students of the PTA program, either during attendance at labs, classes on-campus, or at an off-campus clinical experience, appropriate documentation and follow-up, as necessary, will be completed. Exposure to blood and/or body fluids is an example of an unusual incident.

The purpose of an Incident/Accident Report is to protect the rights and safety of the College, students, faculty, and visitors to the campus while on campus or participating in off-campus events that include clinical education experiences. In general, if the incident occurs on campus, the campus plan will be followed. If the incident occurs at a clinical facility, the procedure of the facility will be followed, but the College must be notified immediately. The individual involved in the incident is responsible for all costs incurred.

Wallace Community College has a comprehensive safety plan that covers many possible emergency situations. If you are involved in, or witness an accident on campus, immediately contact a faculty member or dial "1-1-1" for the switchboard operator. All students should become familiar with emergency exits as well as emergency warning system messages, both of which are posted in all buildings. Additional information is in the *College Catalog*.

1. If the primary responder determines that the emergency situation is life threatening:
  - a) Call 9-1-1.
  
2. If the primary responder determines that the emergency situation is non-life-threatening:
  - a) Call the College emergency operator from a campus phone by dialing 1-1-1 (Wallace Campus) or 4-2-1-0 (Sparks Campus). If it is an evening or weekend, call campus police/security by dialing 334-798-1381 (Wallace Campus) or 334-798-1228 (Sparks Campus).

### **Guidelines for Lab Usage**

The following guidelines have been established for lab usage. This will maintain an atmosphere that is conducive to learning, and will help to train students in the maintenance of an actual physical therapy department.

The lab will be left in the same condition each time it is used. Failure to maintain the orderly condition outlined below will result in a deduction of 1 point from the professional behaviors grade, for each incident, for each student in the lab section. Students' cooperation is highly recommended and greatly appreciated.

1. PLINTHS: Each plinth will have two pillows at the head (next to the wall). Each plinth will have a treatment chair and rolling stool, each maintained in its designated place.
2. CHAIRS: Each plinth will have a chair placed at the head of the plinth with the back to the wall.
3. STOOLS: Rolling stools will be placed at the foot of the plinth.
4. LINEN: Students will be issued a set of linens by the PTA Program at the beginning of 1<sup>st</sup> semester, which includes 6 towels, 6 washcloths, 2 flat sheets, and 3 pillowcases. Students are responsible for laundry of the linens. Linens will be turned in at the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> semester. Students are responsible for replacing any lost linens. Students are responsible for laundering linens regularly.
5. EQUIPMENT: All equipment will be returned to the designated area when not in use. This includes all skeletal parts, muscle models, and modality equipment. There will be no "playing" allowed on the bicycle, treadmill, or other pieces of equipment.
6. PERSONAL ITEMS: All book bags, clothes, shoes, purses, and other personal items will be stored in the cubicles at the back of the lab during labs to minimize tripping hazards. Only materials needed will be allowed in the lab.
7. LAB PARTNERS: Students will be required to work with a variety of lab partners to enhance learning experiences. In order to maintain an appropriate learning atmosphere, excessive talking and visiting will not be allowed.
7. DRESS CODE: The student should wear appropriate lab clothes to each lab.

### **Professional Society**

Students are eligible for student membership in the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). Forms for application are available throughout the year and membership by all students is strongly encouraged; cost is \$85 per year.

Participation in events and meetings sponsored by the American Physical Therapy Association and the Alabama Physical Therapy Association are encouraged. Instructors will provide information on scheduled events. As members of the state association, students should also

receive notification of all meetings.

### **Licensing Examination**

The Physical Therapist Assistant Licensing Examination has been available in Alabama since 1971 and serves to evaluate the graduate's minimum level of competency. It is mandatory for graduates of the program to become licensed if they want to work in the state of Alabama.

In preparation for this exam, as well as to evaluate minimum level of competency needed to practice, a comprehensive review examination is given at the end of each semester.

