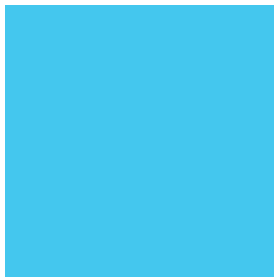


2026-2027 Student Handbook

Department of Physical Therapy

Doctor of Physical Therapy



UAB
The University of
Alabama at Birmingham.
School of Health Professions

UAB SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

DEPARTMENT OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY

2026-2027 ACADEMIC HANDBOOK



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08/24/2026

Date



[David Morris \(Aug 24, 2026 09:57:08 CDT\)](#)

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08/24/2026

Date

Table of Contents

DEAN'S WELCOME MESSAGE	6
OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS	6
SECTION 1—SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION.....	8
ACADEMIC CALENDAR	8
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE.....	8
ADVISING	8
AMBASSADORS	8
ATTENDANCE.....	8
BLAZERID/BLAZERNET/EMAIL.....	9
BLAZER EXPRESS	10
BOOKSTORE	10
CAMPUS ONECARD.....	10
CAMPUS MAP.....	10
CAMPUS SAFETY.....	10
CANVAS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	10
CATALOG	11
COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY	11
COUNSELING SERVICES.....	11
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)	11
EMERGENCIES	11
NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:	12
FERPA TRAINING	12
FINANCIAL AID	12
FOOD SERVICES	13
GRADUATE SCHOOL	13
GRADUATION	13
HEALTH INSURANCE	13
HIPPA TRAINING	13
HONOR SOCIETIES	13
IMMUNIZATION POLICY	14
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN USE (IRB)	14
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.....	14
LACTATION CENTERS	14
LIBRARIES AND LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER.....	14
UAB STUDENT CONDUCT CODE.....	15
ONE STOP STUDENT SERVICES.....	15
PARKING	15
PLAGIARISM AND TURNITIN	15

RECREATION CENTER	16
SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS AWARDS.....	16
SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS	16
SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SHARED VALUES	16
SOCIAL MEDIA.....	17
STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES.....	17
TITLE IX	17
TUITION AND FEES	17
WEATHER.....	17
WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE /PROGRAM	17
SECTION 2–SHPAND UABPOLICIES	19
SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS POLICIES	19
UABPOLICIES.....	24
SECTION 3:PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION	25
DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM OVERVIEW	25
INTRODUCTION	25
DEPARTMENT VISION.....	25
DEPARTMENT MISSION	25
STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY	25
STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRACTICE	26
CURRICULAR THREADS.....	28
FACULTY AND STAFF	30
ACCREDITATION	30
OUTCOMES	30
CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSURES	31
TECHNICAL STANDARDS.....	31
TECHNICAL STANDARDS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION	31
DEGREE REQUIREMENTS	33
CREDIT HOURS	33
CURRICULUM OUTLINE	33
ADVISING &CORE ABILITIES/CORE VALUES	35
ADVISOR ASSIGNMENT PROCESS &MEETING REQUIREMENTS	35
CORE ABILITIES/CORE VALUES.....	35
DPTPOLICIES &STANDARDS	36
ACADEMIC CONDUCT.....	36
ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE/ACADEMIC STANDING.....	37
ACADEMIC PROBATION &DISMISSAL PROCEDURES	37
ACCESS TO SECURE BUILDINGS	37
ACCIDENTS/INJURIES OCCURRING ON CAMPUS.....	38
ATTENDANCE POLICIES	38

BACKGROUND CHECK.....	43
CLASS BREAKS	43
CPR CERTIFICATION	43
CORE ABILITIES/CORE VALUES.....	43
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)	43
DRUG SCREENING	43
EMAIL	44
FACULTY AVAILABILITY	44
GRADE POLICIES.....	44
LEAVE OF ABSENCE & RE-ENTRY PROCEDURES	46
ON CAMPUS RECRUITING ACTIVITY POLICY	46
POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS	47
REQUESTS FOR EMPLOYMENT/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES.....	47
STUDENT BREAK ROOM.....	47
STUDENT COMPLAINTS	47
STUDENT LOCKERS.....	48
STUDENT READINESS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION	48
STUDENT RESEARCH	49
SUPPORT STAFF	49
WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS	49
PROFESSIONALISM EXPECTATIONS	49
PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES	49
DRESS CODE/PROFESSIONAL IMAGE.....	50
USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE	53
USE OF CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS IN CLASSROOM AND LAB SETTINGS	53
RECORDING LECTURES AND LAB SESSIONS:	54
SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY.....	54
ZOOM ETIQUETTE.....	54
FUNDING & FINANCIAL INFORMATION	54
FINANCIAL AID	54
SCHOLARSHIPS.....	55
PROFESSIONAL & STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS.....	55
AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION (APTA).....	55
STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPY ORGANIZATION (SPTO).....	55
KEY MILESTONES IN THE DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM.....	55
NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION:	55
ACADEMIC ADVISING:	55
1ST YEAR PINNING CEREMONY/3RD YEAR WHITE COAT CEREMONY:.....	56
MARILYN R. GOSSMAN ENDOWED LECTURESHIP:	56
PROGRAM ASSESSMENT:.....	56

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ALL COURSEWORK:	56
COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS:.....	56
COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FOR DEGREE:.....	57
FINAL PROGRAM REVIEW:	57
HOODING CEREMONY:	57
CLINICAL EDUCATION	57
INTRODUCTION	57
POLICIES AND PROCEDURES	58

INTRODUCTION

DEAN'S WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the University of Alabama at Birmingham School of Health Professions where you are joining a legacy of excellence!

We are one of the six schools comprising the renowned UAB Academic Health Center. We offer more than 30 programs and 40 offerings at the certificate, baccalaureate, master's, and doctoral levels. And we are home to nearly 3,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

You came here for an outstanding education, and we provide exactly that. However, **only you** can control whether you will become an excellent professional. To do so, you must challenge yourself every day and take advantage of all our vast resources, state-of-the-art facilities and research opportunities during your academic and clinical education. You also need to make the most of your access to the world-class faculty who are here to teach and support your journey. You didn't enroll here to be to be an amateur. You came to become a professional, and not an average one. I encourage you to become a "Pro" and an excellent one at that. Own it, live it, excel at what you do, and make both us and yourself proud.

I look forward to seeing you grow in your respective fields and watching you become the leader we know you can be.

Go Blazers!

Mark Merrick, Ph.D., AT, ATC, FNATA, FNAP, FASAHP

Dean, UAB School of Health Professions

OVERVIEW OF THE SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS

The UAB School of Health Professions (SHP) is one of the largest academic institutions of its type in the United States. What began in the 1950s as a collection of training programs in various para-professional disciplines has grown into an internationally recognized center of academic and research excellence.

Today, we have five academic departments – Clinical and Diagnostic Sciences, Health Services Administration, Nutrition Sciences, Occupational Therapy, and Physical Therapy – that are housed in four buildings: Susan Mott Webb Nutrition Sciences Building (WEBB), Learning Resource Center (LRC), the School of Health Professions Building (SHPB), and the Center for Biophysical Sciences and Engineering (CBSE).

We are proud of many accomplishments including:

- *U.S. News & World Report* ranks all eligible SHP programs in the nation's top 25.
- Research funding is at an all-time high of \$26+ million and growing.
- Nearly 10 of our programs you will only find in Alabama at UAB.

- Our school has never been stronger or better positioned as a national leader in health professions education. And this status will only grow stronger as we continue to welcome students like you.

DISCLAIMER

This Handbook is an overview of general academic regulations specific to SOHP programs at UAB. Although UAB will make its best efforts to abide by this handbook, UAB reserves the right to interpret and apply its procedures and policies, and to deviate from these guidelines, as appropriate in the particular circumstances and in accordance with the mission and goals of the program. UAB also reserves the right to address issues not covered in this handbook and to make changes to the policy without advance notice. Changes become effective at the time the proper authorities determine so and the changes apply to both prospective students and those already enrolled. Please refer to our website for the most up-to-date version.

All students are responsible for knowing and abiding by the general University rules and regulations pertaining to studying at UAB and the specific academic requirements of their particular degree program. This Handbook is not intended to nor does it contain all policies or regulations applicable to students. Each student is responsible for familiarizing him/herself with the contents of this Handbook. Although the policies contained herein are intended to reflect current rules and policies of the University, users are cautioned that changes or additions may have become effective since the publication of this material. In the event of a conflict, current statements of Board policy contained in the Bylaws, Rules, official minutes, and other pronouncements of the Board or Chancellor, or superseding law, shall prevail.

This Handbook does not constitute a contract and may not be deemed or construed as part of any contract between UAB and any student or student representative.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION YOU SHOULD KNOW

Although UAB works hard to prepare students for future careers in their desired fields, employment and salaries are not guaranteed. Employment outcomes depend on a student's efforts and market conditions. Students are responsible for understanding their financial responsibilities. [Tuition costs can be found on this UAB website](#). Scholarships are competitive and not guaranteed. Admission to other graduate or professional programs is also not guaranteed. Advisors will provide students with guidance, but students are ultimately responsible for degree completion, and timelines for completion may vary based on individual circumstances.

SECTION 1—SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY INFORMATION

ACADEMIC CALENDAR

All dates related to registration, payments of tuition and fees, drop/add dates, other administrative requirements, and official school holidays are recorded on the [UAB Academic Calendar](#).

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE

The University established a new Academic Integrity Code effective August 23, 2021. This Code, which applies to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students as well as all academic activities, defines academic misconduct and outlines procedures for breaches of the code. The Academic Integrity Code process is managed by the Academic Integrity Coordinator (AIC). In the School of Health Professions, the AIC is the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs, and the office is located in SHPB 660. [You can see the full text of the Academic Integrity Code online.](#)

ADVISING

Undergraduate student advising is provided through advisors assigned to each program as well as through the Office of Student Services. Advisor and recruiter contact information can be found on the [Office of Student Services Website](#). Graduate student advising is provided through the SHP graduate programs.

AMBASSADORS

Ambassadors help to spread awareness of the School of Health Professions and its multifaceted undergraduate and graduate programs, serve as liaisons between the department and university-wide student organizations, and serve as a student voice in school and university committees. The SHP Ambassadors help to support the programs within the school that will impact recruitment and retention initiatives. [You can learn more about the SHP Ambassadors on their webpage.](#)

AskIT

AskIT is the technology help desk for faculty, staff, and students. You will be asked to supply your BlazerID when you request assistance. Contact them by phone at 205-996-5555 or [via email](#) or [visit the AskIT service portal online](#).

ATTENDANCE

Class attendance is expected in all SHP programs. Specific class, laboratory, or clinical site attendance requirements may be more stringent than university guidelines. Refer to the program requirements in this handbook and in course syllabi for policies. The UAB attendance policy is as follows:

The University of Alabama at Birmingham recognizes that the academic success of individual students is related to their class attendance and participation. Each course instructor is responsible for establishing policies concerning class attendance and make-up opportunities. Any such policies, including points for attendance and/or participation, penalties for absences, limits on excused absences, total allowable absences, etc., must be specified in the course syllabus provided to students at the beginning of the course term. Such policies are subject to departmental oversight and may not, by their specific prescriptions, negate or circumvent the accommodations provided below for excused absences.

The University regards certain absences as excused and in those instances requires that instructors provide a reasonable accommodation for the student who misses assignments, presentations, examinations, or other academic work of a substantive nature by virtue of these excused absences. Examples include the following:

- Absences due to jury or military duty, provided that official documentation has been provided to the instructor in a timely manner in advance.
- Absences for students who have approved disability-related absence accommodations through Disability Support Services may follow the reasonable number of absences outlined in their flex plan or as determined by the instructor. Students are responsible for notifying instructors of these and any other approved accommodations through their Notice of Accommodations letter.
- Absences due to participation in university-sponsored activities when the student is representing the University in an official capacity and as a critical participant, provided that the procedures below have been followed:
 - Before the end of the add/drop period, students must provide their instructor a schedule of anticipated excused absences in or with a letter explaining the nature of the expected absences from the director of the unit or department sponsoring the activity.
 - If a change in the schedule occurs, students are responsible for providing their instructors with advance written notification from the sponsoring unit or department.
- Absences due to other extenuating circumstances that instructors deem excused. Such classification is at the discretion of the instructor and is predicated upon consistent treatment of all students.
- Absences due to religious observances provided that students give faculty written notice prior to the drop/add deadline of the term.

In these instances, instructors must give students the opportunity to complete assignments in a way that corresponds as much as possible to the nature, scope, and format of the original. Options may include making up exams or other assignments, rescheduling student classroom presentations, or arranging for early or late submission of written assignments. The course make-up policy should be included in the syllabus.

BLAZERID/BLAZERNET/EMAIL

BLAZERID

All students receive a unique identifier, the BlazerID, established at [BlazerID Central](#). Your BlazerID is required for accessing BlazerNET and other campus resources. To activate one's BlazerID, select "Activate Accounts."

BLAZERNET

[BlazerNet](#) is the official portal of the UAB information network and is accessible from any Internet-accessible computer, on- or off-campus.

EMAIL

UAB student email is provided through Microsoft Office 365, a cloud-based system. Students have 50 GB of email space and 25 GB of free file 1 TB storage. The UAB email is the official communication medium for courses, news, information, and announcements. Students should not forward their UAB account to a personal email account. UAB is not responsible for information not received by the student due to the 'redirecting' of a UAB account to another email server.

BLAZER EXPRESS

The UAB Blazer Express Transit System provides transportation throughout the UAB campus. With a valid UAB ID badge, students can enjoy fare-free bus transportation. All buses are ADA-accessible and can seat approximately 35 riders. For an updated schedule, route maps, and hours of operation please [visit the Blazer Express website](#).

BOOKSTORE

There is one bookstore located on the UAB campus in the Hill Student Center. It offers a wide variety of products and services to students, including online purchasing and shipping. The bookstore stocks UAB memorabilia and college wear in addition to all required textbooks and course material. Visit [the UAB Barnes and Noble Bookstore online](#) for more details.

CAMPUS ONECARD

The UAB OneCard is the official university identification card. It is used for personal identification, for entry to campus events and the recreation center, for library checkout, and for other UAB services. It also serves as a declining balance card for the UAB meal plans and for Blazer Bucks accounts. Additional information is available on the [UAB OneCard website](#).

CAMPUS MAP

[UAB's campus map can be found online](#).

CAMPUS SAFETY

[Campus safety procedures and resources can be accessed online](#).

CANVAS LEARNING MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The Canvas Learning Management System is the platform used for managing instructional materials online. Canvas course sites are accessed through BlazerNET or at the [UAB Center for Teaching and Learning website](#). Students should monitor their course sites routinely for communication from faculty and to manage course assignments.

CATALOG

The UAB Catalog is published annually and includes UAB's courses, policies, and curricula. Students can [find the Undergraduate or Graduate catalog online](#).

COMMUNITY STANDARDS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

[Community Standards and Accountability](#) is responsible for upholding the integrity and purpose of the University through the fair and consistent application of policies and procedures to students' behavior to ensure a community that respects the dignity and right of all persons to reach their highest potential. UAB Student Advocacy, Rights & Conduct (SARC) delivers programs and services in order to promote student safety and success, the pursuit of knowledge, respect for self and others, global citizenship, personal accountability and integrity, and ethical development. More information can be found at the [UAB SARC website](#). [The UAB student conduct code may be accessed online](#).

COUNSELING SERVICES

Student Counseling Services offers no cost, confidential counseling for UAB students related to physical, emotional, social, intellectual, or spiritual concerns. Student Counseling Services is located on the 3rd floor of the Student Health and Wellness Center at 1714 9th Avenue South. For more information, call 205-934-5816 or [visit the Student Counseling Services website](#).

