

Policies and Procedures for Clinical Education Program

University of Montana School of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science

I. Requirements for Enrollment

- A. Instructor approval is required for each clinical experience course.
- B. To be allowed to participate in the Clinical Education portion of the Physical Therapy curriculum, students must have proof of the following:
 - i. Current CPR certification training through the American Heart Association or The American Red Cross. Basic Life Support for the Health Care Provider is recommended.
 - ii. Certificate of liability insurance (provided by the Montana University System).
 - iii. Hepatitis B vaccination series and proof of immunity through a positive titer
 - iv. Seasonal Flu Shot
 - v. TB screen (this must be done every 12 months)
 - vi. MMR vaccination series or proof of immunity through a titer
 - vii. Varicella vaccination series, positive titer, or history of disease
 - viii. Tdap vaccination within the last 10 years.
 - ix. Health insurance equivalent to student health insurance plan.
 - x. Demonstration of clinical readiness in all didactic and clinical coursework.
- C. Once assigned to a particular clinical site, students can view any additional requirements (e.g., criminal background check, additional training, etc.) specifically associated with the site by accessing Exxat and the details dashboard for that site. Students must provide proof of compliance of the additional requirements to begin their clinical experience or make other arrangements with the Clinical Education Administrative Associate (CEAA). Students can research a particular site's requirements prior to assignment through Exxat and the details dashboard for a site.
- D. The student must satisfactorily complete the academic PT curriculum that is scheduled prior to each clinical experience before being allowed to enroll unless an alternative plan has been approved by the DCE and the PARC.
- E. Any student who has been out of the academic setting for greater than 8 weeks, for any reason, must complete a clinical readiness program prior to returning to patient care-related activities. Details of the clinical readiness program will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the DCE and PARC

II. Student assignment to a clinical site

- A. All requests for clinical experience assignments are managed by the DCE or ADCE. Students should not initiate contact to a clinical site or clinician without permission and consultation with the DCE or ADCE. If a student initiates direct communication with a clinical site to discuss a placement with ADCE/DCE approval, they will be referred to the PARC for unprofessional behaviors.
- B. A student may make one request for placement at a clinical site that UMPT CEP does not have an active affiliation agreement for their final clinical experience (PT 680). Students wanting to make a request of this nature should discuss this with the DCE and they will provide access the "New Site Request Form". The DCE and ADCE will evaluate the request for appropriateness. New sites have to be compatible with UMPT CEP mission and meet needs of future students as well. The student must be in good academic standing at the time of request and remain in good academic standing through the clinical experience at the New Clinical Site. If the student's academic status changes between the time of placement at a New Clinical Site and the start of the experience, the DCE and/or ADCE may remove the student from the placement and reassign them to an established clinical site.
- C. For the first full time experience, PT 587 students are required to choose from reserved clinical sites. If a reserved site is unable to meet a student's needs due to extreme and/or unexpected circumstances the student is required to follow the policy to petition for non-reserved placement, which may include a new clinical site.

D. Full-time Clinical Experiences: The Clinical Education Program uses the Exxat Software and website to help with the administration and management of the CE program, including the process of assignment of students to a clinical site. Students will be oriented to Exxat Autumn semester, 1st year. Students should access available facility information in the Exxat database including student evaluations of clinical sites, information about clinical sites from web sites and other resources. In addition, students should seek information and advice from the DCE and ADCE regarding the program placement requirements and suitability of clinical sites available to students.

- i. PT 587: First year students will make placement requests via Exxat for PT 587 in mid-late September of their first year and students are placed by the DCE shortly thereafter.
- ii. PT 589: Placement proposals for PT 589 are to be submitted by the student to the ADCE by the first Monday in February of a student's first year. Placement requests are processed by the ADCE throughout the rest of spring semester and through summer as needed.
- iii. PT 680: Second year students submit a proposed plan for PT 680 to the DCE by the end of the fall semester of their second year. Placements for PT 680 will be processed during Spring Semester or until assignments are completed. For placement at some sites, submission of an application consisting of a cover letter and resume, along with an interview, may be required.

