



**MERIDIAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT
STUDENT HANDBOOK
Fall 2020 Cohort**

ACCREDITATION STATUS

The Physical Therapist Assistant Program at Meridian Community College is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE), 1111 North Fairfax Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314; telephone: 703-706-3245; email: accreditation @apta.org; website: <http://www.capteonline.org>.

Graduation from a physical therapist assistant education program accredited by the Commission on Accreditation in Physical Therapy Education (CAPTE) is necessary for eligibility to sit for the licensure exam, which is required in all states.

INTRODUCTION

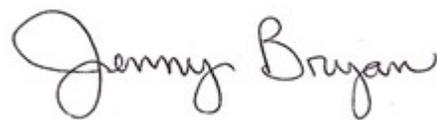
Welcome to the Physical Therapist Assistant Program (PTA) at Meridian Community College. You are beginning a program of study which will prepare you for a rewarding and exciting career in the health field. This program will prepare you for the career you have chosen! Predictions are that as the population of this country continues to age and more rehabilitation services are required, increased usage of physical therapy will be needed.

Please read this handbook very carefully and sign the attached acknowledgment sheet (Appendix D). You should also read the Meridian Community College Catalog so that you will be familiar with the information and guidelines/policies of the college. **As each course begins, you will receive a first day handout and course syllabus which contains objectives, outline of material, and other information specific to that course. It is imperative that you read all these materials carefully!**

If you should encounter problems, cannot find the information you need, or just have questions please let your PTA faculty know how we can assist you. We may not always know the answer, but will find someone who will be able to assist you if at all possible. Do not be afraid to ask as Jenny and I are here to help you. Congratulations on your selection and admission into the PTA program and best wishes for success!



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MCC PTA Student Handbook Appendix

APTA Standards of Ethical Conduct for PTA

Essential Functions for Physical Therapist Assistant Students

A: Technical Standards

B: Value Based Behavior for the Physical Therapist Assistant

C: Forms

Discrimination, Harassment, & Antiviolence

Discrimination

Meridian Community College does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, religion or age in admission or access to, or treatment or employment in its programs and activities.

Compliance with Section 504 is coordinated by Mrs. Deana Smith, Dean of Student Services, 910 Highway 19 North, Meridian, MS 39307. 601-484-8628, Fax: 601-484-8635, email: dsmith40@meridiancc.edu.

Compliance with Title IX is coordinated by Mr. Derek Mosley, Social Science Instructor, Smith Hall, 910 Highway 19 North, Meridian, MS 39307. 601-553-3453, Fax: 601-484-8635, email: dmosley@meridiancc.edu.

Sexual Misconduct Policy

Meridian Community College is committed to creating and maintaining a community in which students and employees can learn and work together in an atmosphere free of the threat of sexual assault. Every member of the college community should be aware that the College considers personal physical safety of students and employees to be a minimal prerequisite for the establishment of a quality learning environment. MCC views any form of sexual misconduct as a serious offense, and such behavior is prohibited by state law and by college policy. The complete sexual misconduct policy is located on Eaglenet and in the *MCC Catalog*.

Sexual Harassment

It is the policy of MCC, in keeping with efforts to establish an environment in which the dignity and worth of all members of the institutional community are respected, that sexual harassment of students and employees at MCC is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated. The College's sexual harassment definition, policy and guidelines outlining procedures for filing complaints may be found in the *MCC Catalog*.

Access & Disability Services

Consistent with the mandates of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American with Disabilities Act of 1990, Meridian Community College is committed to providing individuals with disabilities equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its educational programs and services. The Coordinator of the Career and Technical (CTE) Support Services Office has been designated to coordinate the College's efforts to comply with and carry out its responsibilities under these laws. *Students in need of special assistance should contact the CTE Support Services Coordinator located in Reed Hall room 123B.* Telephone: 601-484-8777; Email: Gmills@mcc.cc.ms.us.

Mission Statements

Meridian Community College Mission Statement

Meridian Community College is a public institution of higher learning dedicated to improving the quality of life in Lauderdale County, Mississippi, and surrounding areas. Through campus-based and distance education programming, MCC serves a diverse student population and accomplishes its mission by providing equal access to:

- Courses leading to the Associate in Arts Degree and/or transfer to senior colleges and universities;
- Associate of Applied Science Degree and occupational certificate programs and customized workforce training, leading to entry-level and/or enhanced employment opportunities;
- Continuing education courses designed for personal and/or professional enrichment, student support services, cultural enrichment events, and adult basic and developmental education programs designed to equip students for expanded opportunities.