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

UAB is committed to providing an accessible learning experience for all students. If you are a student with a disability that qualifies under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and/or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and you require accommodations, please [contact Disability Support Services for information on accommodations, registration, and procedures](#). Requests for reasonable accommodations involve an interactive process and consist of a collaborative effort among the student, DSS, faculty, and staff. If you have a disability but have not contacted DSS, please call 205-934-4205 or visit [the DSS website](#).

If you are a student registered with Disability Support Services, it is your responsibility to contact the course instructor to discuss the accommodations that may be necessary in each course. Students with disabilities must be registered with DSS and provide an accommodation request letter before receiving academic adjustments. Reasonable and timely notification of accommodations for the course is encouraged and provided to the course instructor so that the accommodations can be arranged.

EMERGENCIES

Report suspicious or threatening activity to the UAB Police Department immediately. Law enforcement officers are available 24 hours, seven days a week. Also, more than 300 emergency blue light telephones connected directly to the police dispatch are located throughout campus.

BEHAVIORAL THREAT ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT (BTAM)

The UAB and UAB Medicine Behavioral Threat Assessment and Management Team (BTAM) is an interdisciplinary team dedicated to maintaining a safe, secure, and healthy campus environment for all students, employees, and visitors. BTAM uses a structured, proactive process to identify, assess, and manage behavioral threats to campus safety and well-being. Concerning behaviors—such as a significant change in academic performance or conduct, aggressive or irrational behavior, expressions of severe distress, or inability to control anger—should be reported promptly. Non-emergency situations involving students may be reported through the Division of Student Affairs at (205) 975-9509 or via the online reporting form. For more information, visit the [UAB BTAM website](#).

UAB POLICE:

For an emergency, dial 911 *from a campus phone*. For non-emergencies call: 205-934-3535 or 205-934-HELP (4357) or 205-934-4434.

Emergencies affecting campus are communicated via the following:

- UAB Severe Weather & Emergency Hotline 205-934-2165
- [UAB home webpage](#)
- [UAB Emergency Management webpage](#)
- Announcements on [BlazerNET](#)
- Cell phone messages and SMS text via B-ALERT. [Register for B-ALERT online](#).

NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENT:

UAB is an [Equal Employment/Equal Educational Opportunity Institution](#) dedicated to providing equal opportunities and equal access to all individuals regardless of race, color, religion, ethnicity, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), genetic information, age, disability, and veteran's status. As required by Title IX, UAB prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. Individuals may report concerns or questions to UAB's Assistant Vice President and Senior Title IX Coordinator. [The Title IX notice of nondiscrimination is located online](#).

FERPA TRAINING

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974 provides protection for all educational records related to students enrolled in an educational program. UAB has a dedicated [FERPA website](#) with information about your rights and protection of your records. You may [email any questions or concerns about FERPA issues](#) to FERPA@uab.edu. All SHP students are required to complete FERPA Training. The course can be accessed at [THIS WEBSITE](#).

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid Counselors are available each day in the One Stop Student Services Office located in the Hill Student Center, [1400 University Blvd.](#) Suite 103. If you have general

questions, you can contact the Office of Student Financial Aid at 205-934-8223 or [via email](#). For additional financial aid information [visit the UAB Cost & Aid website](#).

FOOD SERVICES

There are several dining facilities available on campus. The [campus dining map](#) can show you the closest to the SHP buildings. For additional information about meal plans and campus dining facilities [visit the Campus Dining website](#).

GRADUATE SCHOOL

The UAB Graduate School offers doctoral programs, post-master's specialist programs, and master's level programs. Graduate programs in SHP are coordinated through the Graduate School, and students must adhere to the Graduate School policies and procedures. Graduate School information for current students is available at [the UAB Graduate School website](#). Policies and Procedures for the Graduate School can be found in the [Graduate School Catalog](#).

GRADUATION

All students must complete an application for degree six months prior to graduating and no later than the deadline in the academic calendar. The University holds commencement every semester. Check the [UAB commencement website](#) for the most current information.

HEALTH INSURANCE

To ensure that all students have adequate health care coverage, including ongoing primary and specialty care, the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB) requires all students to have major medical health insurance. Students can provide proof of their own private coverage or be enrolled in the Student Health Insurance Plan. The plan is a 1-year commercial policy provided by United HealthCare and is re-negotiated annually. This policy is a comprehensive health insurance policy at an affordable cost that is specifically designed to meet the needs of UAB Students. If you are required to have insurance but have sufficient coverage on another plan and wish to opt out of the Student Health Insurance Plan, you are required to submit a waiver to Student Health Services at the beginning of every semester. More information including submitting a waiver can be found at the [UAB Student Health Insurance Waivers website](#).

HIPPA TRAINING

The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) includes significant requirements for protecting individual privacy of health information. All students in the School of Health Professions must complete an online tutorial and be tested on HIPAA regulations at the time of program admission. A BlazerID is required to access the training site, located at [UAB Online Learning](#). Compliance with the training requirement is monitored by the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs.

HONOR SOCIETIES

All students in the School of Health Professions are eligible for consideration for the Alpha Eta Honor Society. The UAB Chapter of this Society recognizes students registered in the final term

of a baccalaureate or graduate health professions program. Inductees must have a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 (4.0 = A) and be in the upper 10% of their program. Nominations are made by program directors in spring and summer terms.

IMMUNIZATION POLICY

To provide a safe and healthy environment for all students, faculty, and staff at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB), first-time entering students, international students and scholars, and students in clinical & non-clinical programs, must provide proof of immunization against certain diseases, unless they have an approved medical or religious exemption. Full details can be found on the [UAB Immunizations webpage](#).

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR HUMAN USE (IRB)

Student researchers must comply with all requirements for protection of human subjects. Detailed information is available on the [IRB website](#).

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Intellectual property refers to an asset that originated conceptually, such as literary and artistic works, inventions, or other creative works. These assets should be protected and used only as the creator intends. Training materials defining inventor status, patent criteria, and other intellectual property issues, as well as University Policies on Patents, Copyright, and Intellectual Property are on [the Office of Compliance & Risk homepage](#).

LACTATION CENTERS

The University has provided several lactation centers for students, faculty, and staff across the campus. Visit [the UAB Lactation Resources webpage](#) for a resource guide and a location map. The School of Health Professions' lactation room is in the Susan Mott Webb Nutrition Sciences Building at [1675 University Blvd](#), Room 431. Lactating students enrolled in the School of Health Professions have access to the room via their student ID/OneCard. If you cannot access the room, contact the building administrator, Julia Tolbert-Jackson at 205-873-5666.

LIBRARIES AND LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER

[UAB's libraries](#) house excellent collections of books, periodicals, microforms, and other media. Students have online remote access to catalogs and online collections. Computers are available for student use during regular hours of operation.

SHP LEARNING RESOURCE CENTER (LRC)

The School of Health Professions Learning Resource Center (LRC) provides a unique set of enterprise solutions that promote an exciting, intriguing, and innovative learning environment. It provides audio/visual support, and information technology management of public, classroom, and testing labs. The building is at [1714 9th Avenue South](#), and the SHP student space is on the second floor. You can contact LRC staff [via email](#) or via phone at 205-934-5146.

LISTER HILL LIBRARY OF THE HEALTH SCIENCES

[Lister Hill Library](#) (LHL) is the largest biomedical library in Alabama and one of the largest in the south. It is located [across the crosswalk](#) from the School of Health Professions.

MERVYN H. STERNE LIBRARY

[Mervyn H. Sterne Library](#) has a collection of more than one million items supporting teaching and research in the arts and humanities, business, education, engineering, natural sciences and mathematics, and social and behavioral sciences. It is located at [917 13th Street South](#).

UAB STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

The Student Conduct Code promotes honesty, integrity, accountability, rights, and responsibilities expected of students consistent with the core missions of the University of Alabama at Birmingham. This Code describes the standards of behavior for all students, and it outlines students' rights, responsibilities, and the campus processes for adjudicating alleged violations. Behavior that violates UAB standards of conduct listed within the Student Conduct Code and elsewhere will be subject to disciplinary action through the appropriate conduct process. Whether it is determined that an individual or group is responsible for the violation(s), either by direct involvement or by condoning, encouraging, or covering up the violation, appropriate response will occur with respect to the individual(s) and/or group involved.

[Undergraduate Non-Academic Policies](#)

[Graduate Non-Academic Policies](#)

ONE STOP STUDENT SERVICES

The mission of the One Stop is to provide a single point of professional integrated service to students. The One Stop serves students who need assistance with academic records, financial aid, registration, student accounting, OneCard, and other related topics. One Stop is located in the Hill Student Center, [1400 University Blvd.](#) Suite 103. You may contact the [One Stop](#) office by phone or email at 205-934-4300, 855-UAB-1STP (855-822-1787), [or via email](#).

PARKING

Student vehicles must be registered with [UAB Parking and Transportation Services](#), located at [608 8th Street South](#). Parking is allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. Parking fees are established by location, payable by semester or year, and are billed to the student's account.

PLAGIARISM AND TURNITIN

Plagiarism violates the Academic Integrity Code and will be addressed in accordance with it. All papers submitted for grading in any SHP program may be reviewed using the online plagiarism monitoring software. Please note that all documents submitted to [Turnitin](#) are added to their database of papers that is used to screen future assignments for plagiarism.

RECREATION CENTER

The [Campus Recreation Center](#) is located at [1501 University Blvd](#). A valid student identification card or membership card is required for access. Facilities include basketball courts, racquetball courts, weight rooms, swimming pools, exercise rooms, and indoor track.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS AWARDS

All students in the School of Health Professions are eligible for consideration for [the SHP Student Awards Program](#), which includes the following awards:

- Alfred W. Sangster Award for Outstanding International Student – This award is presented annually to an international student in recognition of their academic and non-academic achievements.
- Cecile Clardy Satterfield Award for Humanism in Health Care – This award is made annually to recognize one outstanding student for humanitarianism, professionalism, and commitment to health care.
- Charles Brooks Award for Creativity – This award is made annually in recognition of creative accomplishments such as written publications or artistic contributions which complemented the student's academic activities.
- Dean's Leadership and Service Award – Presented to a maximum of three outstanding SHP students annually, this award recognizes leadership to the School, UAB, and the community.

A call for nominations will be sent to program directors each year. Please refer to the program section of this handbook for awards available to students in individual programs.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SCHOLARSHIPS

SHP has several scholarship opportunities for students enrolled in SHP programs. The Scholarship Committee, comprised of faculty from each department, reviews and selects awardees. Please go to [the SHP Scholarship Application webpage](#) for a list of scholarships and instructions for application.

Application announcements are made by the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs. Many programs in SHP also have scholarships available to currently enrolled students in those programs. Please refer to the program section of this handbook for more information.

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS SHARED VALUES

- Collaboration
- Compassion & Caring
- Excellence & Achievement
- Integrity
- Respect
- Service
- Social Responsibility
- Stewardship

SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media can serve as useful communication tools. However, health professions students should use the forums judiciously. For more information visit [the UAB Social Media Guidelines webpage](#). The school's official sites are on the following platforms:

- [Facebook](#)
- [Instagram](#)
- [LinkedIn](#)
- [Vimeo](#)
- [X/Twitter](#)
- [YouTube](#)

STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES

The University provides prevention, counseling, and treatment services to students through [Student Health Services](#) (SHS) located at [1714 9th Avenue South](#). Appointments may be scheduled via [their online portal](#).

TITLE IX

In accordance with Title IX, the University of Alabama at Birmingham does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any of its programs or services. The University is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination based on sex and expects individuals who live, work, teach, and study within this community to contribute positively to the environment and to refrain from behaviors that threaten the freedom or respect that every member of our community deserves. For more information about Title IX, policy, reporting, protections, resources, and supports, please visit [the UAB Title IX webpage](#).

TUITION AND FEES

[UAB tuition and fees are published online](#). They may be paid through BlazerNET. SHP programs have specific fees attached to programs, courses, and/ or laboratories. Payment deadlines for each semester are published on the official academic calendar. Please note that failure to meet payment deadlines can result in being administratively withdrawn from courses.

WEATHER

Severe weather situations that may affect the safety of students, faculty, and staff are communicated through the same channels as other emergencies. UAB has a dedicated [Preparedness webpage with Severe Weather Gathering Points and supply lists](#). Other information sources include the [B-ALERT System](#) (contact information must be setup and current) and the UAB Severe Weather & Emergency Hotline 205-934-2165.

WITHDRAWAL FROM COURSE /PROGRAM

Withdrawal from a course or from your program is an official process and should be discussed with your academic advisor and/or program director. Most programs in the School of Health Professions are full-time and the curricula specifically sequenced. Withdrawal from a course

may risk you having to wait to register for the class again. Withdrawals are made through the UAB registration system via the Student Resources tab in BlazerNET. Notice of program withdrawal should be given in writing to the program director. For more information [visit the UAB Add/Drop, Extended Drop and Withdrawal Policy webpage](#), which also includes a medical withdrawal policy.

SECTION 2—SHP AND UAB POLICIES

SCHOOL OF HEALTH PROFESSIONS POLICIES

DISMISSAL OF STUDENT FOR FAILURE TO MAKE SATISFACTORY ACADEMIC PROGRESS

[Dismissal of Student and Appeal Process](#)

EMERGENCY PLAN – SHPB/LRC/WEBB

[SHPB/LRC/WEBB Emergency Plan](#)

BACKGROUND CHECK AND DRUG SCREEN POLICY

Students in SHP programs are required to undergo a background check and drug screen using the school's approved vendor, [Disa Healthcare Technology](#), at the time of program admission, and again, prior to placement in a fieldwork placement (clinical, internship, practicum, residency, etc.). Additional checks/screens may be required by the individual sites therefore; students should work with the program to ensure compliance requirements are met. Instructions for requesting the background check and drug screens are provided to students by their programs. Students in SHP undergraduate programs must complete a module on drug screening and background checks during their first semester. The module will be located in Canvas, UAB's learning management system.

The [SHP Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs](#) is responsible for ensuring student compliance with the Background Check and Drug Screen Policy throughout the program. Students found to be non-compliant with this policy will not be allowed to matriculate in the program (orientation, attend class, fieldwork placement, etc.) until all requirements are met. Program Directors, Fieldwork Coordinators, and students will be notified of non-compliance and a hold will be placed on the students' account.

- Fees for these screenings will be the responsibility of the student.
- The rules and regulations governing individual fieldwork placement sites may include additional provisions and/or more stringent guidelines which supersede this policy. Fees for these screenings are the responsibility of the student.
- Should your criminal background check contain issues, or if you fail a drug screen that may prevent you from receiving or sitting for board certification/licensure, a representative from the Office of Academic and Faculty Affairs will contact you. Depending upon the outcome, students will have a registration hold placed on their account until in compliance and this may result in being dismissed from the program. See your program's guidelines regarding specific consequences.

