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Course Description: Five weeks of supervised clinical experience in selected physical therapy settings with emphasis on developing professional behaviors in the clinical environment. Observation in all areas of patient care and participation in developing physical therapy skills in areas in which the student has completed the required coursework.

Course Prerequisites: Successful completion of Winter/Spring 1 DPT courses.

Course Organization: Five weeks of full-time clinical education experience (200 clinical hours, 2 credit hours). Students will achieve course objectives with on-site supervision from one or more clinical instructors (CIs) who are employed by the facility. Teaching methods and learning experiences are tailored by the opportunities available at the facility and type of clinical setting.

Required Materials: Student Clinical Educational Manual, APTA Physical Therapist Student Evaluation: Clinical Experience and Clinical Instruction, APTA Physical Therapist Clinical Performance Instrument (CPI) Web. No texts are required for this course but all previous textbooks and notes from the academic curriculum are recommended. Other readings, appropriate to the patient population or clinical site, may be assigned by the clinical instructor.

Grading: Pass/Fail

The DCE determines the student’s grade for clinical internships. The grade is based on the point system, marks on the CPI rating scale, written comments on the CPI by the CI, as well as communication with the CI via phone calls, site visits and e-mails regarding student performance. The clinical instructor evaluates the student performance at midterm and final using the CPI. In addition, students complete a self-assessment at midterm and final using the electronic version of the CPI. Students must review their self-assessment with their CI. Students complete an evaluation of the clinical internship experience and clinical instruction, and submit these documents to the DCE by the stipulated deadline. See detailed information regarding the grading process in the student Clinical Education Manual.

Pass: At the completion of this internship, all the following conditions must be met:
1) On the CPI, no Significant Concerns boxes are checked or described on “red-flag” items (1-4 & 7).
2) By the final evaluation period, overall ratings of student performance on the CPI are graded between “Beginning Performance” and “Advanced Beginning Performance” or above.
3) Student must demonstrate improved performance from midterm evaluation to final evaluation period as indicated through improved markings on the CPI rating scale and/or descriptions in the comments section.
4) The CI’s written comments on the CPI must reflect satisfactory student performance for the student’s current level of academic preparation.
5) Student has submitted all assignments, in the required manner, by the published deadlines.
6) Student will achieve at least 83% of the allotted points for this course.

Attendance Requirements: 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 or family emergency will need to make those days up in a way that fits the clinic’s schedule.
If an emergency or illness arises which necessitates missing a clinic day the student must notify the clinical instructor or CCCE prior to the start of the day or until phone contact (NOT VOICEMAIL) can be established. In addition, the student must notify the DCE of an absence via voice mail or e-mail at the start of the day.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: Following the completion of the internship, with supervision and/or guidance from the clinical instructor, the student will:

1. Consistently demonstrate professional behavior in the clinical environment in all situations.
2. Consistently practice in a safe manner that minimizes risk to patient, self, and others in all situations.
3. Practice in a manner consistent with APTA Code of Ethics, and with legal practice standards.
4. Appropriately adapt delivery of physical therapy care with respect to individual and cultural differences.
5. Seek constructive feedback and assist the clinical instructor with planning a strategy or action plan to address performance that is in need of improvement.
6. Maintain appropriate documentation adhering to the policies of the clinical facility.
7. Perform a simple physical therapy examination in a competent manner.
8. Demonstrate proficiency in designing a physical therapy plan of care that is patient-centered and evidence-based.
9. Perform simple physical therapy interventions including patient/client and family instruction in a proficient manner.
10. Apply current didactic knowledge and skills to patient examinations and interventions.
11. Communicate effectively verbally and nonverbally, in a professional and timely manner.
12. Demonstrate awareness of strategies to manage time and resources effectively in the clinic setting.