## **Roles and Responsibilities for Clinical Education**

### PTA Program:

- Maintain copies of student's physical examination, immunization records, CPR and Basic First Aid certification in the Program's office. Proof of liability insurance and results of substance abuse screens are maintained in the office of the Associate Dean, Health Sciences
- Provide students with a wide variety of quality clinical education
- Make a minimum of one clinical visit or phone conference during each long term experience. Phone calls and/or site visit will be made during the part time clinical education experiences
- Clinical assignments will be made in keeping with departmental policy. Students will receive at least four weeks' notice for each clinical, unless there is an emergency change necessary.
- Provide each clinical site with a current Clinical Education Manual. This manual will include curriculum outline, course descriptions and competencies that must be reached by the student prior to the start of each affiliation. The manual will also include the evaluation tools to be used by the CI, along with policies to be followed in case of special circumstances.

### Clinical Education Coordinator:

- Counsels students on a personal basis and offers support and assistance as needed
- Assists students in obtaining maximal comprehension and benefit from the clinical performance evaluations.
- Holds seminars and special session with students on topics related to the clinical education experience
- Assesses students' performances by developing adequate evaluation devices and feedback methods
- Evaluates the clinical education sites in order to assign relevant clinical education experiences for the students
- Visits the clinical facilities periodically in the students' interests
- Maintains a current record of the clinical education sites and other background materials that students may need regarding the clinical site
- Accepts the responsibility for scheduling the students' clinical experiences with consideration to input from the students
- Discusses with students the criteria for evaluation of their performance, as well as of the facility, and makes available evaluation forms for same
- Assists students with any problems that may arise during clinical affiliations
- Provides students with general information about the clinical education program in terms of philosophy and education objectives
- Anyone who holds the position should possess the skills necessary to organize and maintains an appropriate clinical educational program. The individual can be on site or at corporate headquarters.
- If the SCCE is a PT or PTA, he or she should have experience as a clinician and clinical educator, possess good interpersonal, communication, and organization skills, be

knowledgeable of the clinical center and its resources, and serve as a consultant in the evaluation process.

- If the SCCE is a non-PT professional, the individual should possess the same skills as a PT or PTA and should have a PT/PTA available as a CI for consultation in planning clinical education experiences. Direct clinical supervision will be performed by the CI.
- Demonstrates knowledge of contemporary issues of clinical practice, practice management, clinical education, and scholarship
- Demonstrates professional and ethical behavior in their field of practice
- Demonstrates effective communication and interpersonal skills, instructional skills, and supervisory, evaluations, and managerial skills
- Delegates responsibilities as deemed necessary to the CI
- Establishes procedures, general guidelines, and manual for the clinical education experiences, and is responsible for scheduling and assignment of students
- Serves as liaison between the College and the clinical facility to:
  - plan student activities/experiences
  - relate curriculum objectives to clinic for relevant clinical education
  - maintain communication with the site and coordinates evaluations
  - maintain optimal relations between program and clinical staff
  - provide feedback from student evaluations of the clinical facility
  - offer consultation to assist faculty in improving education and communication skills
  - maintain optimal relations between program and clinical staff
  - provide feedback from student evaluations of the clinical facility
  - offer consultation to assist faculty in improving education and communication skills

#### Clinical Instructor (CI):

- Responsible for direct supervision and education of students, under the direct supervision of the SCCE
- Have an A.S. or A.A.S. Degree from an accredited PTA program or a minimum of a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Therapy from an accredited PT program. Both PT and PTA must have a minimum of one year of clinical experience.
- Facilitate communication with students to define expectations and provide appropriate and timely feedback to students in a positive manner
- Demonstrate ethical behavior, and serve as professional role model
- Plan, implement, and evaluate learning experiences for students
- Ensure that PTA students are adequately supervised and evaluated in the clinical environment
- Provide sufficient orientation for students
- Provide direct patient care with adequate "hands on" practice for optimum development of skills and professionalism
- Assign and adjust patient caseload as students develop skills
- Allow students to supervise aides or technicians, as appropriate
- Perform other related duties as assigned by the Director of Physical Therapy or SCCE

#### The Student:

- Formulate personal learning objectives for each clinical experience and all other necessary paperwork, and forward all to the SCCE in keeping with established timelines.
- Prepare for patient care during each clinical affiliation.