E. Part-Time Clinical Experiences:

- i. PT 583/PT 584: Second- and third-year students will be assigned to complete these experiences through the UMPT Clinic on campus and/or off campus clinical sites at least one semester in advance.

F. Policy to Petition for Exemption From Clinical Placement Process:

Students may petition for an exemption from the traditional clinical placement process. These requests will be reviewed by the member(s) of the Clinical Education Team, Chair of UMPT and student's advisor on an individual basis, and require that the follow criteria be met before being considered:

- i. The student has met with the DCE to discuss options that may be available to accommodate the student's needs; AND
- ii. The student has identified extreme and/or unusual circumstances that impact their ability to successfully complete a Clinical Experience as assigned through the established Clinical Placement Process. The DCE and student have worked to accommodate these circumstances through the normal clinical placement process and have been unsuccessful; AND
- iii. The student has completed and submitted the required form (which can be requested from the DCE) with alternative clinical site placement options and explanation to the DCE for consideration as soon as possible in order to increase the likelihood of placement exemption.
- iv. The department Chair, Advisor, and Clinical Education Team will review the petition. The final decision will be provided to the student within 10 business days of receipt of the petition.

III. Practices to protect rights, safety, dignity and privacy of patients, clients, other individuals and the clinic.

- A. Students must comply with all state and federal laws associated with patient rights, privacy and protected health information.
- B. Students must comply with clinic policies and procedures that are consistent with state and federal law regarding patient rights, privacy and protected health information.
- C. Students must conduct themselves in a manner that protects the dignity and safety of patients and others.
 - i. Patients and clients should be informed that you are a student intern and that they have the right to accept, limit or refuse your participation in their plan of care.
- D. Students shall seek permission from their clinical instructor or the most appropriate person within the clinic's organization to use any non-protected health information or materials (patient care protocols, administrative information, etc.) for purposes outside of standard patient care responsibilities. Students may need to utilize the Information Release and/or Photo Release Forms, thereby

obtaining informed consent of patients to use relevant information from for educational purposes.

IV. **Dress code and appearance**

- A. The student is required to be well groomed for all clinical experiences. The student should be aware of and follow the dress requirements associated with the clinical sites they are assigned.
- B. In general, be neat, clean, tasteful, and professional in your attire. Avoid the use of perfume or cologne.
- C. Name tags are required. They should have your full name followed by "Physical Therapy Student".
- D. Individual clinical sites will outline their dress code. Students are expected to follow the dress code at the clinical site they are assigned to.

V. **Absences**

A. **Part-time Clinical:**

- i. PT 582: The student may be excused for illness or injury and is expected to make up the lost time before the end of the spring semester. The student should notify the Associate Director of Clinical Education in advance of the absence so that missed course work and alternative clinical experiences (ACEs) may be rescheduled as soon as possible. Students are expected to utilize professional communications to set up and modify any ACE hours.
- ii. PT 583/PT 584: Students are expected to attend all assigned clinic days. Students are allowed one excused absence during the semester. The supervising clinical instructor must approve an excused absence, refer to the syllabus for details. If the absence is not planned (i.e., due to illness or emergency) and is beyond the two excused absences, the student must make up the missed clinic time within the semester the clinical experience is offered.

