

# Clinical Education Program Policies and Procedures AY27

*University of Montana School of Physical Therapy & Rehabilitation Science*

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## I. Requirements for Enrollment

- A. Instructor approval is required for each clinical experience course.
- B. To be allowed to participate in the Clinical Education portion of the Physical Therapy curriculum, students must have proof of the following:
  - i. Current CPR certification training
  - ii. Health insurance
  - iii. MMR vaccination series or proof of immunity through a titer. All titers must include the lab report.
  - iv. Hepatitis B vaccination series and titer with lab report.
  - v. Tdap vaccination within the last 10 years
  - vi. Varicella (Chickenpox) vaccination series, or positive titer. All titers must include the lab report.
  - vii. Documentation of negative TB test within last 12 months
  - viii. UM CITI Blood Borne Pathogens training
  - ix. UM CITI HIPAA training
  - x. Copy of government issued ID
  - xi. Professional photo
  - xii. Background check
  - xiii. Any specific site compliance requirements based on clinical experience location
  - xiv. Demonstration of clinical readiness in all didactic and clinical coursework
- C. Once assigned to a particular clinical site, students can view any additional requirements (e.g., criminal background check, additional training, etc.) specifically associated with the site by accessing Exxat compliance of the additional requirements to begin their clinical experience or make other arrangements with the Clinical Education Faculty / Program Coordinator. Students can research a particular site's requirements prior to assignment through Exxat and the details dashboard for a site. **The student is responsible for all costs associated with program and site compliance requirements, lodging, transportation, and emergency services, etc.**
- D. The student must satisfactorily complete the academic PT curriculum that is scheduled prior to each clinical experience before being allowed to enroll unless an alternative plan has been approved by the Director of Clinical Education (DCE) and the Professional & Academic Requirements Committee (PARC).
- E. Any student who has been out of the academic setting for greater than 8 weeks, for any reason, must complete a clinical readiness program prior to returning to patient care-related activities. Details of the clinical readiness program will be determined on a case-by-case basis by the DCE and the PARC.

## II. Student assignment to a clinical site

- A. Students should expect that there is a high probability that full-time clinical experiences will be outside the Missoula area.
- B. All requests for clinical experience assignments are managed by the clinical

education faculty. Students **should not** initiate contact with a clinical site or clinician without permission and consultation with the clinical education faculty. If a student initiates direct communication with a clinical site to discuss a placement without clinical education faculty approval, they will be referred to the PARC for unprofessional behaviors.

- C. A student may make one request for placement at a clinical site that UMPT does not have an active affiliation agreement for PT 680 Clinical Experience III, the final clinical experience. Students wanting to make a request must discuss this with the DCE and they will provide access to the "New Site Request Form". The DCE and Associate Director of Clinical Education (ADCE) will evaluate the request for appropriateness. New sites must be compatible with UMPT Clinical Education Program mission and meet the needs of future students as well. The student must be in good academic standing at the time of request and remain in good academic standing through the clinical experience at the new clinical site. If the student's academic status changes between the time of placement at a new clinical site and the start of the experience, the DCE and/or ADCE may remove the student from the placement and reassign them to an established clinical site.
- D. For PT 587 Clinical Experience I, the first full-time experience, students are required to choose from reserved clinical sites. If a reserved site is unable to meet a student's needs due to extreme and/or unexpected circumstances the student is required to follow the policy to petition for non-reserved placement, which may include a new clinical site.
- E. The Clinical Education Program uses the Exxat software and website to help with the administration and management of the clinical education program, including the process of assignment of students to a clinical site. Students will be oriented to Exxat Autumn semester, 1<sup>st</sup> year. Students should access available facility information in the Exxat database including student evaluations of clinical sites, information about clinical sites from web sites and other resources. In addition, students should seek information and advice from the DCE and ADCE regarding the program placement requirements and suitability of clinical sites available to students.
  - i. PT 587 Clinical Experience I: First year students will submit placement requests via Exxat software for PT 587 by the first Monday in October. Placement announcement will be made in October after the clinical education faculty use Exxat software to process placements.
  - ii. PT 589 Clinical Experience II: First year students will submit placement requests via Exxat for PT 589 by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Placement requests are processed by the clinical education faculty throughout the rest of spring semester and through summer as needed. For placement at some sites, submission of an application consisting of a cover letter and resume, along with an interview, may be required.
  - iii. PT 583 Integrated Clinical Experience I: Clinical education faculty assign second year students to either a neuro/complex medical or ortho clinician in the UMPT Clinic on campus &/or off campus by the end of December.
  - iv. PT 584 Integrated Clinical Experience II: Clinical education faculty assign third year students to either a neuro/complex medical, ortho, or pediatric clinician in the UMPT Clinic on campus &/or off campus by the end of June. The patient population type will be different than what the student