Programs requiring a criminal background check and drug screening by the end of the first semester of enrollment and again, prior to fieldwork placement (if applicable in the program requirements), are the following:

- Administration Health Services, PhD
- Biomedical Sciences to Biotechnology Fast Track
- Biomedical Sciences to Clinical Laboratory Science Fast Track

- Biomedical Sciences to Health Physics Fast Track
- Biomedical Sciences to Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Sciences Fast Track
- Biomedical and Health Sciences, MS
- Biotechnology, MS
- Biotechnology, PhD
- Dietitian Education Program, Graduate Certificate
- Genetic Counseling, MS
- Health Administration (Residential), MSHA
- Health Care Management to Healthcare Quality and Safety Fast Track
- Health Care Management to Health Informatics Fast Track
- Health Care Management to Occupational Therapy Doctorate Fast Track
- Health Physics, MS
- Medical Laboratory Science, MS
- Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging Sciences, MS
- Nutrition Sciences, MS
 - Dietetic Internship Clinical Track
 - Dietitian Education Program
 - Research Track
- Nutrition Sciences, PhD
- Occupational Therapy, OTD – (entry level)
- Physical Therapy, DPT
- Physician Associate Studies, MSPAS
- Rehabilitation Science, PhD

The following students enrolled in SHP undergraduate programs will complete a learning module related to background checks and drug screens in Canvas, UAB's learning management system by the first semester of enrollment. If a fieldwork placement (clinical, internship, practicum, residency, etc.) is required, students must complete criminal background checks and drug screens prior to the first day of the semester of a fieldwork placement:

- Health Care Management, BS
- Biomedical Sciences, BS
- Nutrition Sciences, BS
- Disability Studies and Rehabilitation Science, BS

Programs waived from the Criminal Background Check and Drug Screening requirements are the following:

- Applied Mixed Methods Research, Graduate Certificate
- Biotechnology Regulatory Affairs, Graduate Certificate
- Clinical Informatics, Graduate Certificate
- Health Administration (International and Executive tracks), MSHA
- Health Informatics, MSHI
- Healthcare Finance Management, Graduate Certificate
- Healthcare Leadership, DSc

- Healthcare Leadership, Graduate Certificate
- Healthcare Quality and Safety, MS
- Healthcare Quality and Safety, Graduate Certificate
- Health Services Research, MS
- Healthcare Simulation, MS
- Healthcare Simulation, Graduate Certificate
- Nutrition for Community Health, Graduate Certificate
- Nutrition Sciences, MS
 - Clinical Track-Prior Learning
 - Lifestyle Management and Disease Prevention Track
- Low Vision Rehabilitation, Graduate Certificate
- Multi-Tiered Approach to Trauma, Graduate Certificate
- Occupational Therapy Doctorate (Post Professional)
- Physical Therapy Residencies (Neurologic, Orthopedic)
- Primary Care Physical Therapy for Underserved Populations, Graduate Certificate

Students enrolled in exempt programs who participate in a course(s) incorporating community, corporate or other high impact, out-of-classroom activities such as service learning, capstone projects or other hands-on learning experiences, may be required by placement sites to submit background check and drug screening results. Students are responsible for the fees associated with such screening.

DISA HEALTHCARE TECHNOLOGY INSTRUCTIONS

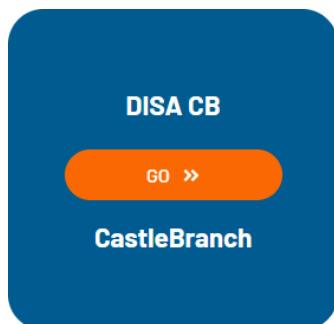
[Disa Healthcare Technology](#) is a secure platform that allows you to order your background check & drug test online. Once you have placed your order, you may use your login to access additional features, including document storage, portfolio builders and reference tools. Disa Healthcare Technology also allows you to upload any additional documents required by your school.

Order Summary

- Required Personal Information
 - In addition to entering your full name and date of birth, you will be asked for your Social Security Number, current address, phone number, and email address.
- Drug Test (LabCorp)
 - Within 24-48 hours after you place your order, the electronic chain of custody form e-chain will be placed directly into your CastleBranch account. This e-chain will explain where you need to go to complete your drug test.
- Payment Information
 - At the end of the online process, you will be prompted to enter your Visa or MasterCard information. Money orders are also accepted, but will result in a \$10 fee and additional turn-around-time.

Place Your Order

[Visit the website](#), click “place order” and choose the Disa CB platform (see logo screenshot below).



Enter package code AHO1 – Background Check and Drug Test. You will be required to enter your program under “Student Information” classification. You will then be directed to set up your Disa/CastleBranch profile account. This package code is for the following majors:

- Health Care Management
- Biomedical Sciences
- Biotechnology
- Biomedical and Health Sciences
- Genetic Counseling
- Health Administration – Residential (MSHA)
- Health Care Quality and Safety (not employees of health care organizations)
- Health Informatics
- Health Physics
- Medical Laboratory Sciences
- Nuclear Medicine and Molecular Imaging Sciences
- Occupational Therapy
- Physical Therapy
- Physician Associate Studies
- Rehabilitation Sciences

View Your Results

Your results will be posted directly to your Disa/CastleBranch profile account. You will be notified if there is any missing information needed to process your order. Although 95% of background check results are completed within 3-5 business days, some results may take longer. Your order will show as “In Process” until it has been completed in its entirety. Your school’s administrator can also securely view your results online with their unique username and password. If you have any additional questions, you may contact the Service Desk at 888-723-4263 x 7196 or submit a question [using the online contact us form](#).

ACCIDENTS /INJURIES OCCURRING ON CAMPUS:

All accidents/injuries occurring while involved in a program associated with the School of Health Professions are to be promptly reported to the faculty member in charge of class. Incident reports for accidents and injuries must be filed with the Department Administrative Office within 48 hours of the incident. Failure to report accidents or injuries within 48 hours of the incident may impact UAB's ability to address the accident or injury.

ACCIDENT /INJURY REPORTING PROCEDURE

When a student, visitor, faculty, or staff is involved in an accident or sustains an injury while involved in a program associated with the School of Health Professions, an accident / injury report is required. The faculty member in charge of the class where the injury occurs, or who is the first point of contact following the injury should download and complete this [Incident Report Form](#).

NEEDLESTICK/BLOOD OR BODY FLUID EXPOSURES

When a student, visitor, faculty, or staff is involved in a body fluid or needlestick exposure while involved in a program associated with the School of Health Professions, they should follow the procedures on [the UAB Human Resources website](#). The faculty member in charge of the class where the exposure occurs, or who is the first point of contact following the injury should download and complete this [Incident Report Form](#).

UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE VOLUNTEER RESEARCH:

Undergraduate or graduate volunteer students wanting to conduct research in a School of Health Professions laboratory should contact [Dr. Samantha Giordano-Mooga via email](#) for requirements.

UABPOLICIES

ACADEMIC PROGRESS

[UABACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS](#)

[UABACADEMIC PROGRESS POLICY FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS](#)

HEALTH

[UABPOLICY ON IMMUNIZATIONS](#)

[UABPOLICY ON NEEDLE STICKS AND EXPOSURES](#)

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

[UABPOLICY ON EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND DISCRIMINATORY HARASSMENT](#)

POLICE AND PUBLIC SAFETY

[UABPOLICY ON CAMPUS SAFETY](#)

[UABPOLICY ON FIREARMS, AMMUNITION, AND OTHER DANGEROUS WEAPONS](#)

RESEARCH AND SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES

[UABPOLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY CODE](#)

[UABPOLICY ON ETHICAL STANDARDS IN RESEARCH AND OTHER SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES](#)

[UAB POLICY ON PATENTS](#)

SUBSTANCE USE/ABUSE

[UABPOLICY ON ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES, USE AND CONSUMPTION](#)

[UAB POLICY AS A DRUG FREE CAMPUS](#)

[UABPOLICY ON NON-SMOKING](#)

TECHNOLOGY

[UABPOLICY ON TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES](#)

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

[UABCOMPLAINT POLICY](#)

SECTION 3: PROGRAM SPECIFIC INFORMATION

DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program is a course of study for the student who holds a baccalaureate degree in a field of study other than Physical Therapy; satisfactory completion of this program leads to a Doctor of Physical Therapy degree and serves as initial preparation for practice as a physical therapist. The student will gain knowledge, skills, and behaviors needed for the initial practice of Physical Therapy in a variety of settings. In addition to practice, the graduate will be prepared to assume responsibilities in areas of administration, consultation, education, and discovery and application of new information as these relate to physical therapy.

The Department of Physical Therapy also offers a Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) and Master of Public Health (MPH) Coordinated Degree (DPT/MPH). Students enrolled in the UAB DPT Program are eligible to apply for the coordinated DPT/MPH degree. Interested students must obtain approval from the DPT program director before applying. [Visit this website for more information on this coordinated degree.](#)

Students admitted to the DPT program may elect to take courses in the Primary Care Physical Therapy for Underserved Populations Graduate Certificate Program within the Department of Physical Therapy. This certificate program provides a broader scope of skills and knowledge necessary to meet the needs of underserved communities and marginalized populations. Students interested in applying to the certificate program or taking courses within the program must receive approval from the DPT program director. [Find additional details about the certificate program on their website.](#)

DEPARTMENT VISION

Leading the way to optimal movement for all individuals and populations in a diverse society resulting in improved health, wellness, and quality of life.

DEPARTMENT MISSION

Develop physical therapy and rehabilitation science leaders through knowledge creation/translation and innovative education, in order to promote health equity and address the needs of all individuals and communities in a rapidly transforming society

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

We believe in the inherent worth of the human being and that sensitivity and responsiveness to human needs serves as the foundation for our endeavors. One of the determinants of society's progress and growth is the collective health of its individuals. Members of the health professions share with the individual citizens, responsibility for maintenance and promotion of health. We believe in the right of everyone to quality health care; furthermore, we are committed to the promotion of effective cost and quality control measures in the health care system.

Physical Therapy is an integral and unique component of health care. We believe that the services of physical therapy must be directed to all phases of health care--promotion of health, prevention of illness, and rehabilitation of the total person--and that the physical therapist is a legitimate point-of-entry into the health care system. This belief requires personnel who are prepared to function in different and changing roles. While there are common basic elements for all roles in physical therapy, society benefits most through expansion in the depth and breadth of preparation of individuals in the diverse roles in physical therapy enabling them to function in an ever-changing environment.

We believe that a diversity of people, thoughts and ideas, educational and experiential backgrounds augment the scope and quality of physical therapy services. Maximum benefits are derived from physical therapy services when physical therapy practitioners are committed to work collaboratively with the health care team.

The choice of a career is a personal decision, but, having chosen a given profession, an individual must assume the inherent responsibilities. Each member must adhere to established professional ethics to maintain membership in that profession.

As educators in Physical Therapy, we assume the responsibility for selection of students and provision of educational excellence to prepare physical therapists that provide high quality physical therapy service for society and leadership to the profession.

Education is a means of facilitating self-realization leading to the enrichment of human life. Learning is a dynamic process. We view the teacher as a facilitator of learning. The opportunity to learn through problem-solving and decision-making experiences enhances the process. We believe that the curriculum must reflect these values and views and should be developed in such a way that the content is presented in an integrated and holistic manner.

We hold faculty communion and unity of purpose as essential and vital elements for effectiveness in an educational endeavor. Members of the faculty must be competent and accountable. Competency and accountability extend beyond the immediate educational environment to the areas of service and research. The faculty is committed to excellence in all that it undertakes. We accept the concept, and all that is inherent with the concept, that educators serve as change agents, and we share with colleagues' responsibility for growth and development of the profession toward continuously meeting needs of society.

Adopted: August 1987

Last revision: September 2014

STATEMENT OF ETHICAL PRACTICE

The faculty of the Department of Physical Therapy is committed to the practice of ethical standards in our educational endeavors and fully supports the activities of the School of Health Professions that foster and ensure compliance with established standards regarding admission and academic policies, establishment and publication of just and equitable fees, publication of full and accurate information concerning educational programs, provision of adequate health and other student services, and policies/procedures for ensuring students' rights to due process. The Department of Physical Therapy adheres to the following practices:

- All published material accurately reflect the education programs offered by the Department of Physical Therapy and are written as clearly as possible to avoid misinterpretation by the reader.
- All applicants for admission will be considered without regard to an applicant's race, national origin, age, genetic or family medical history, gender, faith, gender identity and expression as well as sexual orientation. UAB also encourages applications from individuals with disabilities and veterans.
- An effort is made to ensure that each student upon entry into one of the educational programs is of sound physical and mental health and that any physical dysfunction or disorders are within safe limits for the student and the patients with whom the student will come in contact.
- Academic and clinical education policies/procedures are distributed and reviewed with all students at the beginning of each school year.
- Written agreements are made with each clinical facility and include a statement to the effect that students are there for the purpose of educational experiences and are not to be used in lieu of staff or professional personnel.
- The faculty makes every effort to adhere to student-faculty ratios in both academic and clinical education that will facilitate optimal educational experiences.
- Academic credit is awarded in compliance with the policies established by the SHP Academic Affairs Committee and the Graduate School of the University of Alabama at Birmingham.
- All efforts are made to ensure that the student has developed at least minimal competencies for that particular stage in classroom and laboratory experiences prior to clinical education assignment in a patient care situation.
- The faculty, in its concern for the health and safety of the general public, is committed to ensuring that each student possesses at least the minimal competency levels essential to his/her role in the practice of physical therapy before allowing that student to graduate.
- The faculty is committed to the educational preparation, personal development, and general welfare of each individual student within the curricula and demonstrates a respect for the human dignity and individual rights of each student in all aspects of the curricula.

CURRICULAR THREADS

The four curricular threads in the DPT Program are: 1) Leadership; 2) Evidence Informed Practice Management; 3) Population Health and 4) Interprofessional Collaborative Practice. Each thread is woven throughout the DPT program.

CURRICULAR THREAD #1: LEADERSHIP:

Leadership at all levels of clinical practice is an imperative within healthcare and 'to lead' does not require a formal title (i.e., leader) or specific position.¹ Self-leadership is a set of intentional practices - such as goal setting, self-reflection, and cultivating a growth mindset - that link directly to self-direction, self-motivation, and an enhanced sense of empowerment in daily practice.^{1,2} Ultimately, leadership is a mindset and a set of skills and behaviors that students can develop and that all physical therapists can embody.

The **Leadership curricular thread** prepares students to develop their self-leadership competence (i.e., leading self) first and then how to lead and influence others (i.e., patients, colleagues, teams) and systems effectively (i.e., organizations and communities). Emphasizing the development of self-leadership (i.e., self-influence) establishes that one must lead oneself before effectively leading others. It is the precursor to leading others and the necessary building block for influence across individual, team, organizational, and societal levels. This framing positions everyday clinical decision making, advocacy, and interprofessional collaboration as expressions of leadership grounded in self-leadership capacity.^{1,2}

Elements of the Leadership curricular thread align with contemporary leadership practices and the Leadership Competency Framework for physical therapists (LCF-PT), a validated framework designed to outline and organize the essential leadership skills, knowledge, abilities, and behaviors expected of physical therapists.^{3,4,5}

References

- 1) Green-Wilson J, Tschoepe BA, Zeigler SL, Sebelski CA, Clark D. Self-Leadership Is Critical for All Physical Therapists. *Phys Ther.* 2022 Jun 3;102(6):pzac029. doi: 10.1093/ptj/pzac029. PMID: 35325243.
- 2) Harrison DA, Santurri L, Borrero L, et al. Exploration of the perceived value of self-leadership capacity in physical therapist clinicians. *Physiother Can.* 2026;78(2):220–8. <https://doi.org/10.3138/ptc-2024-0054>.
- 3) Sebelski C, Green-Wilson J, Zeigler S, Clark D, Tschoepe B. Leadership competencies for physical therapists: A Delphi determination. *J Phys Educ.* 2020;34:96-104.
- 4) Tschoepe BA, Clark D, Zeigler SL, GreenWilson J, Sebelski CA. The need for a leadership competency framework for physical therapists: A perspective in action. *J Phys Educ.* 2021;35:46-54.- -
- 5) Braswell Christy J; Morris D; Lein D; Clark D; Green-Wilson J. Teaching to Lead: One Program's Experience With Integrating Personal Leadership Into a Doctor of Physical Therapy Curriculum. *Journal of Physical Therapy Education*, 37(4): p 308-313, December 2023. DOI: 10.1097/JTE.0000000000000305

CURRICULAR THREAD #2: EVIDENCE INFORMED PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

From the [APTA Website](#): “The physical therapy profession recognizes the use of evidence-based practice (EBP) as central to providing high-quality care and decreasing unwarranted variation in practice. *EBP includes the integration of best available research, clinical expertise, and patient values and circumstances related to patient and client management, **practice management**, and health policy decision-making.*”

Evidence Informed Practice Management informs patient/client management and business practices to achieve optimal practice. The framework for the **Evidence-Informed Practice Management curricular thread** includes four major focus areas: 1) External Data (Trends across “systems”, organizations, communities, and industry); 2) Internal Data (Organization-specific information); 3) Expertise (Managerial competence/experience and student expertise in self-management, management of others and management of systems); 4). Scientific Literature (practice management evidence within and beyond healthcare literature).