B. **Full-time Clinical:**

i. Excused Absences

1. Students are provided a set number of excused absences for each full-time clinical experience per the course syllabus. Students are expected to notify the SCCE and/or CI as soon as possible for these situations. Any absences in excess of the days allowed are required to be made up in a manner approved by the SCCE and/or CI. The assigned DCE/ADCE should be consulted if there are questions or differences in how the time should be made up. Number of days allowed for absence: PT 587 & 589 - 2 days each; PT 680 – 3 days.
2. A student who has to wear a cast, use crutches or has another condition which does not allow the student to participate appropriately and carry out typical responsibilities must consult with the SCCE and/or CI, and DCE to make up an appropriate amount of clinical time. Reasonable accommodations will be made for the student to continue their clinical experience when possible.
3. University of Montana Holidays - Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, General Election Day, Veterans' Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas. However, if the student is assigned to a clinical site that provides services on these days the student may be required to work per the clinical site's policy.
4. Other emergencies and extenuating circumstances will be addressed by the SCCE or the DCE/ADCE on an individual basis.
5. If an assigned clinical site has a stricter attendance policy than outlined above, the student is required to comply with the site's policy.

ii. Unexcused Absences

1. All unexcused absences require make-up time. This time will be determined jointly by the SCCE and/or CI and the student. There may be cause for immediate removal from the internship when a student is repeatedly absent or late for undue cause.
2. Unexcused absences include:

- a. Any absence, other than illness, injury or emergency that does not have prior approval.
 - b. Any unexcused absence due to illness or injury in excess of the stated amounts in Bi1.
- iii. Instructions for Make-up Time
- 1. The amount of make-up time will be an amount which is enough to allow the student to successfully fulfill all requirements of the clinical experience such as the total required hours and/or performance expectations for the clinical experience.
 - 2. Make-up time may be done on weekends and/or outside of traditional clinic hours if the learning experiences and supervision are adequate to fulfill the requirement for the clinical experience.
 - 3. Make-up time will be fulfilled at the facility where the time was missed, unless otherwise arranged by SCCE and DCE/ADCE.

VI. **Accidents**

- A. In addition to complying with proper procedures for reporting accidents at each clinical site, all accidents involving students which require the filing of a written report must be reported to the DCE immediately.

VII. **Grading**

- A. All clinical experiences will be graded on a credit/no credit basis, unless approved for traditional (A–F) grading by the PARC and DCE/ADCE prior to the start of the internship.
- B. The DCE or ADCE assigned to the course is the person who assigns the final grade after evaluating written and verbal feedback of the CI, SCCE, and student and any other person with direct knowledge of the student's performance with regard to the current clinical experience, and with consideration of the student's entire academic and professionalism record and performance.

i. Satisfactory Clinical Performance

- 1. A passing grade (Credit) will be given when the student shows satisfactory performance and expected progress in the learning objectives outlined for each specific clinical experience and when required professional behaviors are demonstrated as outlined elsewhere in the student handbook.

ii. Unsatisfactory Clinical Performance: Mediation Procedures

- 1. When a problem is recognized which potentially could conflict with expected progress, the SCCE, CI and the student should attempt to resolve it.
- 2. If the problem cannot be resolved or is significant in nature, the SCCE or CI and the student should notify the DCE/ADCE.
- 3. The DCE/ADCE will contact all appropriate parties (SCCE, CI(s) and/or student) to get the opinions and facts from each party and attempt to resolve the problem.
- 4. If necessary, the DCE/ADCE will arrange a meeting or telephone conference for the purpose of gathering information and taking action to solve the problem.
- 5. In certain circumstances, the SCCE, CI or DCE/ADCE may require a change in clinical instructors or have the student be removed from the clinical site. In the case of the need to remove the student from the clinical site due to unsatisfactory performance, the DCE/ADCE will review the case and in consultation with the Chair, make a determination for how to proceed. The DCE/ADCE may issue an NCR, I, or N grade at this time or reassign the student to a new site (timing and location as determined by the DCE/ADCE). The DCE/ADCE will provide a written report with recommendations regarding the student's status in the program to the PARC.

C. No Credit (NCR), Incomplete (I) or Work in Progress (N)

- i. It is the DCE/ADCE's responsibility to provide a grade for all clinical experiences. When a student earns a grade of No Credit (NCR) or

Incomplete (I), the DCE/ADCE will have given the grade after reviewing the documentation from the CI, SCCE and any other appropriate source including the student's entire academic record.