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Mission Statement

The mission of the PTA program is to improve the quality of life in the community by implementing a quality educational program to produce physical therapist assistants by:

- Providing comprehensive, equal educational opportunities to qualified students of the geographic region at affordable costs;
- The belief that each student has potential for growth and to facilitate the process of personal progression
- Including a distribution of both general education and PTA courses to maximize the intellectual, psychosocial, and cultural development of each student.

Emphasis is placed on the process of learning and critical thinking in order to produce graduates who are responsible and accountable for their own actions and continued learning. A major purpose of the PTA program is to prepare graduates to assist physical therapists in health care settings to deliver physical therapy services in a safe effective manner and to stimulate a lifelong commitment to continued professional development.

The PTA faculty advocates continuing education designed to meet specific learning needs of PTAs within the community as an essential component of the profession.

PTA Program Goals and Objectives

MCC PTA Program Goals

1. The PTA Program will produce clinically competent entry-level, licensed physical therapist assistants who are able to meet the needs of employers and work under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist.
2. The Program will provide an organized, sequential, and comprehensive curriculum that integrates classroom, laboratory and clinical education experiences to prepare graduates for contemporary, evidence-based physical therapy practice.
3. Program faculty will maintain currency in contemporary physical therapy practice to ensure a current, comprehensive evidence-based curriculum consistent with college requirements and CAPTE standards.
4. Faculty and students will promote the importance of lifelong learning, professional engagement, and community awareness regarding physical therapy.

Program Objectives

Graduates of the Meridian Community College PTA Program will...

1. Work as a clinically competent entry-level physical therapist assistant under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist.
2. Demonstrate effective communication skills in a culturally competent manner with patients, family members/care givers, and health care professionals.
3. Increase community awareness of the role of the physical therapist assistant.
4. Demonstrate an awareness of the importance of lifelong learning and professional engagement.

The Physical Therapist Assistant (PTA) program is designed to prepare individuals to function as entry-level physical therapist assistants (PTA). PTA graduates can find employment in a variety of healthcare and human service settings including hospitals, out-patient clinics, rehabilitation and extended care facilities, schools and specialized community care and wellness programs.

To encourage student success in the PTA program, if students have exams and/or assignments that are completed as part of the grade and expectation of the course and/or class with a grade below 82%, the student will be required to complete 2 hours of remediation activities on a day assigned by the faculty member that aides in concept comprehension and/or skill acquisition.

Each class has a maximum faculty/student ratio of 1:14 in lectures and lab sections. To enhance the educational experience, specific course assignments or activities may include additional faculty to be present to ensure the safety and educational components of the activity.

Academic Education

Faculty

Full Time Faculty- Program Chair

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Full Time Faculty- Academic Coordinator-Director of Clinical Education

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Role of Academic Faculty

Physical Therapist Assistant Program Chair

The program chair will lead the student selection committee for students applying to the PTA program. Academic and/or behavioral issues will be directed to the program chair to determine an appropriate resolution.

Academic Coordinator for Clinical Education

The ACCE of the PTA program will oversee all clinical education. The ACCE will be the contact person for students as well as clinical sites (clinical instructors and CCCEs) regarding placement, questions or concerns with all matters related to clinical education.

Program Faculty

Program faculty's main focus is to lead students in the didactic program of the curriculum. The faculty will also have regular meetings with students to insure they are achieving their full potential within the program. Faculty will work with the program chair to assist in academic or behavioral issues that may arise with students.

Guest Lecturers

MCC's PTA program strives to deliver the best in current contemporary practice into the didactic program. In order to do this, we may invite experts in a field to guest lecture. These persons are not employed by MCC and may or may not be a licensed PT or PTA.

Center Coordinator of Clinical Education

The Center Coordinator of Clinical Education (CCCE) is an individual responsible for overseeing the clinical education program at a clinical site. The CCCE is responsible for the training and coordination of clinical instructors and the assigning the student to a clinical instructor. The CCCE helps in planning and problem solving with the clinical instructor and student team in a manner that enhances the clinical education learning experience. The CCCE is the student's contact at the facility related to the clinical experience at the facility. The CCCE is also the Program CEC's contact person at the clinical facility. The CCCE is responsible for developing and maintaining a current Clinical Site Information Form.

Clinical Instructor

The Clinical Instructor (CI) for Part- and Full-time clinical experiences is a licensed professional who is responsible for instruction, supervision, and evaluation of the student at the clinical education site. If the clinical instructor is a physical therapist assistant, a physical therapist will also work with the student and clinical instructor. CIs and CCCEs are expected to have at least one year of professional experience. At some sites, more than one CI may supervise one or more students.

