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POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

General Description

The clinical internship portion of the curriculum consists of 34 weeks of full time clinical experience. Clinical Internship I is a 5 week rotation occurring at the end of the first year. Clinical Internship II consists of a 5 week clinical experience in the middle of the second year. Clinical Internships III, IV, and V are presented in series after the completion of the didactic portion of the program and are each 8 weeks in length.

Academic Standing

A student must be in good standing with the University to attend clinical education.
Eligibility

Students on academic probation may not be allowed to participate in any clinical internship until the terms of the academic probation are met. This may result in a delay in the student’s graduation date.

Selection of Sites

On March 1st of each year, all clinical sites receive a commitment form requesting slots for the next calendar year. Based on this information, the students are presented with a list of available slots prior to each lottery. Students need to recognize that clinical sites frequently affiliate with a number of University programs and must allocate their resources in a way that best suits their needs. Therefore, our clinical facilities are not always able to offer slots for each internship.

Student Assignment

Students are assigned to clinical facilities by a lottery system. A set of random numbers is generated by the computer, and then ranked in order. During the first academic semester, students receive their lottery numbers, based on this ranking, for Clinical Internships I-V.

Students may negotiate with each other to exchange numbers prior to the actual process. This allows students who may have a keen desire to be at the top of the selection process for a specific internship to maneuver them into place to get a top choice. Any request to change lottery numbers should be given to the DCE by e-mail prior to the lottery.

A list of confirmed affiliation slots, with the designated type, is given to the students approximately 2 weeks prior to the selection process. Students are encouraged to research the variety of opportunities available at the site, size of facility, size and qualifications of staff, and types of patients who are treated in that facility by reviewing the site information books in the Resource Room. Students should keep in mind that staffing patterns, types of patients treated, etc. may have changed since the completion of the Clinical Site Information Form.

Students should select internship sites that provide a range of experiences across the continuum of care and lifespan. Students are required to complete an inpatient, outpatient and a rehabilitation affiliation during one of their five internships (5, 5 or 8 weeks each), IF enough slots of each type of internship are available. Students may not do an internship in a facility in which they are currently or have been recently employed.

All students are required to be present at the time of the selection, or forfeit their positions. During the selection process, each student indicates, in order of ranking, his/her choice of assignment for each type of internship. The DCE reserves the right to make assignments due to the special needs of students.

Following the selection process, the DCE compiles the selection list, and distributes it to the students. Students then have 2-3 days in which to request a change in assignment prior to the final list being distributed to the CCCEs. All requests for changes must be submitted to the DCE
by e-mail and must include the student’s name, requested change and lottery number. Once final assignments have been made and the facilities have been notified, NO further changes will be made.

Under no circumstances should students contact a facility and request an assignment. Any contact with potential clinical sites is to be initiated by the DCE.

Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI)

The CPI is an electronic assessment tool for physical therapy student’s designed by the APTA to provide consistency in assessing student clinical skills.

The CPI is the mechanism by which UTHSC and clinical sites evaluate student clinical performance both at midterm and at the conclusion of the clinical internship. Both the student PT and clinical instructor at midterm and final electronically sign the CPI.

The DCE reviews all CPIs at midterm and final to ensure progression of the SPT at the clinical site. For concerns with clinical education the DCE, CI and student will work together to development a plan to address those concerns.

Grading

The Department of Physical Therapy has a Progress and Promotions Committee charged with the responsibility of monitoring each student's clinical and academic performance throughout the curriculum. The committee is composed of the teaching faculty for the term during which students' grades are being considered and is chaired by the physical therapy program director. The committee meets during or at the end of the academic semester, and after reviewing each student's progress, makes recommendations to the dean of the college relative to promotion, probation, or termination for all students. Determination of the student’s grade for clinical internships is made by the DCE and is based on the clinical faculty’s comments, the Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI), and the satisfactory completion of additional assignments when applicable (see Course Syllabus for specific grading criteria for the CPI). The student will receive a grade of:

Pass - if student performance is evaluated as "Satisfactory" or "In Need of Improvement". Any areas that have been designated in need of improvement are considered correctable with continued experience in regularly scheduled clinical education.

Fail - if student performance is evaluated as "Unsatisfactory". Any areas that have been designated as unsatisfactory are considered correctable only with extra classroom and/or clinical instruction.

Any concerns will be discussed with the student. Any unsatisfactory student evaluations will result in an individualized plan for the student determined by the DCE with input from the Program Chair and program faculty. The options available to remediate with a passing grade,
include, but are not limited to: 1) additional time at that facility. 2) An additional clinical assignment of an appropriate length. 3) A successful remedial program followed by another clinical assignment of appropriate length. Any extra instruction will be arranged by the DCE. If unsatisfactory performance by a student in clinical education occurs, graduation of the student from the University of Tennessee's physical therapy program may be delayed until the student meets established criteria for clinical competence. In addition, a student may, upon the recommendation of the committee and approval of the dean, be terminated from the program with unsatisfactory performance in the clinic.