- Follow College policies regarding uniform and supplies for each clinical affiliation
- Complete all assigned projects on time, as established by the facility and/or the Program
- Be responsible for all personal expenses associated with the affiliation
- Complete an accurate and objective evaluation of the clinical site and educational experience, and discuss this with the CI during the final performance evaluation process
- Communicate with the Clinical Education Coordinator, using telecommunication, if necessary in an appropriate manner
- Abide by all policies and procedures of the clinical site, PTA program and Wallace Community College.
- Accept responsibility for his/her own personal safety, as well as the safety of all patients assigned.
- Assume responsibility for any medical expenses that are incurred as the result of personal illness/injury while working at the clinical site.
- Observe and honor all patient's rights of confidentiality and privacy
- Demonstrate professional behaviors in the areas of dress, punctuality, and attendance
- Assume responsibility for scheduling any necessary make-up work with the Clinical Education Coordinator, SCCE, and CI.
  - All make-up time must be approved by the Clinical Education Coordinator, SCCE, and CI in advance.

**Clinical Competencies for PTA 260**

- A. Student is able to demonstrate understanding of basic patient care procedures.
  - 1. Obtains and records vital signs, recognizing normal ranges.
  - 2. Aware of types of isolation and uses correct precautions with each.
  - 3. Understands standard and isolation precautions and recognizes when to use each.
  - 4. Uses principles of proper draping.
- B. Student is able to demonstrate understanding of bed mobility and positioning.
- C. Student is able to perform proper and safe transfers.
- D. Student is able to perform gait training techniques, observing safety, and in keeping with patient impairment.
- E. Student is able to demonstrate understanding of components of wheelchair prescriptions, using and training patients in safe wheelchair usage.
- F. Student is able to safely apply superficial heat and cold modalities, electrotherapeutic agents, mechanical agents, recognizing indications, absolute and relative contraindications, and precautions for each.
- G. Student is able to safely and effectively perform basic massage techniques, with knowledge of indications, absolute, and relative contraindications for each.
- H. Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of goniometric skills on all major joints of the body.
- I. Student is able to demonstrate basic manual muscle testing skills for all major muscle groups in the body.
- J. Student is able to demonstrate passive range of motion exercises for upper and lower extremities.
- K. Student is able to demonstrate working knowledge of communication skills to be utilized both with the physical therapist, other health care workers, and the patient and his/her family.
- L. Student is able to demonstrate knowledge of basic therapeutic exercise principles, techniques and types, being able to progress patients based on the plan of care as established by the physical therapist.

**Clinical Competencies for PTA 261 & 266\***

- A. Students will demonstrate knowledge of entry-level interventions for patients with amputations, wounds, obstetrical problems, and basic neurological diagnoses.
- B. Students will demonstrate entry-level understanding of interventions to be used in specialized areas such as: cardiac rehabilitation, chest physical therapy, neurological diagnoses, and pediatric populations.

\*All competencies from PTA 260 will be carried over into PTA 261 and 266. The students' level of independence with treatments should correspond to their level of education. PTA 266 is an intermediate experience and students are expected to be close to the "Intermediate" rating on the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI).

**Clinical Competencies for PTA 268\***

- A. Student demonstrates effective use of communication skills, according to the audience being addressed.
- B. Student demonstrates proper use of body mechanics at all times.
- C. Student understands the plan of care, and implements the appropriate interventions within that plan of care to reach long and short term goals as established by the physical therapist.
- D. Student demonstrates knowledge of neurological dysfunctions, signs and symptoms of CNS deficits, and reflex and sensory testing.
- E. Student demonstrates understanding of the role of the PTA in treating and assisting with the treatment in the above.
- F. Demonstrates understanding of psychological and psychosocial effects of illness or injury, including the ability to recognize the special needs of the terminally ill patient.
- G. Demonstrates knowledge of abnormalities in growth and development in pediatric patient.
- H. Demonstrates an entry-level understanding of the interventions to be used in a chronic pain management program.
- I. Demonstrates knowledge of advanced rehabilitation techniques to be used in helping the patient to gain independence in the basic activities of daily living, progressing the patient through the stages of motor control, within the plan of care as established by the physical therapist.
- J. Demonstrates responsibility for continued learning and professional development.
- K. Demonstrates an understanding of the scope of work of the PTA and the working relationship with the PT.
- L. Demonstrates an understanding of the proper use of supportive personnel in the practice of physical therapy.

\*All competencies from PTA 260, 261 and 266 will be carried over into this clinical affiliation.

## **Additional Policies of Clinical Education**

### **Change in Health Status**

Students who have a change in medical status, whether temporary or permanent, while enrolled in the program must provide an updated Essential Functions form signed by a physician indicating the student can perform all duties required of the program, to include clinical work. If this documentation cannot be obtained, the student will be encouraged to withdraw from the program and request readmission the following year for the point in the program in which the interruption occurred. PTA Program progression guidelines will apply if there is an interruption in program progression.

