



Essential Requirements of Physical Therapy Education

Physical therapy education requires that the accumulation of scientific knowledge be accompanied by the simultaneous acquisition of technical skills, professional attitudes and professional behaviors. The Doctor of Physical Therapy degree awarded by Husson University, School of Physical Therapy certifies that the graduating individual has acquired a broad base of knowledge and skills requisite for the safe and competent practice of physical therapy. In order to acquire the foundation of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed throughout the physical therapist's professional career, the student must demonstrate essential abilities in five areas: observation; communication; motor function; conceptual abilities and behavioral/social attributes. The following essential requirements have been adopted by the Husson University, School of Physical Therapy as requirements for admission to, promotion within, and graduation from its entry-level professional program. A candidate must be able to perform these essential requirements in a reasonably independent manner. When requested, Husson University will provide reasonable accommodations to otherwise qualified students with disabilities.

Observation

Observation requires the functional use of vision, audition, olfaction, and somatic sensations. The candidate must be able to observe demonstrations and experiments in basic and applied sciences, in physical therapy theory, and in therapeutic practice. The candidate must be able to observe a patient accurately at a distance for posture and functional performance, and close at hand for palpation and the inspection of skin, muscles and joints. The candidate must be able to observe digital and waveform readings, and other graphic images to determine a patient's condition.

Communication

A candidate must be able to elicit information from patients, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive and accurately report nonverbal communications. A candidate must be able to communicate effectively and sensitively with patients and their families. Communication includes speech, reading, writing and computer literacy. The candidate must be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with all members of the health care team in both immediate and recorded modes.

Motor Function

Candidates must have sufficient motor function to elicit information from patients by palpation, auscultation, percussion, manual positioning of body segments and other evaluative procedures. A candidate must be able to physically perform basic screening and examination (physiologic measures such as heart rate and respiration), diagnostic procedures (palpation, manual muscle testing, goniometry, sensory evaluation, gait analysis, balance assessment), and evaluation of EKGs and X-rays. A candidate must be able to execute movements required in the provision of general care, emergency treatment and therapeutic treatment, including cardiopulmonary resuscitation, wound care, positioning and transferring, gait training, and performing manual therapy techniques.

Each student must be willing to submit to screening, examination and therapeutic treatment, allowing student partners, of either gender, to practice therapeutic techniques.

Conceptual - Integrative and Quantitative Abilities

To effectively solve problems required of physical therapist practitioners, the candidate must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate, and synthesize information in a timely fashion. In addition, the candidate must be able to comprehend three-dimensional relationships and to understand the spatial relationships of structures.

Behavioral/Social Attributes

A candidate must possess the psychological ability required for full use of their intellectual abilities, for the exercise of good judgment, for the prompt completion of all responsibilities inherent to diagnosis and care of patients, and for the development of mature, sensitive and effective relationships with patients. Candidates must be able to tolerate physical and mentally taxing workloads and to function effectively under stress. They must be able to adapt to changing environments, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical problems of many patients. In summary, a candidate must be able to collect information, analyze and synthesize it, and effectively perform clinical reasoning in the limited time demanded by a given clinical setting, while under stress, and in an environment in which other distractions may be present. Compassion, integrity, tolerance, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest, motivation and ethical behavior are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admissions and education process.

Reasonable Accommodation

It is the policy of Husson University, School of Physical Therapy to provide reasonable accommodation to qualified students with a disability so they can meet these essential requirements. In addition, students may request an accommodation based upon creed and religious restrictions. Whether or not a requested accommodation is reasonable will be determined on an individual basis. Determining what is a reasonable accommodation is an interactive process, which the candidate must initiate with the Director of Physical Therapy and/or with the Dean of Student Success located in the Office of Academic Success and Intercultural Services--OASIS, at 973-1934.

Revised and adopted April, 2015