Each student is encouraged to read the entire section of "Progress and Promotions" which appears in the UT Center Scope.

Attendance

Attendance is required in all clinical education sessions. Students are expected to follow the facility’s work schedule regarding hours worked, including holidays and weekends. Facility policy will also determine the student’s schedule in the event of inclement weather. Students who miss clinic days due to illness will need to make those days up in a way that fits the clinic’s schedule.

Students are to notify their CI of an illness related absence prior to the start of the day or as soon as telephone contact can be established. In addition, students are required to notify the DCE by email or voice mail of any absence. An unexcused absence may be grounds for dismissal from the Program.

Dress Code

The student's clinical uniform must be neat and professional in appearance, safe, comfortable, non-binding, and acceptable to clinical educators. It should identify students as health professionals and provide a degree of uniformity to the students' appearance. The uniform is to be worn during all phases of clinical education, unless stipulated otherwise by an affiliating center.

GENERAL Students are instructed to follow the dress code of the facility in which they have been assigned. Students are expected to avoid extremes in makeup, hairstyles, perfumes, aftershave lotions, and nail polish. Students may be asked to remove pierced jewelry or cover tattoos as required by the facility. Jeans are not permitted.

Hair Hair must be neat and well groomed. Long hair should be tied back or pinned up away from face and shoulders.

Fingernails Fingernails must be short and well manicured. Acrylic nails are not permitted. Clear polish is allowed.
Jewelry  Jewelry should be kept to a minimum. Name tags, should be worn at all times. A dependable water resistant watch with either a sweep second hand or digital seconds indicator is required.

Shoes  Shoes should be closed toe and heel with non-skid soles. No sandals or high heels are permitted.

Transportation/Lodging

The student is expected to provide for all expenses incurred during all phases of clinical education (e.g., travel, housing, food). The student is also responsible for making housing arrangements during out of town internships. The facility and/or the DCE may be able to provide information or make recommendations regarding housing options.

Confidentiality

Students must abide by the facility’s policies regarding confidentiality as well as the APTA Guide for Professional Conduct as described under Principal 2.3:

A. “Information relating to the physical therapist/patient relationship is confidential and may not be communicated to a third party not involved in that patient’s care without the prior consent of the patient, subject to applicable law.

B. Information derived from peer review shall be held confidential by the reviewer unless the physical therapist who was reviewed consents to the release of the information.

C. A physical therapist may disclose information to appropriate authorities when it is necessary to protect the welfare of an individual or the community or when required by law. Such disclosure shall be in accordance with applicable law.”

D. Social Media sites: Any disclosure of patient related information on social media sites (i.e. Facebook, You Tube, twitter, MySpace etc.) will result in immediate dismissal of the clinical.

HIPAA Privacy and Security Combined Policies

All students must complete and sign the University’s online HIPPA privacy and security combined training course. The course includes:

Medicare Compliance Training
Billing Compliance update 2007
HIPAA, Law, Understanding HIPAA and Living with HIPAA
Sexual Harassment Avoiding Training
Social Media

Students should conduct themselves in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct as outlined in the Centerscope, pages 107-119. Guidelines regarding the use of social media for the classroom, laboratory, and clinical setting are as follows:

1. unless it is part of an approved in-class assignment, students are not to access or post information on social networking sites during lecture, lab, or clinical internship experiences.
2. professionalism should extend to social networking sites and other user-generated media. Do not mention professors, clinical instructors or colleagues in a negative manner. Example: “Professor ABC is a terrible lecturer. Sitting here in class is such a waste of time.” OR “My clinical instructor had me treat all of her patients today while she just sat there.”
2. photographs or video taken during class, lab or clinic should not be posted on social networking sites.
3. posting information about, or images of, a patient or research subject is strictly prohibited. This includes references to family, employment, relatives, conditions, locations of treatment, or any circumstances surrounding their situation. This could potentially violate patient privacy and HIPAA guidelines.
4. discussing exam information prior to all students completing an exam could lead to an Honor Code violation. Example: “The test was pretty easy, there were no questions concerning joint-play.”
5. the use of technology (cell phone, internet) to threaten, intimidate, ridicule, humble, insult, or harass someone is known as cyber-bullying and must be reported to the College Dean or Student Conduct Officer in the Office of Equity and Diversity.

Failure to adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and guidelines for social media may result in dismissal from the Program.

Liability Insurance

Professional liability insurance is provided to all students of the University of Tennessee through the Granite State Insurance Company. A Certificate of Insurance is provided each year to all clinical internship sites.

The University of Tennessee is covered under a blanket policy as outlined by Tennessee State law:

“The University of Tennessee is self-insured under the provisions of the Tennessee Claims Commission Act, T.C.A. 9-8-301, et seq., which provides for a limited waiver of the State's sovereign immunity in specified cases, up to $300,000 per claimant and $1,000,000 per occurrence. Any liability of The University of Tennessee for damages, losses, or costs, arising out of or related to acts performed by the University under this contract is governed by the provisions of said Act.”
Health Insurance

All students are required to have health insurance and must carry proof of that insurance with them to their clinical sites.

Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Control

1. Training

Students receive information and training related to bloodborne pathogens and infection control procedures as part of their academic education. Training is provided during the first academic semester before students begin affiliations in clinical facilities.

The training programs, with annual updates to all students and faculty engaged in clinical practice, include information related to:

a. the Bloodborne Pathogens Standard
b. epidemiology and symptoms of bloodborne diseases
c. modes of transmission of bloodborne pathogens
d. the exposure control plan for the Department of Physical Therapy
e. appropriate methods for recognizing tasks and other activities that may involve exposure to blood and other potentially infectious materials
f. use and limitations of methods that will prevent or reduce exposure
g. types, proper use, location, removal, handling, decontamination, and disposal of personal protective equipment
h. basis for selection of personal protective equipment
i. hepatitis B vaccine, including information on its efficacy, safety, method of administration, benefits of being vaccinated, and that the vaccine and vaccination will be offered through UHS [University Health Services]
j. appropriate actions to take and persons to contact in an emergency involving blood or other potentially infectious materials
k. procedure to follow if an exposure incident occurs
l. post-exposure evaluation and follow-up
m. biohazard signs and labels and/or color coding

2. Recordkeeping

Training records for faculty and students include dates of training sessions, contents or summary of training sessions, names and qualifications of persons conducting the training, and names and job titles of all persons attending the training sessions. Training records are maintained for three years from the date on which training occurred.

3. Student Exposure

In compliance with the Exposure Control Plan published in the Federal Register (Volume 56, No. 235, 12/06/91) and OSHA guidelines, the following procedures
should be followed at the clinical education site if a student is exposed to bloodborne pathogens:

a. Evaluation of the student should be done at the institution where the exposure took place. The expense of the evaluation is covered by the student health insurance.

b. The Center Coordinator of Clinical Education should immediately notify the Director of Clinical Education of the student's exposure.

c. Prophylaxis and follow-up for the student will be provided through University Health Service

CPR

All students must be certified in CPR - Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers through the American Heart Association prior to Clinical Internship I, and their certification must remain current until all clinical internships are completed.

Student Information Form (SIF)

All students prior to the CE affiliation complete a SIF. This form is mailed to the clinical site by the DCE. A clinical site may also request documents of a student’s physical status, immunizations, criminal background check, and drug screening and or other special documents. These documents are provided to the CCCE or CI as requested.

Health Requirements

All students are required to be immunized against the Hepatitis B virus and to have an annual skin test for Tuberculosis. In addition, students must provide evidence of: 2 MMR vaccines given after one year of age, polio vaccine, 2 varicella vaccines or + titer, and tetanus every 10 years or a booster.

Criminal background checks/drug screening

All students are subjected to a criminal background check prior to acceptance in the program. Students are then required to have a criminal background check yearly. Students may also be required to submit to a drug test, fingerprinting and or proof of physical exam as required by the Facility. The cost of testing is generally billed to the student.

Pregnancy

If a student becomes pregnant, she should notify the DCE and the CI as soon as possible in order to prevent any complications and to safeguard the health of the mother and the baby.
Student Evaluation of Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction

Students are required to complete an evaluation of their clinical experience and clinical instruction after each clinical internship. This document should be reviewed and signed by their Clinical Instructor and returned to the DCE.

Development of New Clinical Sites

The Program continuously seeks to develop new clinical sites to provide its students with a variety of clinical experiences. In order to be considered, the facility is asked to complete a Clinical Site Information Form and the DCE will make a site visit to the facility. If the facility meets the criteria as outlined by the APTA Guidelines for Clinical Sites, a recommendation is presented to the Faculty for a decision. In addition, a signed Letter of Agreement must be instituted between the University and the Facility. All contact with the facility under consideration is to be conducted by the DCE.

Withdrawal

The University or Facility may request withdrawal or dismissal from the clinic of any student whose performance record or conduct is considered unsatisfactory.

Generic Abilities

Prior to Clinical Internships I and II, all students are required to complete a self-assessment using The Generic Abilities assessment tool developed by the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This assessment is to be discussed with the student’s faculty advisor.

Professional Behaviors

Students are expected to demonstrate professional behaviors throughout all their clinical experiences. We teach students that the APTA code of ethics http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About_US/Policies/HOD/Ethics/Codeofethics.pdf#search=%2codeofethic%22 and APTA Core Values http://www.apta.org/uploadedFiles/APTAorg/About_Us/Policies/BOD/Judicial/ProfessionalisminPT.pdf#search=%22core are essential to success in the clinic and in the profession.
Clinical Education Checklist

Students may take the following items with them for each clinical assignment:

• Proof of Health Insurance
• Proof of CPR certification
• Documentation of health requirements
• Criminal Background Check
• Additional instructions specific to the internship