was assigned with in PT 583 Integrated Clinical Education.

- v. PT 680: Second year students will submit placement requests via Exxat software for PT 680 by February 1<sup>st</sup>. Placement requests are processed by the clinical education faculty throughout the rest of spring semester and through summer as needed. For placement at some sites, submission of an application consisting of a cover letter and resume, along with an interview, may be required.

F. **Policy to Petition for Exemption from Clinical Placement Process:** Students may petition for an exemption from the traditional clinical placement process. These requests will be reviewed by the clinical education faculty with advisement from the Chair of UMPT and/or student's advisor on an individual basis, and require that the follow criteria be met before being considered:

- i. The student has met with the DCE to discuss options that may be available to accommodate the students' needs; AND
- ii. The student has identified extreme and/or unusual circumstances that impact their ability to successfully complete a clinical experience as assigned through the established clinical placement process. The DCE and student have worked to accommodate these circumstances through the normal clinical placement process and have been unsuccessful; AND
- iii. The student has completed and submitted the required form (which can be requested from the DCE) with alternative clinical site placement options and explanation to the DCE for consideration as soon as possible to increase the likelihood of placement exemption.
- iv. The clinical education faculty will review the petition. The final decision will be given to the student within 10 business days of petition receipt.

III. **Practices to protect rights, safety, dignity and privacy of patients, clients, other individuals, and the clinical site.**

- A. Students must comply with all state and federal laws associated with patient rights, privacy, and protected health information.
- B. Students must comply with clinic policies and procedures that are consistent with state and federal law regarding patient rights, privacy, and protected health information.
- C. Students must conduct themselves in a manner that protects the dignity and safety of patients and others.
  - i. Patients and clients should be informed that you are a student intern and that they have the right to accept, limit or refuse your participation in their plan of care.
- D. Students shall seek permission from their clinical instructor or the most appropriate person within the clinic's organization to use any non-protected health information or materials (patient care protocols, administrative information, etc.) for purposes outside of standard patient care responsibilities. Students may need to utilize the Information Release and/or Photo Release Forms, thereby obtaining informed consent of patients to use relevant information for educational purposes.

IV. **Dress code and appearance**

- A. In general, students need to be neat, clean, and professional in their attire, often referred to as “business casual”, to include closed toed shoes. UMPT recommends that students avoid the use of scented personal products.
- B. Name tags are required. These should have the student’s full name and indicate that you are a Student Physical Therapist or SPT
- C. The student is required to be well groomed for all clinical experiences. Individual clinical sites will outline their dress code. Students are expected to follow the dress code at the clinical site they are assigned to. This may include the restriction of scented products.

## V. Absences

### A. Part-time Clinical:

- i. PT 582: The student may be excused for illness or injury and is expected to make up for the lost time before the end of the spring semester. The student should notify the course instructor in advance of the absence so that missed course work and alternative clinical experiences (ACEs) may be rescheduled as soon as possible. Students are expected to utilize professional communications to set up and modify any ACE hours.
- ii. PT 583/PT 584: Students are expected to attend all assigned clinic days. Students are allowed one clinical day of excused absence during the semester. If the absence is beyond one clinic day, the student must work directly with the preceptor to schedule the hours required to make up lost time and do not require notification or approval of the clinical education faculty notification or approval. Refer to the syllabus for details.

