OSU-Cascades Doctor of Physical Therapy Program
Technical Standards and Professional Behaviors
for Admission, Promotion and Graduation

The Doctor of Physical Therapy (DPT) program at OSU-Cascades is committed to developing outstanding physical therapists from diverse backgrounds who demonstrate effective communication and critical thinking skills and who integrate evidence into practice.

The Doctor of Physical Therapy program at OSU-Cascades is a rigorous academic and clinical program that places specific requirements and demands on the students enrolled. An objective of this program is to prepare graduates to enter a variety of employment settings and to render entry-level care to a wide spectrum of individuals. In order to perform as a physical therapist, an individual must be able to meet certain minimum Technical Standards and exhibit minimum Professional Behaviors. 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. Students must also be in compliance with legal and ethical standards as set forth by the APTA Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice.

These technical standards enable each graduate to subsequently enter clinical practice as an entry-level physical therapist. Students must be able to meet these minimum standards, with or without reasonable accommodation, for successful completion of the program. In addition, these standards meet the expectations of the program’s accrediting agency, the Commission on Accreditation of Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE). Compliance with the program’s technical standards does not guarantee a student’s eligibility for the licensure examination.

Individuals who are interested in applying for the Doctor of Physical Therapy program should review these standards prior to completing the application. The Doctor of Physical Therapy program, as a part of Oregon State University, is committed to the principle of equal opportunity. The college does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, marital status, disability, and disabled veteran or Vietnam-era veteran status. When requested, the college will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified students with disabilities. We encourage students to engage in a conversation early with the Disability Access Services office and the DPT program to discuss what accommodations might be possible given the program requirements. Contact information can be found at the end of this document.

Technical Standards and Professional Behaviors

Observation and Sensory Skills
The student must be able to demonstrate the functional use of vision, hearing, and somatic systems. They must be possess adequate visual, auditory, and tactile competencies in order to respond efficiently and effectively in an emergency situation.

Examples include, but are not limited to the ability to: use vision, hearing, and tactile means for acquisition of information; observe and acquire information presented through lectures, laboratory
dissection of cadavers, lecture and laboratory demonstrations, and patients in the clinic; observe a patient’s body, movement, and facial expressions accurately at a distance and close at hand, noting nonverbal as well as verbal signals; read digital and waveform readings and other graphic images on screen and print to help determine a patient’s condition; palpate pulses and physical structures and detect abnormalities or changes; perform visual and tactile evaluation for areas of inflammation and signs of disease and malfunction; auscultate and perform an auditory assessment of heart rhythm, lung sounds, and gait; and assess the presence and degree of edema through visual and tactile modalities. The student must have sufficient position, movement, and balance sensation to assist and safely guard/protect patients with movement dysfunctions.

**Communication skills**
Physical Therapy education presents exceptional challenges in the volume and breadth of required reading and the necessity to impart information to others. Students must be able to utilize effective communication with peers, faculty, patients, families, caregivers, and other health providers. Communication includes: speech, language, reading, writing, and computer literacy.

Examples include but are not limited to the ability to: communicate efficiently and effectively in English in both oral and written form, using both lay and medical terms, to different stakeholders; effectively utilize resources to communicate in non-English languages; complete assignments (reading, written, and oral presentation), search literature, and maintain written records in a timely manner; express ideas clearly and freely in group discussions; give and receive feedback; listen empathetically and develop rapport; recognize, correctly interpret, and respond to non-verbal communications of self and others.

**Motor/Psychomotor skills**
Students must possess sufficient motor function to execute the movements and skills required to provide safe and effective patient/client management.

Examples include but are not limited to the ability to: execute gross- and fine-motor movements, manual dexterity, and kinesthetic awareness required to safely provide care and treatment to patients in all health settings; elicit information from the patient examination, by palpation, auscultation, tapping, and other evaluation motor functions; execute movements required to provide general and therapeutic care, including the coordination, balance, speed, and agility needed to assist and safely guard patients as they perform therapeutic activities such as walking or exercising; ability to lift and transfer patients; demonstrate coordination of both gross and fine muscular movement, equilibrium, and the integrated use of touch and vision. Candidates must have the physical strength to perform cardiopulmonary resuscitation and emergency treatment to patients; be able to frequently lift and/or move fifty pounds, and occasionally lift up to 100 pounds to facilitate safe patient transfers; be able to walk, bend, squat, stand and reach in all planes frequently throughout a work shift.

**Intellectual, Cognitive, Quantitative and Analytical Abilities**
To effectively solve problems, students must be able to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, integrate and synthesize information in a timely fashion.

Examples include but are not limited to the ability to: comprehend, interpret and analyze new information; reason and carry out evidence-based decision making; use critical thinking skills and problem solving to evaluate information from multiple sources and synthesize a plan of action; provide a reasoned explanation for likely therapy; thrive in a rigorous foundational and clinical science-based curriculum; recall and retain information in an efficient and timely manner; comprehend two and three
dimensional relationships and to understand and interpret graphs and spatial relationships of structures; identify and communicate the limits of their knowledge to others when appropriate.

