

## SOUTH TEXAS COLLEGE PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT PROGRAM

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### Student Standard 1001: TECHNICAL PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Revised July 2014

Technical Performance Standards are the essential functions which every STC PTA student is expected to perform for successful participation in the Program. These are necessary in order to provide physical therapy services in a safe, ethical, and legal manner. Students participating in the STC PTA Program are expected to demonstrate the essential functions listed below, with or without reasonable accommodation. These are applicable in classroom, laboratories, and clinical settings. The STC PTA Program uses independent clinical education sites that may or may not be able to offer the same reasonable accommodations that are made available by the College. Any student wishing to request reasonable accommodations due to a documented disability must initiate the process by contacting an ADA representative from the STC Office of Disability Support Services for information and procedures at (956) 872-2513. For additional information please refer to Student Accommodations Standard 1002.

1. **READ:** Students must be able to read and understand printed materials used in the classroom and health care settings such as textbooks, signs, medical supply packages, policy and procedure manuals and patient records.
2. **ARITHMATIC COMPETENCE:** Students must be able to read and understand columns of numbers and measurement marks, count rates, tell time, use measuring tools, write numbers in records, and calculate (add, subtract, multiply, divide) mathematical information such as fluid volumes, weights and measurements, and vital signs.
3. **CRITICAL THINKING:** Students must possess sufficient ability to:
  - comprehend and process information in a timely manner
  - acquire and apply information from classroom instruction, skills laboratory experiences, independent learning, and group projects
  - Prioritize multiple tasks, process information, and make decisions
  - collect, interpret, and assess data about patients
  - observe, measure, and interpret normal and abnormal patient responses to physical therapy interventions, and appropriately modify treatment interventions
  - act safely and ethically in the physical therapy lab and clinic
4. **COMMUNICATION:** Students must be able to:
  - communicate effectively in English in oral and written form with peers, instructors, patients, and other health care professionals
  - complete assignments and tests in both written and oral formats
  - give directions, explain procedures, give oral reports, speak on the telephone and interact with others
  - document care using appropriate terminology, accuracy, efficiency, and in a legible manner.
  - comprehend, interpret, and follow oral and written instructions
  - recognize, interpret, and respond to nonverbal behavior of self and others
  - interpret and communicate information regarding the status, safety, and rehabilitation of patients.

5. **BEHAVIORAL SOCIAL SKILLS:** Students must be able to:
- develop therapeutic relationships with patients and others
  - work in stressful situations with multiple patients and colleagues at the same time
  - interact appropriately with individuals of all ages, genders, races, socio-economic, religious, and cultural backgrounds
  - establish rapport and work effectively with peers, patients/clients, and instructors (ask advice, seek information, and share)
  - negotiate interpersonal conflicts
  - cope with the fast pace of class/lab/clinic, heavy workloads, classroom and/or patient demands, changes in schedule, motivate a sometimes discouraged patient and demonstrate patience and empathy with patients
  - focus attention on task, monitor own emotions, perform multiple responsibilities concurrently, deal with the unexpected, handle strong emotions (i.e. grief, revulsion), manage impulses
  - tolerate close physical contact with co-workers and sick or injured patients who may have multiple problems and diagnoses
  - cope with patients who may be terminally ill
  - exercise appropriate work ethics including the maintenance of confidentiality.
  - recognize and respond appropriately to potentially dangerous situations
  - maintain the emotional health and stability required to fully utilize intellectual capabilities, demonstrate good judgment, and render physical therapy treatment.
6. **FINE MOTOR:** Students must possess manual dexterity necessary to palpate muscles and/or bony prominences, pick up objects with hands, grasp small objects, write with pen or pencil, and squeeze fingers.
7. **MOTOR CONTROL:** Students need to be in good physical condition and have a moderate amount of strength in order to:
- Safely adjust, move, position, and lift patients and equipment
  - Safely assist and protect patients who are walking with and without assistive devices, exercising, or performing other activities
  - Independently adjust equipment parts, perform manual therapy techniques, and utilize PT equipment such as goniometers, grip gauges, wheelchairs and free weights
  - Provide for the patient's safety in all physical therapy activities
  - Reach arms above head and below waist, stoop/twist, stretch, bend, kneel, squat, push, pull, walk, sit, or crawl as the need arises; move quickly (respond to emergency) while maintaining safe posture/body mechanics
  - Perform bimanual activities easily
  - Obtain and maintain CPR certification (American Heart Association CPR for Healthcare Providers)
  - Use proper body mechanics for all skills related to physical therapy, and apply standard precautions when rendering physical therapy treatment
  - Possess the endurance necessary to perform 40 hour work weeks during clinical education courses
  - Stand and maintain balance during classroom or therapeutic procedures/ activities for long periods of time, and maintain a high energy level throughout the day

8. **VISUAL:** Students must be able to:
- read small numbers/scales and fine print on goniometers and other measuring devices accurately to ensure safe treatment
  - recognize and interpret facial expressions and body language
  - identify normal and abnormal postures and patterns of movement
  - discriminate differences and changes in skin and soft tissue
  - recognize a patient's physiological status
  - assess a patient's environment
  - read computer screens
  - recognize depths and use peripheral vision
9. **AUDITORY:** Students must be able to:
- recognize and respond to a normal speaking level sounds/verbal communication, auditory equipment timers, and alarms in an environment with a moderate level of background noise
  - effectively use equipment to assess blood pressure, pulse rate, and breath sounds
10. **SMELL:** Students must be able to detect odors from client, smoke, gases or noxious smells.
11. **TACTILE:** Students must be able to:
- feel vibrations (palpate pulses)
  - detect and assess changes or abnormalities in skin texture, skin temperature, muscle tone, and joint movement
  - detect environmental temperature (drafts, cold and hot)
  - adjust physical therapy equipment.
12. Students must have the ability to use computers and complete computer-based assignments.
13. Students must have the ability to complete tasks/ examinations within required time limits in the classroom, laboratory and in the clinical areas.