### B. Full-time Clinical:

- i. Students are provided a set number of excused absences for each full-time clinical experience per the course syllabus. Students are expected to notify the CI as soon as possible for these situations. Any absences more than the days allowed are required to be made up in a manner approved by the CI. The clinical education faculty should be consulted if there are questions or differences in how the time should be made up. Number of days allowed for absence: 2 days for each full-time clinical experience.
- ii. A student who has a temporary condition (i.e., cast) which does not allow to carry out typical responsibilities must consult with the Site Coordinator of Clinical Education (SCCE) and/or CI, to determine if reasonable accommodations can be made for the student to continue their clinical experience. If the conditions are such that more permanent or long-standing accommodations are required, and/or the clinical experience will not be completed as planned, the student will be required to consult with the course instructor and will be referred to the UM Office of Disability Equity If indicated. Refer to the “Technical Standards and Essential Functions” section of the student handbook for more details on the requirements and resources for UM physical therapy students.

### C. Holidays:

- i. If the student is assigned to a clinical site that provides services on holidays, the student may be required to work per the clinical site’s policy.

### D. Other emergencies and extenuating circumstances

- i. Will be addressed by the SCCE and/or the CI, and/or the clinical education

faculty on an individual basis.

**E. Clinical Site Policy:**

- i. If an assigned clinical site has a stricter attendance policy than outlined above, the student is required to comply with the site's policy.

**F. Instructions to Make-up Time**

- i. The amount of make-up time will be an amount which is enough to allow the student to successfully fulfill all requirements of the clinical experience such as the total required hours and/or performance expectations for the clinical experience.
- ii. Make-up time may be done on weekends and/or outside of traditional clinic hours if the learning experiences and supervision are adequate to fulfill the requirement for the clinical experience.
- iii. Make-up time will be fulfilled at the facility where the time was missed, unless otherwise arranged by SCCE, CI, &/or clinical education faculty.

**VI. Injuries, illness, and emergencies**

- A. In addition to complying with proper procedures for responding to injuries, illness, and emergency situations at each clinical site that involve or impact a UMPT student, any injury, illness, or emergency situation that may impact the ability of the student to successfully complete their clinical experience on time should be reported to the clinical education faculty by the student and CI or SCCE. The clinical site will make provisions for emergency medical care. The student may be held responsible for costs.

**VII. Grading**

- A. All clinical experiences will be graded on a credit/no credit basis.
- B. The clinical education faculty will assign the final grade after evaluating written and verbal feedback of the CI, SCCE, and student and any other person with direct knowledge of the student's performance regarding the current clinical experience, and with consideration of the student's entire academic and professionalism record and performance.
  - i. Satisfactory Clinical Performance
    1. A passing grade (Credit) will be given when the student shows satisfactory performance and expected progress in the learning objectives and competencies outlined for each specific clinical experience course and when required professional behaviors are demonstrated as outlined elsewhere in the student handbook.
  - ii. Unsatisfactory Clinical Performance: Mediation Procedures
    1. When a problem is recognized, which potentially could conflict with expected progress, the SCCE, CI and the student should attempt to resolve it.
    2. If the problem cannot be resolved or is significant in nature, the SCCE or CI and the student should notify the clinical education faculty.

3. The clinical education faculty will contact all appropriate parties (SCCE, CI(s) and/or student) to get the opinions and facts from each party and attempt to resolve the problem.
4. If necessary, the clinical education faculty will arrange a meeting (in person, virtual, or telephone) to gather information and solve the problem.
5. In certain circumstances, the SCCE, CI or clinical education faculty may require a change in clinical instructors or have the student be removed from the clinical site. In the case of the need to remove the student from the clinical site due to unsatisfactory performance, the clinical education faculty will review the case and in consultation with the Chair, decide how to proceed. The clinical education faculty may issue an NCR, I, or N grade or reassign the student to a new site (timing and location as determined by the clinical education faculty). The clinical education faculty will provide a written report with recommendations regarding the student's status in the program to the PARC.