Key elements within the focus areas for this thread will include Health Care System/Industry, Physical Therapist as a practice manager, Health Policy/Advocacy, and Innovative Practice/Entrepreneurship.

CURRICULAR THREAD #3: POPULATION HEALTH

The **Population Health curricular thread** empowers students to help transform society by shifting focus from individual patient/client treatment to community well-being. Throughout this thread, students will learn the principles of social responsibility, identifying and managing the social drivers of health by forming reciprocal relationships with the communities they will one day serve. Achieving inclusion excellence is a central part to student development; they will learn to build clinical spaces that promote belonging, manage personal biases, and actively oppose injustice. Students will be trained in enhanced therapeutic communication, including motivational interviewing and trauma-informed care, to connect with diverse individuals and guide them toward healthier lives. The integrated health-focused care model will teach students how to prioritize prevention and wellness, using population health data to develop community programs and initiatives that promote well-being. Ultimately, this thread prepares students to be a strong agent of advocacy, equipping them with the skills to speak out for their patients/clients, their communities, and the profession to create a healthier, more equitable society.

The population health curricular thread includes 5 focus areas: 1) Social Responsibility
2) Inclusive Excellence, 3) Enhanced Therapeutic Communication, 4) Health-Focused Care, 5) Advocacy

CURRICULAR THREAD #4: INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

According to the [Interprofessional Education Collaborative Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice \(2023\)](#), interprofessional collaborative practice is “when multiple health care workers from different professional backgrounds work together with patients, families, [carers], and communities to deliver the highest quality of care. (WHO 2010)” Within the **Interprofessional Collaborative Practice curricular thread**, the UAB DPT program will focus on four core competencies. *source:* [Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice \(2023\)](#):

- **Values and Ethics:** Work with team members to maintain a climate of shared values, ethical conduct, and mutual respect.
- **Roles and Responsibilities:** Use the knowledge of one's own role and team members' expertise to address health outcomes.
- **Communication:** Communicate in a responsive, responsible, respectful, and compassionate manner with team members.
- **Teams and Teamwork:** Apply values and principles of team science to adapt one's own role in a variety of team settings.

FACULTY AND STAFF

The Department of Physical Therapy faculty and staff are dedicated individuals who provide exceptional mentoring and training. They are prepared to deliver high-quality education and assistance to all our students. In addition, we have an esteemed network of emeritus faculty who are a valued part of the program. [Visit the Department of Physical Therapy website to see our faculty and staff.](#)

ACCREDITATION

The UAB DPT program is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 3030 Potomac Ave., Suite 100, Alexandria, Virginia 22305-3085; phone: 703-706-3245; [email](#). [Additional information can be found on the CAPTE website.](#)

Students who have complaints about the program that cannot be resolved at the program or institutional level may [file a complaint online with CAPTE](#).

OUTCOMES

At the completion of the UAB DPT program students should be able to:

- Deliver value-based and consumer-centered patient/client management to diverse populations to optimize movement, function and health.
- Abide by national and state regulatory and legal standards and adhere to the core values and ethical principles adopted by the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA).
- Engage in interprofessional collaborative practice by effectively educating, communicating and partnering with consumers, peers, other healthcare and non-healthcare providers, regulatory agencies, third-party payers, and other stakeholders.
- Critically appraise the literature and other resources to guide evidence-informed physical therapy practice.
- Influence the ever-changing health care landscape through personal leadership, advocacy, life-long learning in the clinic, community, professional organizations and society.

Adopted: October 2002

Revision: September 2006

Revision: March 2016

CERTIFICATIONS AND LICENSURES

The UAB Doctor of Physical Therapy degree program is designed to lead to professional licensure in Physical Therapy. While graduates of the program are eligible for the licensure examination, specific licensure requirements vary from state to state. The program has determined that its curriculum meets the state educational requirements for licensure in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands secondary to its accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) based on the following: Accreditation of a Doctor of Physical Therapy program by CAPTE satisfies state educational requirements in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Thus, students graduating from CAPTE-accredited Doctor of Physical Therapy programs are eligible to take the National Physical Therapy Examination and apply for licensure in all states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. For more information regarding state qualifications and licensure requirements, please [use this link to access the Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy website](#).

Additional [information on state and territories requirements can be found on the UAB Professional Licensure and Certification General Disclosures webpage](#).

TECHNICAL STANDARDS

TECHNICAL STANDARDS OF PHYSICAL THERAPY EDUCATION

The physical therapy degree is recognized as a broad undifferentiated degree requiring the acquisition of general knowledge and basic skills in all applicable domains of medicine. The education of the physical therapist requires assimilation of knowledge, acquisition of skills and development of judgment through patient care experience in preparation for independent and appropriate decisions required in practice. The current practice of physical therapy emphasizes collaboration among physical therapists, other health care professionals, the patient, and the patient's family.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham Department of Physical Therapy endeavors to select applicants who can become highly competent physical therapists. As an accredited physical therapy program, the University of Alabama at Birmingham curriculum adheres to the standards and guidelines of the Commission on Accreditation for Physical Therapy Education of the American Physical Therapy Association. Within these guidelines, the University of Alabama at Birmingham Department of Physical Therapy has the freedom and ultimate responsibility for the selection and evaluation of its students, the design, implementation, and evaluation of its curriculum, and the determination of who should be awarded a degree. Admission and retention decisions are based not only on prior satisfactory academic achievement, but also on non-academic factors, which serve to ensure that the candidate can complete the essential functions of the academic program required for graduation.

The Department of Physical Therapy is responsible to the public to assure that its graduates are fully competent and caring physical therapists, capable of doing benefit and not

harm. Thus, it is important that persons admitted possess the intelligence, integrity, compassion, humanitarian concern, and physical and emotional capacity necessary to practice physical therapy. The Department of Physical Therapy, as part of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. The Department does not discriminate based on race, religion, national origin, sex, disability, and disabled veteran or Vietnam era veteran status. When requested, the University will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified students with disabilities.

Technical standards, as distinguished from academic standards refer to those physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities required for satisfactory completion of all aspects of the curriculum, and the development of professional attributes required by the faculty of all students at graduation. The essential abilities required by the curriculum are in the following areas: motor, sensory, communication, intellectual (conceptual, integrative, and quantitative abilities for problem solving and patient assessment), and the behavioral and social aspects of the performance of a physical therapist.

The University of Alabama at Birmingham Department of Physical Therapy curriculum requires that students possess the ability to master information presented in course work in the form of lectures, written material, projected images, and laboratory demonstration.

The student must have the cognitive abilities necessary to master relevant content in basic science and clinical science courses at the level deemed appropriate by the faculty. These skills may be described as the ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze, and synthesize material. The student must be able to discern and comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships of structures and be able to develop reasoning and decision-making skills appropriate to the practice of physical therapy. The student must have the ability to take, and document in a patient's record, an appropriate history, and perform a physical examination. Such tasks require the ability to communicate with the patient and family. The student must also be capable of perceiving signs of disease, especially neuro-musculoskeletal dysfunction, as manifested through physical examination. Such information is derived from observation and palpation of the body surfaces, palpable changes in various organs and tissues, and auditory information (such as patient voice and heart tones).

The student must have the ability to discern the integrity of skin, subcutaneous masses, muscles, bones, joints, lymph nodes and intra-abdominal organs (for example, liver and spleen). The student must be able to perceive the presence of abnormalities that are not within the musculoskeletal system, such as masses in the abdomen.

A major component of the practice of physical therapy is the assessment and management of movement disorders. Therefore, the student must have the ability, within reasonable limits of safety, to assist a patient in moving, for example from a chair to a bed, or from a wheelchair to a commode. The student must also have the ability to move him or herself and the patient in a three-dimensional space in order to perform motor function tests and treatments. Additionally, the student must be able to ensure the physical safety of a patient at all times.

The student must be able to communicate effectively with patients and families, physicians and other members of the health care team. These communication skills require the

ability to assess all information, including the recognition of significant non-verbal communication and immediate assessment of information for appropriate and focused follow-up inquiry. The student must be capable of responsive, empathetic listening to establish rapport in a way that promotes openness on issues of concern and sensitivity to potential cultural differences.

The student must be able to process and communicate information on the patient's status with accuracy, in a timely manner to physical therapist colleagues and other members of the health care team. This information then needs to be communicated in a succinct, yet comprehensive manner and in settings in which time available is limited. Written or dictated patient assessments must be complete and accurate. The appropriate communication may also rely on the student's ability to make a correct judgment in seeking supervision and consultation in a timely manner.

The student must be able to understand the basis and content of ethical physical therapy practice. The student must possess attributes to include compassion, empathy, altruism, integrity, responsibility, and tolerance. The student must have the ability to function effectively under stress and to adapt to an environment, which may change rapidly without warning, and/or in unpredictable ways.

It is the responsibility of the student seeking accommodations of a disability to make his/her requests known and to present supporting documentation from his/her health care provider to Disability Support Services.

Based on the Essential Requirements of Physical Therapy Education at the University of Washington School of Medicine/Department of Physical Therapy. Modified and used with permission. Approved: Dept.PT Faculty. 7/9/99 Revised 01/2002; 12/2018; 06/2019.

DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

CREDIT HOURS

The DPT program consists of 119 semester credit hours delivered over 9 semesters.

CURRICULUM OUTLINE

[Use this link to visit the UAB Catalog website for course descriptions.](#)

SEMESTER 1/YEAR 1—SPRING

- PT 700: Human Gross Anatomy I, 3 credit hours
- PT 702: Functional Anatomy, 4 credit hours
- PT 730: Essentials of Human Physiology, 3 credit hours
- PT 710: PT Intervention I, 3 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 760: PT Professional Practice I, 2 credit hours

SEMESTER 2/YEAR 1–SUMMER

- PT 701: Human Gross Anatomy II, 2 credit hours
- PT 711: PT Examination I, 2 credit hours
- PT 712: PT Examination II, 3 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 720: Pathology & Pharmacology for Movement Disorders I, 3 credit hours
- PT 731: Human Performance Physiology, 3 credit hours
- PT 790: Scientific Inquiry I, 3 credit hours

SEMESTER 3/YEAR 1–FALL

- PT 704: Analysis of Human Movement, 3 credit hours
- PT 706: Neuroscience I, 3 credit hours
- PT 714: PT Intervention II, 3 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 715: PT Intervention III, 3 credit hours
- PT 721: Pathology & Pharmacology for Movement Disorders II, 3 credit hours

SEMESTER 4/YEAR 2–SPRING

- PT 707: Neuroscience II, 3 credit hours
- PT 716: Clinical Evaluation in Physical Therapy, 3 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 740: PT Management of Musculoskeletal Dysfunction I, 5 credit hours
- PT 761: Professional Practice II, 3 credit hours

SEMESTER 5/YEAR 2–SUMMER

- PT 743: PT Management of Cardiovascular/Pulmonary Dysfunction, 4 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 750: PT Management of Adults with Neuromuscular Dysfunction I, 3 credit hours
- PT 770-A: Clinical Education 1, 4 credit hours
- PT 791: Scientific inquiry II: 3 credit hours

SEMESTER 6/YEAR 2–FALL

- PT 741: PT Management of Musculoskeletal Dysfunction II, 5 credit hours
- PT 751: PT Management of Adults with Neuromuscular Dysfunction II, 2 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 752: PT Management of Pediatric Conditions, 3 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 762: PT Professional Practice III, 3 credit hours
 - includes Integrated Clinical Education experiences
- PT 778: Special Topics in Physical Therapy, 1 credit hour

SEMESTER 7/YEAR 3–SPRING

- PT 763: PT Professional Practice IV, 2 credit hours
- PT 764: PT Professional Practice V, Capstone Experience, 2 credit hours
- PT 770-B: Clinical Education II, 9 credit hours

SEMESTER 8/YEAR 3–SUMMER

- PT 770-C: Clinical Education III, 9 credit hours

SEMESTER 9/YEAR 3–FALL

- PT 770-D: Clinical Education IV, 9 credit hours

ADVISING & CORE ABILITIES/CORE VALUES

ADVISOR ASSIGNMENT PROCESS & MEETING REQUIREMENTS

Each student will be paired with a faculty academic advisor during the first week of the program. Students are required to meet with their advisors during each semester of the first year, summer semester of year 2, and spring semester of year 3. Students may request to meet more frequently with their academic advisor.

CORE ABILITIES/CORE VALUES

Core Abilities and Core Values are attributes, characteristics, or behaviors required for success as a student and as a physical therapist. The **Core Abilities** include commitment to learning, interpersonal skills, cultural competence, communication skills, effective use of time and resources, use of constructive feedback, problem solving, professionalism, responsibility, critical thinking, and stress management. The **Core Values** include accountability, altruism, compassion/caring, excellence, inclusion, integrity, professional duty, and social responsibility. Throughout the curriculum, students will periodically use self-assessment tools to facilitate professional growth required for graduation from the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. Academic and clinical faculty will evaluate the development of students' core abilities and values throughout the program using similar assessment tools.

The **Core Abilities Assessment** will be introduced and provided to the students during orientation and in the first semester during PT 760 (PT Professional Practice I). Students access and complete the core abilities self-assessment in Exxat. Students complete self-assessments and meet with faculty advisors to discuss progress as noted below.

YEAR 1

- Semester Self-Assessment Completed/Submitted in Spring, Summer and Fall.
- Semester Meeting with Faculty Advisor in Spring, Summer and Fall.

YEAR 2

- Semester Self-Assessment Completed/Submitted in Summer and Fall.
- Semester Meeting with Faculty Advisor in Summer.

YEAR 3

- No Semester Self-Assessment Completed/Submitted.
- Semester Meeting with Faculty Advisor in Spring.

Due dates for core abilities assessments and meetings will be provided on the class schedule.

The **Core Values Assessment** document will be introduced and provided to the students during the spring semester of the third year, in PT 764 (Professional Practice V: Capstone Experience). Students will complete the assessment as an assignment in PT 764 prior to leaving campus for the full-time clinical education courses

The professional nature of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program dictates that DPT students appropriately progress in their core abilities/core values during the program. Students who demonstrate significant core ability/core value violations will be reviewed following the Departmental Review Procedure and are subject to disciplinary action.

DPT POLICES & STANDARDS

Except for special circumstances described in the policies stated below, the Department of Physical Therapy abides by those policies established by the School of Health Professions and the Graduate School.

ACADEMIC CONDUCT

The University established a new Academic Integrity Code effective August 23, 2021. This Code, which applies to undergraduate, graduate, and professional students as well as all academic activities, defines academic misconduct and outlines procedures for breaches of the code. Policies are established for resolution of charges of academic misconduct, and these processes are managed by the Academic Integrity Coordinator (AIC). In the School of Health Profession, the AIC is the Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs (office is in SHPB 660).

[Use this LINK to access the UAB Academic Integrity Code.](#)

At orientation, each DPT student will be required to sign a statement that he/she has read and understands the UAB Academic Integrity Code. **By signing this statement, each student accepts responsibility not only for his/her personal academic conduct, but for the conduct of all physical therapy students.** In accepting this responsibility, the students in the Department of Physical therapy will not lie, cheat, or steal. A student found to have engaged in academic misconduct such as knowingly giving and/or receiving unauthorized aid in tests and examinations, plagiarizing, falsifying data, or any other acts of dishonesty in academic work will be reviewed following the Academic Integrity Code Policy. In addition, students who knowingly are involved in or fail to report a violation of the UAB Academic Integrity Code by another

student will be subject to disciplinary action following the Academic Integrity Code Policy. Students accept this responsibility because of a commitment to personal and professional honor.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE/ACADEMIC STANDING

Academic Performance includes *academic standing, academic conduct, and core abilities/core values*. The Departmental Review Procedure will be utilized to address student issues related to academic performance.