### **Illness/Injury** (Clinical Education Coordinator should be informed of any student illness or injury)

Students are required to submit evidence of good mental and physical health, upon entry to the program. An essential functions form is completed and verified by the student's personal physician. Proof of health insurance or a waiver form is also required and maintained in the student's file. If a student is absent from the clinic due to illness, the Clinical Education Coordinator must be informed of the exact nature of the illness. Routine dental and medical appointments **should not** be made during school or clinical hours.

In the event of a serious illness/injury, the Clinical Education Coordinator should be notified by phone as soon as possible. A follow-up notification in writing should follow within 24 hours. The facility will follow their own policies and procedures concerning emergency procedures. The student will assume all medical expenses related to any injury in the clinic.

While in the clinic, the student should practice standard infection control precautions and use safe lifting techniques. With regard to clinical settings or clinical responsibilities, clinical policies will prevail.

### **Orientation of Students**

It is the belief of the PTA Program that students cannot reach their maximum potential unless they are familiar with their environment and aware of the expectations placed upon them. In accordance with this belief, it is requested that **all students have a facility orientation**. Students and CIs are asked to complete a checklist to ensure that all pertinent and applicable areas are covered. A copy of the checklist is enclosed in the *Clinical Education Manual*.

### **Substance Abuse**

All PTA students undergo a substance abuse screen during their first semester in the Program and randomly through their course of study. A positive test results in immediate interruption of program progression and the student is no longer allowed to attend classes or clinical experiences.

In the event of suspicion of any substance usage or abuse by a student during clinicals, the Clinical Education Coordinator should be notified immediately. The Clinical Education Coordinator can be reached by calling the Allied Health Secretary at 334-556-2388 or by cell phone; one of these contact methods should be used to make certain that an immediate response can be initiated. The student will be immediately removed from the facility in order to ensure the safety of patients and all parties involved. The Program faculty will pursue

investigative procedures into the incident. Policies and procedures of both the Program and the College will be followed. A drug test may be required at this time and the cost will be the responsibility of the student.

If no evidence of substance abuse is discovered, the student will be returned to the clinical facility, or a similar site, if the original site is no longer available. The SCCE at the facility will be given the option to reinstate the student to complete the affiliation at the same facility or to request that the student complete the affiliation elsewhere. Notification of the SCCE's decision should be given, in writing, to the Clinical Education Coordinator within 24 hours of the results of the screening procedure.

If there is evidence of substance abuse by the student, in keeping with College Policy, the student will be suspended from the program. Readmission to the Program will follow the College's policy.

### **Attendance**

The program is evaluated based on the number of hours that students spend in supervised clinical practice. For this reason, students will be required to complete and submit weekly time sheets to the Clinical Education Coordinator while in clinic. Clinical education courses are professional courses and the motivated student will strive for perfect attendance during all clinical education experiences. While the possibility of extenuating life and/or crisis circumstances is acknowledged, absences from the experiential learning environment causes significant concern regarding clinical and professional skill development. This impacts knowledge acquisition as it relates to the integration and utilization of physical therapy theory and best practice.

Program policy for absences during clinical education experiences must be followed. All missed clinical hours must be made up prior to the start of the next semester. Absences that result from attendance at college sponsored events (award ceremonies, etc.) will be made up at the discretion of the Clinical Education Coordinator. Missed clinical hours must be done at the convenience of the clinical instructor and the Clinical Education Coordinator. Any clinical absence will be penalized according to course syllabi. Students will receive an "Incomplete" in the course until the hours are made up. If the hours are not completed prior to the start of the next semester, students will be unable to progress in the program.

Students are granted one professional leave day during PTA 268, Clinical Practicum if approved by the clinical instructor and/or Clinical Education Coordinator. Professional leave days are designed for students to use if they need to attend a job interview or if a travel day is needed for the clinical education experiences.

Absences for personal time off for extra-curricular activities such as weddings, sports competitions or events, children's activities, etc. are **NOT** acceptable. Absences that exceed those allowed will be handled on an individual basis between the student, Clinical Education Coordinator, and Clinical Instructor (if appropriate).