C. No Credit (NCR), Incomplete (I) or Work in Progress (N)

- i. It is the clinical education faculty's responsibility to provide a grade for all clinical experiences. When a student earns a grade of No Credit (NCR) or Incomplete (I), the clinical education faculty will have given the grade after reviewing the documentation from the CI, SCCE and any other appropriate source including the student's entire academic record.
- ii. If the clinical education faculty determine that a student's performance does not meet the course objectives, a grade of No Credit (NCR) will be give and PARC will be notified. All available members of the PARC would then review the record and the recommendations of the clinical education faculty and decide on a course of action.
- iii. A student may receive an Incomplete (I) or Work in Progress (N) grade. Please consult the University grading policy. When an I or N grade is given, and as appropriate for the circumstances, a specific number of clinical hours, location, and goals of the extended clinical experience will be determined by the clinical education faculty in consultation with the student, CI and SCCE.
- iv. A student must earn a Credit grade for each clinical experience before advancing through the clinical education courses.

**VIII. Requirements and expectations regarding feedback**

A. Feedback from Students

- i. Students will complete and share feedback at midterm and at final for clinical education using the forms accessed in Exxat and share the feedback with the appropriate individuals; midterm and final assessment of clinical instruction and final assessment of clinical site. The DCE and ADCE will access the evaluations through Exxat and release

the final clinical site evaluations to be available to other students in Exxat.

- ii. Students will complete evaluations of the DCE, ADCE, Program Coordinator and the Clinical Education Program at the completion of the DPT program.

B. Feedback to Students and Student Self-Assessment

- i. During each clinical experience, students should receive verbal and written feedback from their CI(s), at minimum, during the midterm and final meetings with the CI. Written feedback related to the student's performance will be provided via the Assessment of Performance Tool (APT) through Exxat. Students will complete a self-evaluation using the APT, and then submit their assessment to the CI for their assessment and feedback, then meet together to discuss the results. The student and the CI are expected to use the APT as it is designed.

Comments should address the competency categories, identifying strengths and deficits, especially related to expectations for the clinical experience. There should be consistency with the comments provided and the marks given on the rating scale using the definitions for the various levels.

The midterm feedback should be primarily formative in nature, emphasizing the progress that has been made and identification of goals and strategies for the remainder of the clinical experience to reach expected outcomes. Under certain circumstances, weekly formal verbal and/or written feedback may be appropriate. A form may be provided for this purpose.

If there is concern at any time that a student's performance is such that achievement of expected outcomes is in doubt, the clinical education faculty needs to be notified.

- ii. The clinical education faculty will communicate with the student and CI during the experience, typically via email initially. A follow-up phone call or site visit may be scheduled based on the circumstances of the clinical experience. CIs/SCCEs and students are encouraged to initiate communication with the clinical education faculty any time when consultation, feedback and/or assistance are believed necessary.

If there is concern by the clinical education faculty that a student will not be able to meet the course objectives during the clinical experience, written notification will be provided to the student and notification will be sent to the Chair and/or the PARC. Written notification will include a remedial plan with specific goals.

- iii. The DCE and ADCE will meet after each clinical experience to discuss student overall performance and progress. If a review of the student and/or CI APT shows that there are lingering concerns or deficits with a student's performance even though a student may have met the minimal requirements for a "passing" grade, the clinical education faculty will provide the student with written communication outlining the findings and

may also choose to meet with the student to discuss their performance, expectations for future clinical experiences, need for remediation, and/or opportunities for professional development. The DCE and ADCE may also make appropriate recommendations to the student to prepare for future success.

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