- ii. If the student's deficits are judged by the DCE/ADCE to be significant, the DCE/ADCE will issue a grade of No Credit (NCR) and make recommendations to the PARC that may include dismissal of the student from the program. All available members of the PARC would then review the record and the recommendations of the DCE/ADCE and decide on a course of action.
- iii. A student may earn an NCR when his or her performance is judged to be unsatisfactory, yet the deficits are not so severe to warrant a recommendation of dismissal from the program. The NCR grade will be given by the DCE/ADCE in consultation with the Chair and PARC when feasible. The student must repeat the internship at a time and location determined by the DCE. Other remedial requirements will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the PARC with recommendations from the DCE.
- iv. A student may receive an Incomplete (I) or Work in Progress (N) grade. Please consult the University grading policy. When an I or N grade is given, and as appropriate for the circumstances, a specific number of clinical hours, location, and goals of the extended internship will be determined by the DCE/ADCE in consultation with the student, CI and SCCE.
- v. A student must satisfactorily complete a given clinical internship before moving to the next internship unless other arrangements have been made by the DCE/ADCE for special situations regarding a student's health or as part of a remedial plan.

VIII. Requirements and expectations regarding feedback

A. Feedback from Students

- i. Students will complete and share feedback at midterm and at final for clinical education using the forms accessed in Exxat and share the feedback with the appropriate individuals; (Midterm and Final Experience Evaluation with CI and SCCE; Final clinical instruction to be completed and viewed by DCE/ADCE). The DCE and ADCE will access the evaluations through Exxat and release the Experience evaluations to be available to other students in Exxat.
- ii. Students will complete evaluations of the DCE, ADCE and the Clinical Education Program, periodically and at the completion of their education.

B. Feedback to Students and Student Self-Assessment

- i. During each internship, students should receive verbal and written feedback from their CI(s), at minimum, midway and at the end of their assignment. Written feedback related to the student's performance will be provided via the Performance Assessment. Students will complete a self-evaluation using the Performance Assessment to facilitate CI feedback. It is expected that the student and the CI will use the Performance Assessment as it is designed. Comments should address the pertinent competency categories, identifying strengths and deficits, especially related to expectations for the particular clinical experience. There should be consistency with the comments provided and the marks given on the rating scale using the definitions for the various levels. The midway feedback should be primarily formative in nature, emphasizing the progress that has been made and identification of goals and strategies for the remainder of the clinical experience to reach expected outcomes. Under certain circumstances, weekly formal verbal and/or written feedback may be appropriate. A form is provided for this purpose. If there is concern at any time that a student's performance is such that achievement of expected outcomes is in doubt, the DCE/ADCE should be notified.
- ii. The academic faculty member assigned to the course (DCE or ADCE) will communicate with the student and CI during the experience, typically via email initially. A follow-up phone call or site visit may be scheduled based on the circumstances of the clinical experience. CIs/SCCEs and students are encouraged to initiate communication with the DCE/ADCE at any time when consultation, feedback and/or assistance is believed necessary. If

there is concern by the DCE/ADCE that a student's performance is such that achievement of expected outcomes is in doubt, written notification will be provided to the student and a copy will be sent to the Chair or the PARC. Written notification will include a remedial plan with specific goals.

- iii. The DCE and ADCE will meet after each clinical experience to discuss student overall performance and progress. If a review of the student and/or CI Performance Assessment shows that there are lingering concerns or deficits with a student's performance even though a student may have met the minimal requirements for a "passing" grade, the DCE/ADCE will provide the student with written communication outlining the findings and may also choose to meet with the student to discuss their performance, expectations for future clinical experiences, need for remediation, and/or opportunities for professional development. The DCE and ADCE may also make appropriate recommendations to the student to prepare for future success. A written report will go in the student's clinical education file and will be shared with the PARC.