**Procedure for Clinical Attendance:**

1. The Clinical Education Coordinator will keep record of attendance using attendance forms completed by the student and verified by the Clinical Instructor.
2. If the student is not able to attend clinical due to acute illness, the student is required to notify both the Clinical Instructor and Clinical Education Coordinator prior to the beginning of the workday or as close as possible. The use of social media is not an acceptable method of communication.
3. Absences that are deemed excusable will require missed time to be made up at the convenience of the Clinical Education Coordinator and Clinical Instructor. These hours will be made up at the same rate of those missed (1:1 ratio). Absences that are unexcused will be made up at a double rate (2:1).
4. After the first absence, the student will be counseled by the Clinical Education Coordinator and a Student Conference Summary form will be completed. The Clinical Attendance policy will be reviewed with the student.
5. All clinical hours must be made up prior to the beginning of the next clinical. Clinical hours missed in PTA 261 may affect the student's ability to begin PTA 266. Clinical hours missed during PTA 268 must be made up prior to graduation or the student's graduation will be delayed until hours are completed.
6. If a student has a second unexcused absence, the student will be counseled by the Clinical Education Coordinator and Program Director. The student will be required to make up hours at a double rate (2:1).
7. Three or more unexcused absences will result in termination of the clinical experience. The student and clinical facility will be notified by the Clinical Education Coordinator that the clinical has been terminated. Decision regarding repetition of this clinical affiliation will be made on an individual basis. Consideration must be given to the student's overall progress in the Program and length of time for the clinical practice to be repeated. The Program's progression policy will be followed.
8. Clinical Education Coordinator, Program Director, and Clinical Instructor will develop a specific plan of action for each student.

**Sample Clinical Contract\***  
**Wallace Community College**

**HEALTH SCIENCE PROGRAM**  
**AGREEMENT FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION**

This contract is entered into by and between *Wallace Community College*, Dothan, AL, hereinafter referred to as the College and *Facility*, hereinafter referred to as the Agency.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, the College has established certain state-approved professional programs in health-related occupations, and such programs require the provision of clinical facilities in which the student can obtain clinical learning experiences set forth by the curricula of the approved programs, and Wallace Community College shall, throughout the terms of this Agreement, be responsible for the following:

It is an accepted principle that care of the patient is the function of the Agency. The administration of the medical assistant and patient care at the Agency shall be the responsibility of and under the immediate supervision and control of the Agency and shall be administered through the Agency staff. It is also understood that education is a primary function of the College and that cooperation and harmony are essential if both functions are carried out properly.

**A. The College agrees to:**

1. Cooperate with the Agency personnel in the planning and administration of a suitable education program for each student enrolled in the Health Science Program.
2. Provide an instructor/coordinator who will teach organized unit instruction and provide for the supervision of students participating in patient care within the Agency.
3. Maintain all necessary records pertaining to students enrolled in the program.
4. Ensure that all students and faculty are covered by professional liability insurance while they are participating in the program. Furthermore, the College agrees to furnish the Agency with evidence of such insurance at the Agency's request. The limits of professional liability are at minimum \$1,000,000/\$3,000,000.
5. Acknowledge that nothing in this agreement shall be construed as an assumption of liability by the Agency for any injury suffered by a student, faculty member, or any other personnel during participation in clinical experiences within the Agency. In the event of injury, emergency care may be provided at the Agency or at any facility chosen by the individual at the sole expense of the individual involved.
6. Prepare a schedule for each student with the cooperation of the appropriate Agency personnel.
7. Require each student to provide his/her own transportation to and from the Agency during the period of clinical training.

8. Cooperate with appropriate authorities and agencies in planning of clinical experiences and learning objectives for **Program** students.
9. Ensure that students adhere to existing rules and regulations of the Agency.
10. Ensure that commonly accepted professional standards for confidential treatment of medical information, patients/clients and the facility, are maintained through appropriate instruction and clinical supervision of students.
11. Require a criminal background check upon entrance into the program and an update criminal background check if student breaks enrollment for an entire semester.
12. Require a substance abuse screen upon entrance into the program and yearly update every fall semester.
13. Conduct random substance abuse screens for students enrolled in lab and/or clinical components.
14. Maintain documentation of the following:
  - i. Physical examination
  - ii. Initial two-step TB skin test and yearly follow-up through single step test, QuantiFERON-TB Gold Assay, or current chest x-ray (if applicable), followed by yearly single-step TB skin test, QuantiFERON-TB Gold Assay, or symptom questionnaire.
  - iii. Positive measles, mumps, rubella, and varicella titer or signed waiver
  - iv. Current Tdap vaccination
  - v. Immune Hepatitis B titer or a signed waiver
  - vi. Current annual influenza (flu) vaccination
  - vii. Current COVID-19 vaccination status
  - viii. Essential Functions Verification form
  - ix. Current CPR certification
  - x. Drug screening according to College policies
  - xi. Criminal background checks
15. Encourage each student to maintain appropriate personal health insurance