Students in the Department of Physical Therapy must maintain good academic standing in the Graduate School and in the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program to satisfactorily progress toward completion of the program and the degree. “Good academic standing” is defined by the following two components:

- A. Cumulative grade point average (GPA) of ≥ 3.00 in the DPT program and
- B. Successful completion of all DPT course work (No grades of F or Non-Pass/NP).

ACADEMIC PROBATION & DISMISSAL PROCEDURES

A student who fails to maintain a GPA ≥ 3.00 in DPT coursework will be placed on academic probation per the Graduate School Academic Progress Policy ([use this link to access the graduate school academic progress policy](#)). Such a student must re-establish good academic standing within the next two semesters. Students who do not establish “good academic standing” in this timeframe will be **academically dismissed** from the DPT program and the UAB Graduate School.

Students earning a failing grade (F) or Non-Pass (NP) are dismissed from the DPT program and the Graduate School due to failure to satisfactorily complete prerequisite coursework for subsequent required courses.

Students may appeal the dismissal decision following the administrative procedure that can be [accessed using this link for the SHP Policy for Dismissal of Student for Failure to make Satisfactory Academic Progress and Procedures for Dismissal](#)

ACCESS TO SECURE BUILDINGS

The School of Health Professions Building (SHPB) and Lab in Volker Hall (VH) require ONE Card for access. A One Card can be obtained at One Stop Student Services located at the Hill Student Center. The PT Lab, locker rooms, OTPT lab, and student break room access are also via OneCard. Use of the OneCard is tracked centrally for purposes of monitoring security of these areas. All students, faculty and staff are responsible for making sure these areas remain secure by keeping doors closed/locked.

ACCIDENTS/INJURIES OCCURRING ON CAMPUS

All accidents/injuries occurring in the Department of Physical Therapy are to be promptly reported to the faculty member in charge of class. Incident reports for accidents and injuries must be filed with the Department Administrative Office within 48 hours of the incident. Failure to report accidents immediately may result in lawsuits or other serious consequences.

ACCIDENT /INJURY REPORTING PROCEDURE

When a student, visitor, faculty, or staff is involved in an accident or sustains an injury on the UAB premises, an accident / injury report is required. The faculty member in charge of the class where the injury occurs, or who is the first point of contact following the injury should download and complete this [Incident Report Form](#); the form should accompany the injured individual when medical attention is sought and the injured individual must ensure that the attending physician signs the form. The original form should be given to the Program Director. The Program Director will ensure that all sections are completed and signed by the injured party, the reporting party, and attending physician (if applicable). The Program Director will then give the form to the Department Chair. The Department Chair will send the incident report form to Risk Management, The UAB Safety Office and the SHP Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs. It is very important to thoroughly complete the form, recommend to the injured to go to either Student Health or the Emergency Room (as appropriate), secure the appropriate signatures, and process promptly to the Department Chair's office. Injuries sustained during a laboratory session are included in this procedure and should be reported by the student as soon as the injury is noted.

ATTENDANCE POLICIES

STUDENT REQUEST FOR ABSENCE

The UAB Department of Physical Therapy requires that students attend all scheduled classes including lectures, labs, clinical assignments, and other off-site scheduled events. Failure to do so may result in "unexcused absences" and a violation of core abilities.

Absences fall into the following categories: 1). UAB DPT EXCUSED Absences, 2). Approved Personal Day Absences, 3). Sickness, 4). Doctor's Appointments, and 5). UNEXCUSED Absences.

Students must follow the established procedure regarding UAB EXCUSED, Sickness/Doctor's Appointments, and PERSONAL DAY Absences.

- One email addressed to all the Course Directors whose classes are affected by the absence will be sent by the student. The Director of Student Affairs should be copied on this email
 - Absences due to illness or last-minute circumstances/emergencies should be communicated PRIOR to the start of the class session.

- Personal Day Absence requests should be communicated 14 days prior to the requested absence whenever possible. Students will be allotted 5 “personal days” during the didactic portion of the program.
- The student should complete the “Request for Absence” online form. [Use this LINK to access the form](#) on the DPT Program Resources page. Failure to comply with these procedures may be considered a violation of core abilities.

UAB DPT EXCUSED ABSENCES

Refer to the School/University section of the handbook for information regarding Excused absences. Excused absences do not count against the 5 allotted Personal Days. Students are required to submit the online absence request form for all excused absences.

Bereavement Leave

During the didactic portion of the program, students **may be given** up to three days (24 hours maximum) excused absence per occurrence to make arrangements, as needed, and attend the funeral or memorial service for members of their immediate families: husband, wife, sponsored adult dependent* children (including stepchildren), child(ren) of sponsored adult dependent, brothers, sisters (including step- brother or sister), brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, parents (including step-parents), grandparents, grandchildren, father-in-law, mother-in-law, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law. To be eligible for bereavement leave, the student should notify the Director of Student Affairs and the DPT Program Director immediately. Students should also communicate with the Course Director of any courses that will be affected by the leave of bereavement. Upon the student's return to school, an official record, obituary notice, or other form of documentation to substantiate the request for absence may be required.

Voting

Time off to vote in primary and general elections is not normally necessary. Voting hours are such that students may vote either before or after class. If for some reason this is not possible, students may submit a request to be late arriving to class or to leave early. The Director of Student Affairs/Course Directors will determine whether the request will be approved based on the situation.

Jury Duty

For jury duty the Department will excuse students from scheduled classes for the days they are required to serve on juries.

The student/juror is required to return to school only after they are finally discharged for all jury service or is released from service for a particular day by the court. For the absence to be an approved absence, proper documentation of time served must be provided.

Students should notify the Director of Student Affairs/Course Directors of impending jury duty as soon as they receive notice to serve. A copy of this notice should be provided. Students may be able to communicate with the court to attempt to reschedule

the jury duty to avoid interfering with critical course demands. It is expected that students will attempt to complete their civic duty with minimal disruption to their educational demands.

PERSONAL DAYS

- We acknowledge that other life situations may happen during the program (e.g., routine doctor's appointments, weddings, "once in a lifetime" opportunities, car trouble, family events, etc.).
- During the didactic portion of the program (i.e., the first two years while on campus) each student may request a total of five personal days for any absence that does not fall under the UAB Excused Absences listed above.
 - Students may ONLY request personal days in half-day increments or full days.
 - Routine doctor/dentist appointments (non-acute illness or annual/routine visits) should be made during times in the schedule where classes would not be affected. Routine appointments made during scheduled class time will require use of a minimum of ½ personal day.
- Requests for personal days are not automatic approved. The Director of Student Affairs and the Course Directors will consider these requests on an individual basis.
 - Students are required to complete and submit the "Request for Absence" form at least 14 days in advance whenever possible.
 - The student must also send ONE email to all of the Course Directors whose classes will be missed and copy the Director of Student Affairs with the request.
 - The Course Directors and Director of Student Affairs will review the request. The final decision will be communicated to the student by the Director of Student Affairs.
 - Failure to follow these steps may result in the denial of the request.
- Certain dates during the semester are designated as "No Personal Days" due to exams or other special events (presentations, department events etc.) scheduled on those dates. The "No Personal Days" will be designated on the semester calendar posted in the DPT Student Channel on Teams and on the class cohort Outlook Calendar.
 - Should extenuating circumstances necessitate a request for a personal day on those dates, the student must submit the request to the Director of Student Affairs and the course directors involved.
 - If approved, the student will lose an additional 0.5-1.0 personal day in addition to the requested 0.5-1.0 personal day.
 - Exams will be rescheduled at the discretion of the course director, and whenever possible will be scheduled PRIOR TO the requested absence.

- The Director of Student Affairs will track all requests to ensure that the policy is enforced with fairness. During the clinical education portion of the program, clinical education attendance policies will apply. Clinical education policies are posted on Canvas for PT 770 courses and are included in the clinical education policies and procedures in this student handbook.
- **Spring semester of the 3rd Year:** Students are on campus for ~4 weeks to complete the didactic portion of the curriculum during this semester. Personal days will not be approved during the didactic portion of the spring semester.

SICKNESS

Students should not come to campus when they are sick and could potentially infect other individuals. As adult learners, it is expected that all students will utilize sick days responsibly. We recognize that not all illnesses require you to visit a health care provider thus resulting in accumulation of co-pays and potentially overburdening the health care system unnecessarily. The following policy regarding absences for sickness will be enforced.

- If you are sick and need to miss class:
 - Complete an absence request form immediately (do not wait to submit the form unless your health status makes it impossible for you to do so.). **YOU MUST COMPLETE THE ABSENCE REQUEST FOR EACH DAY THAT YOU ARE OUT FOR ILLNESS.**
 - Communicate with the Director of Student Affairs AND course directors for ALL courses affected by the absence.
 - If you elect to be seen by Student Health/personal MD, please provide any documentation regarding return to class recommendations to the Director of Student Affairs.
 - If your illness requires you to miss >2 consecutive days, you **MUST** provide a note from an MD/Health Care Provider.
- If your dependent is sick and you need to miss class:
 - Complete the online absence request form immediately (prior to the classes you will be missing.). **YOU MUST COMPLETE THE ABSENCE REQUEST FOR EACH DAY THAT YOU ARE OUT FOR YOUR DEPENDENT'S ILLNESS.**
 - Communicate with the Director of Student Affairs AND course directors for ALL courses affected by the absence.
 - If your dependent's illness requires you to miss >2 consecutive days, you **MUST** provide a note from an MD/Health Care Provider.
- A pattern of repeated absences (>2 absences) due to illnesses that are not documented by an MD visit may result in the student being required to submit documentation for any future illness-related absences or use personal days for the time missed.

ACUTE INJURY OR SURGICAL PROCEDURES

- Students who have an acute injury or surgical procedure may not be able or permitted to participate in psychomotor learning activities during lab sessions, simulations, practical examinations, and clinical education experiences. The ability to participate in lab, simulation, practical examinations, or clinical education experiences will be determined

by the course director, program director, director of student affairs and the student using information provided by the student and their health care provider who is overseeing management of the current condition.

- Students who are unable to participate in these activities due to an acute injury or surgical procedure must provide the course director and director of student affairs with appropriate documentation to include initial documentation from the treating physician clearly outlining restrictions. Once the student is cleared for full return to all activities, the student must provide the course director and director of student affairs with documentation from the treating physician stating that the student is cleared for all activity with no restrictions.

DOCTOR'S APPOINTMENTS

- Doctors' appointments required for management of **chronic health conditions** OR for **post-op appointments** for you and/or your dependent will be considered excused absences and will not count against your personal days. Whenever possible, these appointments should be made on days that do not affect scheduled classes, however, we recognize that there are situations that require MD appointments that cannot be scheduled outside of scheduled class time. Students should communicate with the Director of Student Affairs/Course Directors for affected classes regarding these non-routine appointments. Students will still be required to complete the online Absence Request Form.
- Doctors' appointments for management of **acute illness** for you or your dependent will be considered excused absences and will not count against personal days.

UNEXCUSED ABSENCES

Greater than 5 total days absences for personal reasons (any absence that does not fall under the UAB DPT Excused Absence List) or absences occurring without prior approval will be considered a violation of core abilities. The student will receive a written warning as described in the *UAB DPT Review Procedure for Violations of Professional Behaviors Related to Core Abilities/Values* found later in this handbook.

Continued violations will result in probation up to dismissal from the program.

TARDINESS

Students are expected to be prepared to begin all classes and return from class breaks on time. Habitual tardiness may result in disciplinary actions for violation of core abilities.

INCLEMENT WEATHER DAYS

The Department of Physical Therapy will follow the recommendations of [UAB Emergency Management](#) for cancellation of classes. The Program Director will email all students via email if classes are cancelled due to weather. Students are advised to register with [B-Alert](#) to receive weather/emergency updates.

UAB HOLIDAYS AND SEMESTER BREAKS

Designated university holidays and breaks are available on the UAB Academic Calendar. The semester class schedule will be made available to all students prior to the beginning of each term. Revisions in the schedule will be communicated to all students via email as needed, updated on the cohort Outlook schedule and posted on the DPT TEAMS Student Channel.

BACKGROUND CHECK

Please see the SHP Section for information about the Background Check for SHP Students. In the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program, clinical sites may require students to complete additional criminal background checks from the site-specific vendor prior to the start of a clinical education experience.

CLASS BREAKS

The scheduling of breaks is the prerogative of the faculty and/or clinical instructors. Students should return promptly upon completion of the break. Failure to do so is considered tardiness.

CPR CERTIFICATION

CPR certification must always be current during the program. CPR certification will be scheduled in spring semester for first year students and fall semester for second year students.

All students must take CPR training, even if currently certified.

CORE ABILITIES/CORE VALUES

Please refer to the Advising & Core Abilities/Core Values section previously described.

DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)

PLEASE REFER TO THE SHP SECTION OF THE HANDBOOK REGARDING DSS POLICY FOR THE SCHOOL.

Students registered with Disability Support Services **must contact the course director** to discuss the accommodations that may be necessary in that course. Students with disabilities must be registered with DSS and provide an accommodation request letter **before** receiving academic adjustments. Reasonable and timely notification of accommodations to the course director for the course is encouraged so that the accommodations can be arranged.

[Visit the DSS website for further information.](#)

DRUG SCREENING

Please see the SHP Section for information about Drug Screening for SHP Students. In the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program, clinical sites may require students to complete additional drug screenings from the site-specific vendor prior to the start of a part-time or full-time clinical education experience.

EMAIL

All students are required to have email through on-campus student accounts. Information pertaining to the program is often disseminated via email. Students are required to check emails at least daily, if not more frequently. E-mail distribution lists should be used only for activities associated with the Department of Physical Therapy program/activities. Updated class schedules will be posted on the student Microsoft Office Teams shared drive and in the Outlook Class Calendar.

FACULTY AVAILABILITY

Please be aware that while the primary goal as faculty members is to facilitate your learning, each faculty member has other responsibilities which demand time and attention. These roles range from involvement on school-wide committees to research and patient care. The faculty want to be responsive to your needs but ask that you respect their involvement in these other activities. Please ask the faculty how and when they can be available to you. For non-course related concerns, students are encouraged to contact the Director of Student Affairs, their advisor, or another faculty member whenever the need arises.

GRADE POLICIES

GRADING SYSTEM

A: 90 – 100%

B: 80 – 89.99%

C: 70 – 79.99%

F: <70

- PT 770 Clinical Education courses use a Pass/Non-Pass grading system.
- Performance requirements will be identified in the course syllabi. **Grades will not be rounded up.**
- **NOTE:** *Only Course Directors or the UAB Office of the Registrar will report Grades to students. Students should not contact the department staff to inquire about grades, as they are not at liberty to give this information.*

WRITTEN EXAMINATION POLICY

During written in-person examinations, students must follow these procedures:

- “Smart” devices (e.g., cell phones and watches) must be powered down and placed on the testing area table with the screen down. An exception may be made for students who are expecting an emergency call, but this must be worked out in advance with the instructor and exam proctor.
- Noise cancelling headsets are allowed but only if not connected to another smart device.
- All backpacks, purses, totes, gym bags or other carrying satchels must be placed in a designated place in the testing room away from the student’s testing area.

- Presence of test aids of any kind will be considered cheating and the student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in the [UAB Academic Integrity Code](#).
- No food may be brought to the testing area, unless necessary for health reasons. Prior permission must be granted.
- Drinks may be brought to the testing area if they are in an approved bottle/container (e.g., a reusable water bottle).
- The exam proctor will provide plain paper if needed which should be turned in to the exam proctor at the end of the exam; students may not bring their own paper to the exam.
- The exam proctor will not entertain questions regarding exam content. Issues with exam content will be addressed following the exam. Technical issues should be brought to the proctor's attention immediately.
- Any communication between students during an exam will be considered as intention to cheat, and the students may be removed from the testing session immediately. The students involved will be subject to disciplinary action following the [UAB Academic Integrity Code](#).
- Any other behavior by the student that is considered as a violation of the honor code or academic misconduct will be subject to disciplinary action following the [UAB Academic Integrity Code](#).
- Any student with Disability Support Services accommodations for written exams must schedule with [Disability Support Services](#).