**Behavioral and Social Attributes and Respect for Diversity**

Students must be capable of exhibiting the skills and behaviors required for the successful conduct of physical therapy in all environments, including respect for diversity. A student must be able to relate to patients, families, caregivers, and colleagues with honesty, integrity, and dedication in a non-discriminatory manner. Students must display appropriate sensitivity and respect for all social or cultural backgrounds and proactively seek ways to provide an inclusive environment that addresses unique patient needs. They must be able provide care without judgement of a patient’s personal choices or situation, and take into consideration the cultural norms and unique therapeutic needs/challenges of the patient.

Students must possess the psychological and emotional health and maturity required for the full utilization of their intellectual abilities, for the exercise of good judgment, for the prompt completion of all responsibilities inherent to diagnosis and care of patients, and for the development of mature, sensitive, and effective relationships with patients. They must perform effectively and display sound judgment while under stress. Students must be able to adapt to a changing environment, display flexibility, and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical management of patients. They must address disagreements with tact, accept constructive criticism, and adapt behavior. Students must demonstrate ethical behavior, moral reasoning, and cultural sensitivity.

**Professional Requirements**

Students must conduct themselves appropriately in all academic and clinical interactions both on and off campus, including abiding by University policies, the APTA Code of Ethics, and the APTA Guide for Professional Conduct.

Examples of professional requirements include but are not limited to: attending and participating in classes in the full-time DPT program, for 30 or more hours per week each academic quarter, including some evening and weekend commitments; timeliness in attendance and meeting deadlines for professional commitments, including both classes and clinical experiences; dressing appropriately for the educational setting; participating in both “therapist” and “patient” roles during didactic coursework and labs, which will necessitate the exposure and palpation of various parts of the body in order to learn and demonstrate curricular knowledge; complying with clinical education site schedules, dress codes, and other site policies during clinical rotations; seeking assistance and following supervision in a timely manner; accepting responsibility and responding appropriately to constructive feedback; demonstrating integrity, responsibility, and tolerance; being truthful about background and qualifications; exercising sound judgment in the classroom and clinic; interacting courteously, fairly, and professionally with individuals from diverse backgrounds; protecting the confidentiality of patient information consistent with applicable law.

In order to facilitate clinical rotations, criminal background checks are required annually. Students with criminal records may not be accepted at some or all clinical sites, depending on the nature of the offense. In addition, criminal histories may prevent a program graduate from obtaining state licensure. Please contact the program or the Physical Therapy Licensing Board in Oregon or the state in which you hope to practice to determine how offenses on a criminal record may influence the ability to complete the program, become licensed, and work in the field of physical therapy.
**Information about Accommodations**

The student is responsible for requesting reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation refers to ways in which the University can support the ability of students with disabilities to meet program requirements, including Technical Standards. Reasonable accommodation does not mean that students with disabilities will be exempt from meeting program requirements; it does mean that the DPT Program will work with students with disabilities to determine whether there are reasonable accommodations that will provide the student the ability to meet program requirements.

Candidates for admission with a disability are not required to disclose the specifics of their disabilities, but prior to the start of DPT classes, they must indicate that they can meet program requirements, with or without reasonable accommodation. Students who cannot meet program requirements, even with accommodation, are ineligible for admission. Any previously made offer of admission will be withdrawn. An offer of admission may be withdrawn if it becomes apparent that the student cannot meet program requirements even with accommodation, or that the accommodations needed are not reasonable and would cause undue hardship to the institution, or that fulfilling the functions would create a significant risk of harm to the health or safety of others.

**Questions**

If you have additional questions or who would like to discuss potential accommodations/program modifications, please contact the Program Director of the Doctor of Physical Therapy Program. For further information regarding services and resources for students with disabilities and/or request an accommodation, please contact Disability Access Services at Oregon State University, disability.services@oregonstate.edu or by phone at 541-737-4098

**Statement of Understanding**

I have received, read, and understand the OSU-Cascades Doctor of Physical Therapy Program Technical Standards Policy and the requirements to be a student physical therapist. I agree to notify the PT Program if I am unable to meet these technical standards, and understand that the inability to meet these technical standards, with or without a reasonable accommodation, can result in withdrawal, delay in progress, or dismissal from the program.

I understand that the information provided in this document is intended to serve as a guide regarding the physical, emotional, intellectual, and psychosocial expectations placed on a student physical therapist. I also understand that this document cannot include every conceivable action, task, ability, or behavior that may be expected of me upon graduation.

*By signing below, I agree to the statements above.*

NAME: ____________________________________________________________

SIGNATURE: ____________________________ DATE: ____________________