**B. The Agency agrees to:**

1. Cooperate with College personnel in planning and administering a suitable educational program for the **Program** student, to include clinical experiences at the Agency.
2. Provide and maintain professional personnel who are capable and qualified in those services or division in which the students are placed for clinical experiences.
3. Allow the instructional personnel to provide for each student the learning opportunities afforded by direct patient contact under proper supervision.
4. Accept each group of students for a period of clinical experience and training conforming to the requirements of the College and the Agency.
5. Provide for orientation of the College staff to the extent the same will benefit the **Health Science Program**.
6. Permit students formally enrolled in the Health Science program at the College continued opportunities to utilize the various departments of the Agency for related learning experiences during the day and hours planned by the faculty of the program with the consent and approval of the appropriate Agency personnel.

7. Make available to the **Program** students its clinical facilities, classrooms, and conference spaces together with related library materials.
8. Permit the use of available instructional materials including consumable supplies as may be required for demonstration or practice. When the price for consumable supplies warrants, such expenses shall be equally shared by the Agency and the College.
9. Provide clinical experiences and/or observational opportunities in the various departments as needed for **Program** students.
10. Carry out a plan of rotation for each student enrolled in the program.
11. Allow students and instructors, at their own expense, to use the cafeteria facilities.
12. Allow **\_\_\_\_\_** departmental personnel to act as clinical preceptors in the education of the **Program** student to the extent that this activity does not interfere with their primary functions in the provision of patient care.

**C. The College and Agency mutually agree:**

1. The **Program** student shall be under the overall supervision of the College instructor/coordinator through a cooperative agreement with the Director or Supervisor of **Program** at the Agency.
2. To cooperate and assist in the recruitment and selection of prospective students.
3. To cooperate and assist in the evaluation of students currently enrolled and those who have recently completed the program.
4. To cooperate and participate in informal conferences held for the purpose of critically reviewing the entire program and seeking methods of improvement.
5. It is agreed that the terms and commitments contained herein shall not be constituted as a debt of the State of Alabama in violation of Article XI, Section 213 of the Constitution of Alabama, 1901, as amended by Amendment Number 26. It is further agreed that if any provision of the contract shall contravene any statute or Constitutional provision or amendment, either now in effect or which may, during the course of this contract, be enacted then the conflicting provision in the contract shall be deemed null and void. The contractor's sole remedy for the settlement of any and all disputes arising under the terms of this agreement shall be limited to the filing a claim with the Board of Adjustment for the State of Alabama.
6. This agreement may be amended by mutual consent of both parties at any time and such amendment shall become effective immediately upon mutual agreement.
7. If either party desires to terminate this agreement, it shall serve written notice thereof on the other party sixty (60) days in advance, and said agreement shall continue in full force until the effective date of termination.
8. The Agency may preclude a student from participation in clinical activities at its facility if, in the opinion of appropriate Agency authorities, the participation by that student could in any way be contrary to the best interests of the Agency and/or its patients, employees, medical staff, or guests. Such action by the Agency would be discussed with appropriate personnel at the College prior to its implementation.
9. This agreement shall continue indefinitely and ensure the continued participation of the Agency in the clinical training of Health Science students.

The parties hereto shall review this agreement annually and the same shall be automatically renewed for a period of one year unless either party desires to terminate the agreement pursuant to the termination clause above.

The College is an Affirmative Action/Equal Employment and Educational Opportunity Institution. No student or faculty member shall be discriminated against because of race, creed, gender, religion, or national origin.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the College and the Agency have executed these presents by causing their names to be signed by their authorized agents.

**WALLACE COMMUNITY COLLEGE**

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Linda C. Young, President

Agency: **CLINICAL FACILITY**

By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signatory

Its: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signatory's Title/Position