WRITTEN EXAM REMEDIATION POLICY

Written exam scores will not be released immediately following the examination. This delay is intended to encourage reflection on performance, identification of learning needs, and development of strategies for continued academic improvement. During this period, students may reflect on their exam experience but may not discuss exam content with classmates or others. Sharing or soliciting information about exam questions or content constitutes a violation of the Academic Honor Code.

A scheduled in-person exam review session will be provided for all students. This session will be the only opportunity to review the exam. **Students who earn a score below 75% on a written examination must attend the review session and submit a completed exam wrapper to the course director** to facilitate reflection on their preparation, test-taking approach, and performance. After reviewing the exam wrapper, the course director will identify any additional remediation activities that align with the student's specific areas for growth.

Students must complete the remediation process to satisfy the requirements of the course.

PRACTICAL EXAMINATION POLICY (INCLUDING REMEDIATION)

Practical exams in Patient/Client Management courses will include previously learned tests and measures from prior coursework in the program. Students who do not demonstrate satisfactory

competency on those previously learned tests and measures will be required to remediate those skills. The course director will determine the timing and nature of the remediation.

Students must earn a grade of 80% or higher on the practical examination to pass the course. Some sections of the practical exam are designated as “must pass” items (e.g. unsafe practices). Failure on a “must pass” section but an overall score of $\geq 80\%$ on the practical exam is still considered a failure of the practical exam.

Students will have one opportunity to retake the practical examination. The retake will be observed and graded by two examiners. Prior to scheduling the retake, students must meet with the course director to review their initial performance and the policies regarding the retake. The practical exam retake will be scheduled by the course director and will allow adequate time for the student to review content and skills. The retake MUST be completed prior to the start of the next semester.

Successful completion of the retake will result in a score of 80% for that practical exam/content material. Failure to pass the retake exam will result in an F for the course.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE & RE-ENTRY PROCEDURES

A UAB DPT student may request a leave of academic absence. The request for a leave of academic absence may not exceed one (1) academic year. The Request for Leave of Academic Absence form can be found at the [Graduate School Website](#). A student must first consult with the Director of Student Affairs/ Program Director if considering a leave of academic absence from the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. The DPT Program Director and the Graduate School Dean must approve the request. Before a student can return from an approved leave of academic absence, the DPT Program Director must submit to the Graduate School a request to allow the student to re-enroll in courses.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) curriculum is delivered in a lockstep format, requiring students to progress through coursework in a prescribed sequence with their cohort. Due to this structured design, students requesting a leave of absence or re-entry after a dismissal must receive program approval. Upon approval, students will be placed into the appropriate semester based on course alignment.

ON CAMPUS RECRUITING ACTIVITY POLICY

Meetings with recruiters and recruiting events must be approved by the Program Director and Chair. The DPT Program Director must be informed of the request for a recruiting event. The event may not be scheduled during regularly scheduled class times.

Generally, the PT Department receives the initial request from a recruiter. The PT Department will contact the Class President or designee with the recruiter contact name, company name, and phone number. The Class President or designee should notify classmates and make all arrangements with the Program Director, class, and recruiter, except reserving meeting space.

The Class President or designee will contact the Department of Physical Therapy Staff to request a room. The Support Staff will secure the room and notify the Class President or designee. The room will always be reserved under the Department Chair's name.

POTENTIAL HEALTH RISKS

Potential health risks associated with engaging in the DPT Program:

Students should be aware that they may encounter health risks while participating in educational activities in the campus/clinical/community settings. Such potential risks include, but are not limited to:

- Physical injury associated with performing PT interventions (e.g., lifting and moving people and/or objects, engaging in exercise)
- Skin irritation/eye injuries from exposure to chemicals used in PT procedures (e.g., massage gel, baby powder, chlorine, electrode adhesives, cleaning supplies)
- Exposure to infectious diseases (e.g., HIV, Hepatitis B, TB, Flu, COVID-19)

Students with conditions making them more prone to health risks (e.g., allergies, physical injuries, etc.) should report these conditions to the Program Director (while on campus) or DCE (when engaged in clinical education). Students experiencing health problems or who are exposed to health risks likely leading to health problems, should report them to the Program Director (while on campus) or DCE (when engaged in clinical education) and complete an incident report if appropriate.

REQUESTS FOR EMPLOYMENT/VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

The DPT Program often receives requests from the community for DPT students to work/volunteer as, for example, caregivers for individuals with disabilities. As a service to the community, the Program Director may forward these requests to students. Student participation in this type or any outside work is done on an individual basis, and not as a representative of the UAB DPT Program. The UAB DPT Program assumes no liability or responsibility for this type of employment.

STUDENT BREAK ROOM

A small break room/ kitchenette is available for DPT students to use and store lunches. The break room is accessible with the OneCard. Students are responsible for keeping the break room and equipment clean and must also keep the door locked when not in use. Students should report any issues with the student break room to the Director of Student Affairs/Program Director.

STUDENT COMPLAINTS

Students should always feel free to voice concerns or complaints about the program to the appropriate faculty members including course directors, academic advisors, the DPT Program Director, Director of Student Affairs and Department Chair. If the student has a complaint or concern about a particular course, the student should first approach the course director. If the

complaint is not resolved, the student should then approach the DPT Program Director/Director of Student Affairs. If the complaint is still not resolved, the student may approach the Department Chair. If the complaint is still not resolved, the student may approach the SHP Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs. If the complaint is still not resolved, the student should use this LINK to access the [UAB Student Complaint Policy](#).

Individuals may also contact the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education CAPTE to file a complaint about the program. Please Visit the CAPTE [website for policies and procedures](#) for filing a complaint.

STUDENT LOCKERS

Locker facilities are provided for Department of Physical Therapy students in their respective locker rooms. Students are assigned a locker and must provide their own locks. Students are responsible for maintaining a clean and safe locker room environment and for reporting any maintenance issues to a staff member or the Program Director.

STUDENT READINESS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION

The UAB Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) Program evaluates students' readiness for clinical education throughout the curriculum to ensure students possess the knowledge, skills, abilities, and professional behaviors necessary for safe and effective patient care.

Each semester, faculty review multiple sources of assessment data to determine whether students have demonstrated the minimum knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required to progress to the next semester and its associated clinical education experiences. Students' readiness is evaluated using a comprehensive review of student performance, including:

- Academic course performance and successful completion of required coursework
- Written examinations, including comprehensive examinations when applicable
- Practical examinations assessing clinical reasoning, decision-making, communication, and patient management skills
- Skills checks assessing psychomotor performance, safety awareness, and procedural competence
- Professional Abilities/Core Abilities assessments
- Clinical education performance evaluations
- Faculty observations of professionalism, communication, and readiness for patient care activities
- Compliance with program, university, and clinical education requirements

Progression decisions are based on a student's overall performance across multiple measures rather than any single assessment. Students who do not demonstrate the expected level of readiness may be required to complete remediation, participate in a learning or development plan, undergo additional assessment, or delay progression until program expectations are met. The DPT Program reserves the right to require additional written, practical, or comprehensive

assessments to verify student's readiness for progression and participation in clinical education experiences.

STUDENT RESEARCH

All research performed by faculty, students, and staff of the University of Alabama at Birmingham, which utilizes University time, space, or resources, is the property of the University of Alabama at Birmingham regardless of the funding source. The Department of Physical Therapy follows the UAB Policy regarding the responsible conduct of research and other scholarly activities, found at this website: [UAB Responsible Conduct of Research Policy](#). The final publication order of authorship is at the discretion of the principal investigator/mentor and will follow the guidelines found at this website: [UAB Authorship Policy](#). For group projects in which students participated equally, authors will be listed alphabetically.

SUPPORT STAFF

The Department of Physical Therapy Support Staff are eager to assist you. Please remember that all staff have their own work areas, and those areas are not available for student use (i.e., telephones, computers, and printers). Please respect staff breaks as these may be federally mandated.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

Students should follow instructions for written assignments as provided by the course directors. In general, the Department of Physical Therapy recommends [American Medical Association \(AMA\) style of referencing](#) for assignments.

PROFESSIONALISM EXPECTATIONS

PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS & POLICIES

UAB STUDENT CONDUCT CODE VIOLATIONS

Students in the DPT program are expected to exhibit behaviors consistent with the UAB Student Conduct Code found at this website: [Link to UAB Student Conduct Code](#). For additional information, access the School and University section of the handbook for specific definitions and examples, as well as information regarding student rights and the procedures for reporting non-academic misconduct. UAB DPT students who violate the UAB Student Conduct code will be referred to the [Office of Community Standards and Student Accountability](#) who will handle the investigation and potential disciplinary action.

UAB DPT REVIEW PROCEDURE FOR VIOLATIONS OF PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIORS RELATED TO CORE ABILITIES/VALUES

The professional nature of the Doctor of Physical Therapy program dictates that DPT students appropriately progress in their core abilities/core values during the program. Students who demonstrate significant core ability/ core value violations will be reviewed following the Departmental Review Procedure as follows:

Students demonstrating significant deficits in professional behaviors may be referred to the Director of Student Affairs/Program Director. The Director of Student Affairs/Program Director

will meet with the student to discuss the issues. The DPT Core Faculty will then meet to discuss the appropriate disciplinary action. These include: written warning, probation, dismissal.

1. Written Warning: A written warning to the student with a description that he/she is in violation of professional behavior standards as defined in the core abilities/core values. Warnings will be documented in the student's record in the Department of Physical Therapy.
2. Probation: A written warning explaining the serious nature of the offense and outlining the terms of the probationary status, including length of probation and performance requirements to remain enrolled in the academic program. A copy of the probation documents will be included in the student's record in the Department of Physical Therapy. The length of the probationary period will be recommended by the core faculty and is subject to approval by the Department Chair.
3. Dismissal: Termination of student status in the DPT Program and School of Health Professions. A copy of the dismissal documents will be included in the student's record in the Department of Physical Therapy and copied to the Department Chair, SHP Associate Dean for Academic and Faculty Affairs and graduate school.

Regarding significant violations of core abilities/values, the final decision for action rests with the Department of Physical Therapy Faculty. A student has the right to appeal the faculty's decision with the Department Chair. The Department of Physical Therapy will follow the School of Health Professions Policy for Dismissal of Student for Failure to Make Satisfactory Academic Progress and Procedures for Appeal of Dismissal.

DRESS CODE/PROFESSIONAL IMAGE

Professional image serves to protect the patient, to identify the professional to the consumer and to other health professionals, and to allow us to do our jobs safely and effectively. When one accepts the individual responsibilities inherent in becoming a physical therapist, one assumes the collective responsibilities of professional image that reflect upon the profession. Therefore, the faculty has established the following standards of dress.

UAB photo identification must be always worn on campus, during off-campus activities affiliated with UAB, and during clinical education experiences.

Unprofessional attire may not be worn at any time when a student is representing UAB as an institution – on or away from campus.

IN ALL SETTINGS

Personal Hygiene: Students need to manage their own personal hygiene to avoid offensiveness in close physical interactions with patients, visitors, students, and instructors. Body odor/smoke or other odors are not acceptable. Use of deodorants and/ or antiperspirants is encouraged. Perfumes or offensive fragrances are never acceptable.

Nails: Fingernails are to be kept short and clean to avoid skin trauma or contamination. Nail polish should be conservative and well maintained in classes and labs. Please note that nail polish is not appropriate in the clinic and should not be worn in clinical situations to minimize infectious disease concerns.

Hair: All hair should be clean and well-groomed. Hair should be styled so that it is not distracting or in danger of interfering with lab sessions, management of patients or use of equipment.

Jewelry: Jewelry should be professional in nature and not pose a risk to other students, instructors, or patients. Sharp edges should never be worn.

Exemptions will be made on a case-by-case basis by the Program Director. Please e-mail the Program Director to discuss.

CLASSROOM, LRC/SHP ATTIRE

The professional standards, goals, and objectives of the UAB Doctor of Physical Therapy Program always require appropriate behavior and attire in the classroom/educational environment in any UAB building. Professional behavior and attire include, but are not limited to, the following standards:

- **Tops**
 - Appropriate: Tops should cover the chest and torso area.
 - Inappropriate: Tops/shirts that gap when bending forward or raising arms overhead. Tops with inappropriate language/logos. Tops that reveal cleavage.
- **Bottoms**
 - Appropriate: Bottoms (pants, shorts, and skirts) should be neat, professional and modest. Shorts are appropriate for lecture only on days that also have scheduled labs requiring shorts. Denim pants must be neat and professional.
 - Inappropriate: Bottoms that do not cover the low back region appropriately with movement. Leggings of any type are never appropriate unless the buttock region is completely covered by a tunic or dress.
- **Footwear**
 - Appropriate: Footwear: Closed toed shoes, sandals that cover most of the foot, athletic shoes.
 - Inappropriate: Footwear that exposes most of the foot; slippers.

ALL attire must be in good repair, clean and neat. If in doubt regarding appropriateness of clothing, please consult with the program director. **Students who ignore these guidelines may be reported for core ability violations and subject to disciplinary action.**

PRESENTATION DRESS CODE (CLASSROOM OR EXTERNAL)

For female students, appropriate attire includes suits (with either pants or skirts), dress pants with blazers, or business-type dresses with dress shoes. For male students, dress pants and shirt with sports coat or suits and dress shoes are appropriate.

LABORATORY DRESS CODE

Wearing appropriate attire has a direct effect on learning experiences. Specific guidelines are

required to ensure that you will be able to examine the body, move appropriately and maintain modesty. Students should read the syllabus to determine the part of the body of focus for each lab and should plan to dress appropriately. Students should show respect for classmates by wearing clean and appropriate lab attire. All students will be provided with a personal locker on the first day of class to use during the program.

- **Appropriate Attire**

- Sweatshirts, sweatpants, shorts, short-sleeved t-shirts, tank tops.
- Athletic shoes in good condition.
- Bra-like halter top or sports bra that allows for observation/palpation of anatomical landmarks. Note: a t-shirt must cover sports bras when outside the OTPT or PT lab areas.
- Athletic leggings in lab sessions where lower extremity exposure is not required.
- Scrub suits for Anatomy dissection labs.

- **Inappropriate Attire**

- Clothing with inappropriate advertisement or logos. Sweaty or unclean lab clothing (e.g., just from the gym).
- Athletic leggings in lab sessions where lower extremity exposure is required.

If students have both lecture and lab on the same day, students may wear lab attire for the entire day. If students have only lecture or exams (no lab sessions), students must wear lecture attire.

CLINICAL EDUCATION DRESS CODE

(i.e., any time you are in a clinical or simulation setting for any reason)

Clothing worn for clinical education and/or simulation must be neat and clean to avoid contamination. Clothing should be removed for cleaning as soon as possible after leaving the clinical setting to reduce contamination of personal surroundings. Students should pay attention to their own personal hygiene to avoid offensiveness in close physical interactions with patients. In clinical, community, or research settings, student's attire is expected to be conservative, appropriate, and professional. **Students are expected to follow the dress code requirements of their clinical education sites.**

- **Appropriate Attire**

- UAB photo ID that states that you are a "Student Physical Therapist" should always be worn. Students may also be required to wear a photo ID made at the assigned clinic
- Supportive, non-slip, closed toe and heeled shoes must always be worn with socks or stockings. Shoes should allow easy pivoting.
- Tops with logos or other writing on them are only appropriate if the logo represents the facility and is worn by the staff therapists.
 - Tops must cover the upper chest area and midriff area.

- Pants must be conservative in nature and always cover the low back region.
- Hair must be secured away from the face. Hair should be styled so that it is not distracting or in danger of interfering with the patient care or the use of equipment.
- Fingernails shall be bare with no artificial nails or overlays and must be kept at a length as to not harm patients. Natural nail tips are not to exceed ¼ inch (CDC guideline).
- Jewelry should be kept to a minimum.
- If scrubs are permitted as attire in the clinic setting, students must ensure that they are conservatively clothed and that the scrubs are neat and clean.
- **Inappropriate Attire**
 - Lost IDs must be replaced immediately, or you may be in violation of Alabama state law. **Notify the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) immediately if you lose your Student Physical Therapist ID badge.**
 - Sandals of any kind are NEVER appropriate.
 - Tops that gap on top or ride up over the pant area when bending.
 - Tops that expose the midriff when reaching overhead.
 - Clothing that allows undergarments to be visible
 - Hair that is unsecured and in danger of falling into the face of students, patients, or equipment.
 - Nail polish is not appropriate and should not be worn during clinical education experiences for infectious disease purposes.
 - Jewelry with sharp edges MUST NOT be worn in clinical settings.
 - Smart watches that distract students should be avoided.

USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Academic Integrity is compromised whenever AI assistance has been used when unauthorized, or when authorized, has not been disclosed as required. Such behavior is considered deceit and a violation of UAB's shared commitment to truth and academic integrity. Deceit constitutes academic misconduct and is subject to review according to [UAB's Academic Integrity Code which can be found online](#).

Students should refer to specific course syllabi and/or course directors/instructors for specific policies about use of AI in each course.

USE OF CELL PHONES AND COMPUTERS IN CLASSROOM AND LAB SETTINGS

Cell phones, computers, smart watches, and other electronic devices are important tools used in the daily life of most individuals and can be excellent tools to enhance learning. However, when these devices are used for reasons unrelated to the course content or session, they can be extremely disrupting, unprofessional, and can negatively affect the learning process of others. Therefore, students must exercise personal responsibility for use of these devices and refrain from using them for reasons other than enhancing the learning process during each session in the DPT Program. Students who excessively use technology and devices during

class or laboratory sessions for inappropriate reasons may be reported for core ability violations and subject to disciplinary action.

RECORDING LECTURES AND LAB SESSIONS:

Students who wish to record (video or audio) lectures or laboratory sessions must first ask the course director and all people to be recorded for permission. If all parties agree, the recording must only be used for personal education. Students must refrain from allowing the file to be posted on the public internet (e.g., You Tube, Facebook, Instagram, etc.) or using the recording for other purposes without additional permission from the course director. Patients or community volunteers must never be recorded without permission from the course director who will obtain UAB media consent.

SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY

Refer to the School and University section of the handbook for the UAB Social Media Policy.

ZOOMETIQUETTE

Students may need to participate in lectures, labs and discussions via ZOOM. During all ZOOM sessions, students should be professional, attentive and on time like an in-person lecture session. The following procedures must be followed by all DPT students when using ZOOM:

- Students should log in to ZOOM using their Blazer ID and Password from the [UAB ZOOM WEBSITE](#) before clicking the link for the session.
- Students should log in to the ZOOM classroom no later than five minutes prior to the official start of the session. Any student logging in later than five minutes prior to the start of the session will be considered tardy.
- Students should be presentable in appearance, sit upright, and act professionally.
- Students should use their own name in the ZOOM session.
- Students should always have their video on unless the instructor states otherwise.
- Students must show respect by always giving their full attention to the instructor and class session. Students must not be driving, riding in a car, or doing other activities during the ZOOM session.
- Students who do not follow these policies will be reviewed following the department review procedure for Core Abilities.

FUNDING & FINANCIAL INFORMATION

FINANCIAL AID

Financial Aid programs are administered through the UAB Office of Student Financial Aid located at 1700 University Blvd. Lister Hill Library G20; Telephone (205) 934-8223. [Use this link to access the financial aid website.](#)

SCHOLARSHIPS

Information about [scholarships offered at the University, School and Department Level can be accessed on the SHP Admissions webpage](#). Specific [information about DPT scholarships can be found by visiting the DPT Scholarships website](#).

Calls for all departmental and school level scholarships are made each semester.

PROFESSIONAL & STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Participation in professional organizations is encouraged and supported by the DPT program. Active involvement in these organizations supports professional growth, advocacy and the advancement of the physical therapy profession.

AMERICAN PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION (APTA)

The American Physical Therapy Association is an individual membership professional program that represents ~100,000 physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and students of physical therapy members. There are 51 chapters representing the U.S. States and District of Columbia. The organization also includes sections/academies and Special Interest Groups that are focused on practice areas, patient populations, special interest topics and policy areas. [Use this link to visit the APTA website for more information](#).

STUDENT PHYSICAL THERAPY ORGANIZATION (SPTO)

The purpose of SPTO is to engage fellow students and educate the community about physical therapy health care services, to offer social activities for students to interact outside of class and school functions, to raise funds to further address the needs and purposes of the organization, and to help students attend professional meetings and conferences held for the advancement of our personal education and the PT profession. General membership is restricted to currently enrolled students at the University of Alabama at Birmingham, attending the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program.

KEY MILESTONES IN THE DOCTOR OF PHYSICAL THERAPY PROGRAM

NEW STUDENT ORIENTATION:

All students are required to attend new student orientation which will also include CPR training and onboarding.

ACADEMIC ADVISING:

A physical therapy core faculty member will be assigned to serve as the student's academic advisor throughout the course of the program. The student and the advisor should meet

throughout the program to confer about courses, core abilities, and other issues the student wishes to discuss.

1ST YEAR PINNING CEREMONY/3RD YEAR WHITE COAT CEREMONY:

All students are expected to participate in the UAB DPT Pinning Ceremony/ White Coat Ceremony during the first and seventh semesters of the program. The purpose of the ceremony is to welcome 1st year students to the profession and 3rd year students to the clinic.

MARILYN R. GOSSMAN ENDOWED LECTURESHIP:

During the spring semester of the 1st and 2nd years, students will be required to attend the [Marilyn R. Gossman Endowed Lectureship](#)

PROGRAM ASSESSMENT:

Students are expected to participate in the ongoing program assessment which includes course evaluations for each course, focus groups and the curricular assessment surveys.

SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF ALL COURSEWORK:

Upon successful completion of all coursework, the candidate will be recommended for the Doctor of Physical Therapy degree by the Department of Physical Therapy.

COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATIONS:

Comprehensive examinations will be given to students in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program at the beginning of the 4th and 7th semesters and during the 9th semester.

The purpose of the comprehensive examinations are as follows:

- To identify areas of strength/weakness in the professional preparation of individual students.
- To provide guidance for the continued preparation of each student to enter the practice of physical therapy.

Performance Standards:

- a. **Comprehensive Written Examination #1** (spring of the 2nd year): This comprehensive examination will include content taught during the first year of the program. Remediation activities may be required based on student performance on the examination.
- b. **Comprehensive Practical Examination** (spring of 2nd year): This comprehensive practical examination will include content taught during the first year of the program. Remediation activities may be required based on student performance on the examination.

- c. **Comprehensive Examination #2:** A practice NPTE Examination Package will be purchased for all third-year students. Students will take the assigned practice test in a standardized setting during PT 764. Remediation activities may be required based on student performance on the examination. Additional details regarding the exam can be found in the course syllabus.
- d. **Comprehensive Examination #3:** A practice NPTE Examination Package will be purchased for all third-year students. Students will be required to complete a practice test during the final PT 770 course. Remediation activities may be required based on student performance on the examination. Additional details regarding the exam can be found in the course syllabus.

NOTE: Students/graduates are responsible for preparation for the [FSBPT National Physical Therapy Examination](#) once classroom and clinical faculty have judged performance in the professional degree program to be acceptable for successful completion of the program.

COMPLETION OF APPLICATION FOR DEGREE:

Students are responsible for completing the *Application for Degree* during the final year of the program. Students will receive instructions from the graduate school via email.

FINAL PROGRAM REVIEW:

Faculty and students will meet after the final clinical education experiences (PT 770, fall semester) prior to graduation, for general discussion/feedback regarding experiences during the program. Students will complete paperwork regarding curriculum review and alumni data.

HOODING CEREMONY:

Students are encouraged to participate in the hooding ceremony held each December.

CLINICAL EDUCATION

INTRODUCTION

As part of the Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program, students will complete integrated clinical education and full-time clinical education experiences (PT 770 course series). During the first six (6) semesters of the DPT program, students will be assigned to attend clinicals or community sites each semester by the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) and the Associate Director of Clinical Education (ADCE). During these Integrated Clinical Education experiences, students will gain exposure and experience working with individuals with various health needs.

Students will observe and learn under the supervision of licensed healthcare providers, often in an interprofessional environment and/or pro bono settings.

During semester five (5) of the DPT program, students will continue with an integrated, full-time clinical education experience (PT 770 Clinical Education). These will be arranged by the DCE and ADCE. Students will complete three (3), terminal, full-time clinical education experiences after successful completion of all academic coursework during semester 7 (spring, year 3), 8 (summer, year 3), and 9 (fall, year 3). These will be arranged by the DCE and ADCE).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Students shall comply with all policies and procedures related to clinical education experiences as outlined in this section. Accountability, communication, and duty are essential values of professional behavior ([APTA Core Values for the Physical Therapist and Physical Therapist Assistant](#)) and are cornerstones of the leadership (see leadership curricular thread). These skills are critical for success in the clinical education aspects of the DPT degree. Failure to comply with clinical education policies and procedures will result in the following infractions:

- First infraction: Written warning from the Director of Clinical Education (DCE)
- Second infraction: Loss of ½ personal day
- Third infraction: Loss of one personal day
- Fourth infraction: Assigned community services hours within the Department of Physical Therapy to be completed at the end of the semester that the fourth infraction occurs
- Fifth infraction: Cancellation of the clinical education experience

NOTE: During the first two years in the program, any personal days lost will be deducted from the personal days offered during the didactic portion of the degree. During the final year in the program, any personal days lost will be deducted from the 3 (three) personal days offered during terminal, full-time clinical education experiences.

Key Abbreviations:

- Director of Clinical Education = DCE
- Associate Director of Clinical Education = ADCE
- Site Coordinator of Clinical Education = SCCE
- Clinical Instructor = CI
- Clinical Education Learning Management System = Exxat

Further information regarding these roles and responsibilities associated with clinical education can be found in the Clinical Education Learning Management System, Exxat.

DRESS CODE

All information regarding the dress code during clinical education experiences is available for review under the Professionalism Expectations and Dress Code/Professional Image section of this handbook.

NAME TAGS AND NAME CHANGES

- When in the clinic, students are required to always wear a UAB photo ID card, known as the clinical ID card, to identify themselves as a “Student Physical Therapist”. This clinical ID card differs from the UAB OneCard. This card must state the student’s legal name.
- Students who misplace their clinical ID card need to contact the DCE to request a new clinical ID card.
- Students may also be required to wear an additional photo ID badge from the clinical site. At times, there may be an additional fee, payable to the clinical site, for issuing an ID badge.
- During clinical education experiences, students must use the same name in clinic as they used to register for the clinical education course, as this name is linked to the professional liability coverage.
- Based on requests from our clinical partners, students are discouraged from changing their name during a clinical education experience. Students who wish to change their name during a clinical education course must complete an official request for a name change through UAB OneStop. Once the University has officially approved the name change, the student should notify the DCE via email. The DCE/ADCE will communicate with any impacted clinical education sites and initiate the process of obtaining an updated “Student Physical Therapist” ID badge on behalf of the DPT student. Questions on this process should be directed to the DCE. Information on the process of changing your name at the University level is available by visiting this [LINK to One Stop Student Services](#).

ELECTRONIC DEVICES

- Students are expected to contribute to the development of an optimal learning environment. Cell phones, smart watches, and/or electronic devices should be set to vibrate or shut off during normal clinic hours to prevent a distraction to you, patients/clients, staff members, and/or clinical instructors. Electronic devices (cell phones, tablets, smart watches) may not be used during patient care hours for personal reasons. Electronic devices, with permission of the preceptor/clinical instructor (CI), can be used for communication with clinic staff following clinic policies.

ATTENDANCE

Punctuality and reliability are essential elements of professional behavior. To optimize student learning and avoid disruptions to clinical site operations, students are expected to be present and actively engaged in all activities at their clinical education site during the expected hours of operation. Behaviors that are inconsistent with this expectation are serious and may result in dismissal from the clinical education experience.

- Students are to report to the assigned preceptor or clinical instructor (CI), ready to actively engage, no later than the appointed time at the appropriate location.

- Students should not attend clinic when feeling ill. If illness develops during the day, the student should notify the Preceptor/CI and DCE/ADCE of the need to leave clinic. Repeated days off due to illness may require a medical release to return to clinic.
- Students who require greater than five (5) consecutive days off during clinical education courses must first gain the approval of the DCE. The DCE will communicate with the SCCE/CI at the clinic regarding the attendance issue. Participation in scheduled clinical education experiences is a critical component of the clinical education aspect of the Doctor of Physical Therapy degree. Prolonged absences may result in a grade of “Incomplete (I)” in the clinical education course. If a student misses an ICE experience due to illness, the DCE/ADCE will reschedule the ICE experience, as scheduling allows.
- Students should communicate with the Preceptor/CI and DCE/ADCE prior to the scheduled arrival time if the student will be unable to attend clinic.
- Each student shall attend clinic meetings, patient care, and in-services at the clinical site as designated by the Preceptor/CI responsible for the student’s clinical education.
- Students shall not plan personal activities/events during clinical education experiences (i.e. vacations, weddings, or other events/functions, etc.) It would be helpful to discuss this with family and friends prior to a clinical education experience, so they will avoid these dates as well.
- Students have a total of **three personal days throughout all four full-time clinical education courses (PT 770 series)**. Personal days do not need to be made up; however, students must achieve the expectations of the clinical education experience. Personal days must be approved by the student’s CI(s) and the DCE/ADCE prior to taking time off, preferably two weeks before the scheduled time off.
 - **Students shall not take personal days off during the final week of a clinical education experience.**
 - Students are limited to **a maximum of one (1) personal day per full-time clinical education experience.**
 - Personal days are meant to be used to attend weddings, family emergencies, residency interviews, job interviews, NPTE (PT boards). They are not to be considered “vacation” days.
 - Personal days can only be taken in four- or eight-hour increments and must be submitted via Exxat for approval
- Attendance at national or state APTA events are considered excused absences but require the approval of the SCCE/CI and the DCE. Students must notify the DCE in writing prior to starting the full-time clinical education course if their clinic attendance will be affected by a professional conference. The DCE will discuss the requested absence with the SCCE/CI and will notify students if/when the absence has been approved. The clinical site may reject the requested absence if it could disrupt clinical operations or student learning.

- Students may request up to two (2) days off from clinic without making up the time due to bereavement of their immediate families (husband, wife, parents (including stepparents), father-in-law, mother-in-law, grandparents, brothers, sisters (including stepbrother or stepsister), brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, children (including stepchildren). Students must communicate this request with the DCE and SCCE/CI. Requests for additional bereavement time will be handled on an individual basis by the DCE in collaboration with the SCCE/CI.
- If a clinic closes due to inclement weather, students need to communicate this information with the DCE. The DCE, in collaboration with the Preceptor/CI/SCCE, will determine if the student needs to make up any missed time.
- If UAB closes due to inclement weather, students will be excused from their part-time integrated clinical education experience. Closure of the UAB Campus due to inclement weather does not pertain to students during their full-time clinical education experiences, PT 770 course series.
- Plans for making up missed time during clinical education courses are handled on an individual basis at the discretion of the respective Preceptor/CI, SCCE, and DCE/ADCE. There are **no** built in “off” days for clinic. If required, students must make up for missed days during the same clinical education course in which the day(s) were missed. This cannot be completed by adding additional hours onto the previously scheduled workday. Therefore, it behooves students not to schedule personal events the week immediately following the end of a full-time clinical education experience.
- Students are expected to work on holidays if the clinic is open.
- Students may be required to work on the weekend while in clinic.
- During full-time clinical education experience (PT 770 series), student attendance reported by the CI and student on the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) should be consistent with attendance information entered into Exxat. Failure to communicate with the DCE regarding attendance will result in an infraction.
- Absences from full-time clinical education experiences must be documented in Exxat no later than the day of the absence.

LIABILITY INSURANCE

- Each student is required to carry liability insurance each semester while enrolled in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. The insurance is made available through UAB at a minimal cost and is included in the student’s tuition bill.
- It is the responsibility of UAB to send a certificate of liability coverage to the clinical sites verifying the policy with applicable dates. Therefore, if a student is asked to provide this information, the student should forward this request via email to the DCE for fulfillment.
- To participate in clinical education, students must be able to perform the technical standards of the UAB DPT program. Students must not have temporary medical/surgical restrictions.

HEALTH INSURANCE

- All students are required to have personal health insurance each semester enrolled in the Doctor of Physical Therapy program. It is the student's responsibility to know their policy coverage when out-of-state or out-of-network for a clinical education experience.
- All students must maintain a copy of their current health insurance card in Exxat throughout the duration of time in the program. If a student's insurance changes, he/she/they must update their health insurance information in Exxat with a copy of the new insurance card.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Students will comply with Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations including protecting health information in any format during all clinical education experiences.
- Students complete training on HIPAA and FERPA during their first semester in the academic program and submit certificates of completion in and Exxat.
- A student's academic standing cannot be shared with individuals outside of the academic program without the written consent from the student.
- Students may not use proprietary information from their clinical sites without permission from the clinical site.
- Clinical education sites may require students to complete additional HIPAA and/or FERPA training specific to their facility during a clinical education experience.

COMPLIANCE AND ONBOARDING REQUIREMENTS FOR CLINICAL EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

Students are expected to complete **ALL** compliance and onboarding requirements associated with clinical education by the stated deadline. **Communication is critical for success.** The release of any specific compliance or onboarding documentation regarding the student will require the student to complete a FERPA release for the specific clinical education site.

- **Drug Screen:**
 - By SHP Policy, students are required to complete a drug screen prior to placement in a clinical education experience. Students are responsible for any associated expense.
 - The DCE will provide students with information on the provider vendor to complete this requirement.
 - Students may be required by a clinical education site to complete a drug screen specific to the clinical facility. It is the student's responsibility to make these arrangements when required and pay associated expenses.
- **Criminal Background Check:**
 - By SHP Policy, students are required to complete a criminal background check prior to placement in a clinical education experience. Students are responsible for any associated expense.

- The DCE will provide students with information on the provider vendor to complete this requirement.
- Students may be required by a clinical education site to complete a criminal background check specific to the clinical faculty. It is the student's responsibility to make these arrangements when required and pay associated expenses.
- **Immunizations:**
 - Students are engaged in clinical education each semester of the program; therefore, immunizations should always be up to date. UAB Student Health will send reminders directly to students regarding their immunizations. Please [use this link to the UAB Student Health webpage](#) for specific requirements for clinical students.
 - Students may be required to show proof of these items in the clinical education site prior to their start date.
 - Currently, clinical education sites require annual TB testing to confirm that students/volunteers are negative for TB. Therefore, the Department of Physical Therapy will continue to require annual TB testing to comply with these clinic requirements.
 - Clinical education sites will communicate requirements related to the COVID vaccine with the DCE. These requirements may change based on the status of public health policies. UAB supports the decisions of our clinical education sites/partners. The DCE will communicate these requirements with students as needed.
 - Students with a COVID vaccine exemption may be required to follow different policies from the clinical education site regarding personal protective equipment, COVID testing, and social distancing. Students are required to follow the clinical education site policies regarding these requirements. Failure to comply with these requirements will result in removal from the clinic.
 - Clinical education sites are not required to accept students with COVID vaccine exemptions.
 - All students, regardless of their COVID vaccination status, must meet all clinical education requirements for graduation.
- **CPR Training:**
 - Students are required to successfully complete CPR training in their first and sixth semesters. This training is arranged by the School of Health Professions (SHP) and consists of two components: 1) online, asynchronous learning modules and 2) skill-based competency training. Information regarding this training will be provided by the DCE.
 - Students must have current CPR certification throughout all clinical education experiences.
- **Clinical education site training/orientation:**
 - Many clinical education sites have their own requirements that students must complete prior to the start of a clinical education experience.

- The DCE will facilitate the completion of these clinic requirements, when known, directly with the student for each clinical education course.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)**
 - Students will complete education and training on appropriate donning/doffing of PPE and hand hygiene during the first semester in the program.
 - Students are required to comply with clinic rules and regulations regarding PPE. Failure to follow clinics guidelines may result in removal from a clinical education experience.
 - Students may be required to complete an N95 Fit Test prior to the start of their clinical education experience. The cost of the N95 Fit Testing will be the responsibility of the student. The DCE will communicate this requirement directly to the student, when known.
 - Students are responsible for obtaining their own PPE for clinic if the clinic does not provide PPE. Students who cannot obtain PPE should request assistance from the DCE and Program Director via email.
- **Establishment of a New Clinical Site by Students**
 - Students may not initiate direct contact with clinics of interest by any means at any time.
 - Students may send emails with information requesting a potential new clinical site to the DCE.
 - If a potential clinical education site initiates contact with a student, the student should redirect the clinic to communicate with the DCE.
 - The DCE will follow the specific standard outlined in the UAB Department of Physical Therapy's procedures for selection of a new site for clinical education. Students should be aware the process can take greater than one year, and not all clinics are interested in partnering for clinical education purposes.
- **Procedures to Assign Part-Time Integrated Clinical Education (ICE) Experiences:**
 - During semesters 1-4 of the program, the Associate Director of Clinical Education (ADCE) makes all assignments of the integrated clinical education experiences. During semesters 5-6 of the program, the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) makes all assignments of the integrated clinical education experiences.

- **Graduation Requirements for Full-Time Clinical Education Experiences**

The UAB Department of Physical Therapy strives to assign students to clinical education sites that provide structured and varied learning experiences. In aggregate, these clinical education experiences should address comprehensive patient/client management across the human lifespan and the spectrum of patient/client care. Students can travel throughout all 50 states for their clinical education experiences, provided an established relationship exists with the clinic for that purpose.

The following requirements must be met during full-time clinical education experiences to ensure students receive learning opportunities in **fully bedded environments** (e.g., acute care, long-term acute care, skilled nursing facilities, or inpatient rehabilitation) and **outpatient environments** (e.g., school system, private practice, hospital-owned outpatient, early intervention, home health).

Students must complete **one acute care experience, one musculoskeletal experience, and one neurological experience** in either an adult or pediatric setting, ensuring exposure to key areas of contemporary physical therapist practice.

- **Procedures to Select Clinics for Full-Time Clinical Education Experiences**

Students are provided an opportunity to communicate their personal interests and needs for their learning experiences during full-time clinical education. The following outlines the global process for selection:

- **Students may only choose from clinical education sites that offered placements.** Students who request placement at a site where they have previously observed, volunteered fewer than 20 hours, or held short-term or informal roles must **carefully consider the potential for real or perceived bias** in the evaluation process. It is the student's responsibility to disclose this history to the DCE and discuss whether such a placement is appropriate in order to maintain fairness, objectivity, and professional boundaries within the clinical education experience.
- After reviewing information in Exxat, discussions with the DCE/ADCE, and careful self-reflection, students submit their requests via the Student Preference Form to provide input on their clinical education site(s) for the upcoming calendar year.
- A computerized program randomly assigns students to clinic(s) with consideration of students' requests via the Student Preference Form. The DCE/ADCE have the authority to determine placements, ensuring that graduation requirements are met and that there is alignment between clinical education sites and student learners. This authority is intended to guarantee compliance and uphold the integrity of the clinical education process.
- Students review clinical assignment(s) and will be provided a brief opportunity to trade for open clinical placements.
- Students review their final clinic assignments and may appeal placements, as needed. Students will sign receipt of their assignments.

If a clinical education site is unable to confirm a student or needs to cancel a placement, the DCE or ADCE will communicate with the student to determine a suitable replacement clinical education site.

Once a student is confirmed at the clinical education site, the student cannot request a change. Students cannot contact the clinical education site until notified by the DCE or ADCE to initiate contact.

- **Incident Reports**

In the event of any accident or injury at the clinical education site involving the student or patient/client who is receiving care from a student, the student should follow the clinical education site's policies and procedures for reporting the incident. **In addition, the**

student should complete the UAB Incident Report Form posted on Canvas and email it to the DCE/ADCE. Students should maintain HIPAA compliance when completing an incident report on a patient/client. They should list the name of the clinical education site in lieu of the patient's information. **Students must phone the DCE/ADCE the day of the accident/injury to describe the incident and notify the DCE/ADCE of what, if any, consequences occurred due to the incidence.**

- **Evaluation of Student Performance During Integrated Clinical Education Experiences**

During semesters 1-4, at the end of each Integrated Clinical Education experience, students will complete self-assessments on their performance and receive written feedback from their preceptor after each ICE experience. In addition, students will complete reflection assignments. **The ADCE is responsible for assigning the grades for all Integrated Clinical Education experiences during semester 1-4.**

During semesters 5-6, assignments related to part-time Integrated Clinical Education experiences will be found on the academic syllabus and the Canvas course shell.

- **Evaluation of Student Performance in Full-Time Clinical Education (PT 770 Series)**

All clinical education courses (PT 770 series) are pass (P), fail (F), or incomplete (I). **The DCE/ACCE is responsible for assigning the final course grade for all clinical education courses (PT 770 series).** The course director will determine the grade based on feedback from the CI(s) and the student on student's performance using a standardized tool, discussions with the CI/SCCE, as needed, and review of assignments associated with each clinical education course as outlined in the specific course syllabus.

- Student performance problems:

- If a CI reports significant concerns about a student's knowledge, skills, or professional behaviors, the student may be subject to remediation, removal from the clinic, and/or dismissal from the program as evaluated on an individualized basis. The CI, in consultations with the DCE/ADCE, may recommend specific objectives for remediation and the student may be placed on clinical probation.
 - In some cases, students may be removed from the clinic for academic and/or non-academic remediation. In these situations, after successful remediation, students will be required to demonstrate competency of knowledge, skills, and behaviors either in the same clinic facility or a different facility of the same type of assignment. Students will need to demonstrate definite improvement in stated objectives to successfully complete the clinical education course. The length of the assignment may be extended for remediation; thus, this may result in a delay in the graduation date. Such decisions are based on the objectives and student

performance determined by the DCE/ADCE in consultation with the clinical faculty involved.

- If the student fails to successfully complete the course objectives, they will fail the clinical education course receiving an “F” (Fail) with no opportunity for remediation and are subject to dismissal from the program.
- If a student’s performance has compromised ethics or the safety of themselves, colleagues, and/or the patient/client, the clinical faculty and DCE/ADCE may determine that such a flagrant violation prohibits remediation. In this case, the student will receive a “F” (fail) with no opportunity for remediation and are subject to dismissal from the program.
- Clinical education sites have a right to dismiss a student from a clinical education experience prior to the completion of the clinical education experience for academic or non-academic reasons by communicating with the DCE/ADCE.
- Failure of any clinical education course may be appealed in the same manner as any other academic course.

- **Professional Behaviors and Personal Leadership**

Students are expected to demonstrate interest, ability, and aptitude for responsibilities in physical therapy regardless of practice setting. Unsatisfactory conduct may be considered grounds for probation or dismissal. Disregard for patients/client’s welfare, disinterest in clinical education as shown by tardiness or unexcused absences, failure to cooperate in clinic assignments and discussions, and dishonesty are examples of behaviors that can be interpreted as lack of interest and are considered unprofessional. **This is an especially important issue during all clinical education coursework.**

- **Sexual Harassment**

The University of Alabama at Birmingham is firmly committed to providing an environment that is free of discrimination, including sexual harassment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when (1) submission to such conduct is made, either explicitly or implicitly, a term or condition of an individual’s employment or academic evaluation, (2) submission to, or rejection of, such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment or academic decisions affecting such individual, or (3) such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with an individual’s work performance or of creating an intimidating or hostile working or education environment. Such behavior may violate federal law and/or give rise to personal liability for the results of such behavior. Consequently, UAB prohibits all forms of sexual harassment and will investigate complaints thoroughly and with the utmost seriousness.

A student who believes that he/she/they have been sexually harassed should report the incident promptly to the DCE and/or DPT Program Director.

Sexual harassment by a student is considered nonacademic misconduct, and the alleged student offender will be subject to the disciplinary process contained in the *Doctor of Physical Therapy: Student Handbook*.

- **Technical Standards for Physical Therapists**

Fundamental tasks, behaviors, and abilities that are necessary to successfully complete the academic and clinical requirements of the program and to satisfy licensure/certification requirements have been outlined in the *Doctor of Physical Therapy: Student Handbook*. Students requesting disability accommodation must do so in advance by using the policy outlined in the *Doctor of Physical Therapy: Student Handbook*. Requests for accommodations of known disabilities should be completed prior to placement when the Student Preference Request Form is submitted.

- **Conflict Resolution**

- If feasible, students should attempt to resolve issues with the preceptor, CI, and/or SCCE utilizing the DCE/ADCE as a resource as needed.
- The student has the right to appeal decisions made by either the clinical faculty (preceptor/CI or SCCE) or DCE/ADCE using the following procedure:
 - The student will submit a dated, written statement outlining the concern(s) to the DCE/ADCE.
 - The DCE/ADCE will investigate, as deemed appropriate, and respond to the student within seven (7) working days.
 - If the student is dissatisfied with the decision of the DCE/ADCE, they must notify the DCE/ADCE of their intent to appeal to the Program Director.
- Appeals regarding grades should be handled according to the SHP Academic Appeals process. Additional information on this process is available in the *Doctor of Physical Therapy: Student Handbook*.

- **Technology**

- **It is the student's responsibility to check and respond to their UAB email account daily (Monday – Friday).** This is the primary mode of communication while students are away from campus. There may be times when communication is very time sensitive.
- Students are responsible for accessing Canvas, the online learning platform to access resources and assignments associated with clinical education courses.
- Students are responsible for accessing Exxat, the learning management system for clinical education for compliance related items, information about clinics, and learning activities associated with clinical education courses.

- **Patient's Rights**

Students must legally identify themselves as a student physical therapist and inform the patient/client that the patient/client has the right to decline physical therapy services from a student without risk of negative consequence.

- **Clinical Site Visits**

The DCE/ADCE or assigned faculty delegate may conduct a site visit either on-site or via telecommunication. Site visits may be requested by the clinical site and/or the student. The DCE will rotate site visits based on frequency of use or requests with every attempt made to complete a site visit to each clinic within a seven-year rotating cycle.

- **Social Networking Policy**

Even with strong privacy settings, it is important that students avoid written or photographic posts about your clinical education experiences. Students are to refrain from asking the preceptor/CI to "friend" or "follow" them on social media. This places the preceptor/CI and student in an awkward situation with personal information about each other. If the student and preceptor/CI mutually decide to "friend" or "follow" each other at the end of a clinical education experience, this is their personal choice. Students should consider what they post on social media sites and recognize the lack of control they have with how their posts are used. Many employers will view these sites which may influence the student's hirability.

- **Other**

- Students shall abide by the professional and ethical guidelines set forth by the American Physical Therapy Association. Ethics violations are serious and may result in failure of the clinical education course and dismissal from the program.
- Each student should have a copy of the *Doctor of Physical Therapy: Student Handbook* available at all times during clinical education experiences.
- Students must successfully complete all required academic coursework prior to participating in scheduled clinical assignments.
- **Due to the nature of clinical education, related policies are subject to change. The most current policies are available on Canvas within the course shell of the clinical education course in question. It is the responsibility of the student to review the most current policies prior to each clinical education course.**