Program Guidelines

Program Guidelines

The PTA program abides by MCC's policies. The most current college policies can be found at <http://www.meridiancc.edu/about-mcc/catalog/index>

Students are expected to have a working knowledge of the content of the MCC PTA Program Student Handbook, which is provided annually during the fall semester. After reviewing the Student Handbook, students will sign and date the "Student Handbook Agreement", which is an agreement where the student states they understand the content of the handbook and agree to abide by the policies and procedures set forth during their tenure as a Physical Therapist Assistant student. Students will also be able to access the PTA Program Student Handbook on the program website at:

<http://www.meridiancc.edu/workforce-education/programs-of-study/health-education/physical-therapist-assistant/index>

The PTA Program Student Handbook is reviewed and revised annually by program faculty. To ensure all program policies are consistent with those of the College, the handbook is reviewed annually by the Interim Associate Vice President of Career Technical, Work Force Education and Health Professions. Program faculty will consider input for manual revisions from students, college administration, the PTA program advisory committee, and clinical faculty. When changes are made after the initial publication of each year's Student Handbook, PTA Program students and MCC's administration will be notified of the updates. The Handbook available on the program website will also be updated.

Evaluation of Students

Course Grading

The grading scale that will be used in the PTA Program is as follows:

- 93% -100% = A
- 86% -92.49% = B
- 80% -85.49% = C
- 70% -79.49% = D
- 0% -69.49% = F

- All lecture/lab and clinical education courses must be taken in sequence.
- A minimum grade of “C” is required in all general education and technical courses within the PTA Program Curriculum.
- GPA calculation is consistent with MCC policy.
- Grades are permitted to be rounded up in cases where scores exceed .50 or greater.
- All course assignments must be turned in on time and must be college-level work. Faculties have the right to not accept late assignments, and/or deduct points for late or unacceptable work per course syllabi.
- For each PTA technical course, students must average a minimum of 80% for all lecture examinations to successfully pass the course, regardless of non-examination grades.

Grades on Individual Assignments

Assignments for all courses must be turned in on time and must be college-level work. Points will be deducted for assignment turned in late as per course syllabus. Points will be deducted if an assignment contains spelling or grammatical errors, or if it is considered sub-standard work. A student may make a failing grade on any assignment, which contains a substantial number of errors. **All assignments MUST be completed on computer unless the instructor specifies otherwise.** The Basic Assignment Rubric will be used for grading unless otherwise specified. Students are expected to bring appropriate books, materials, and lab uniforms to class as assigned. Failure to do so may result in a penalty grade.

Skill Checks

A skill check is an assessment of a student’s ability to demonstrate competence in a PTA skill. Skill check assessments are done in two different ways. First, a peer skill checks must be completed with a lab partner. Students will then have the opportunity to work on any problem areas prior to being tested by a course instructor. Faculty skill checks performed by an instructor will be performed during open lab times or during scheduled course labs, if there is time.

Skill checks contain safety elements of PTA skills that must be completed in order to pass the skill check. If a student fails any safety element, they automatically fail the skill check and must retake it.

Practical Exams

Practical Exams are used to assess a student's ability to effectively and safely integrate course material and perform a patient treatment following a physical therapist's plan of care. Students will be given the opportunity to attempt each skill/lab practical three times if necessary. If the student fails to pass on the first attempt, the student must document 2 hours of practice before the second attempt. If the skill is passed on the second attempt, the highest grade that can be attained is a "B". If the student fails the second attempt, the student must appeal the PTA faculty for a third attempt in written form documenting procedures the student has taken to prepare for the exam. If a third attempt is granted, the PTA faculty will determine the conditions that the student must meet. Two PTA Program faculty members will be present for the 3rd practical examination retake. The highest grade that can be attained is a "C". **A lab practical grade of a "C" or higher must be attained in order to successfully complete this course.**

Students will be required to have been signed off on two peer skill checks and one faculty skill check prior to taking the practical exam.

Required cueing to complete a practical exam will result in a reduction in the student's score. Unsafe behavior during a practical exam is, at the instructor's discretion, grounds for immediate failure of the practical exam. Sharing practical exam scenarios or information with classmates who have not yet taken the exam is considered academic dishonesty and will be treated as such.

Test Policies and Make-Up Exams

1. If a student misses a test for any reason, the design and date of the make-up test is left to the discretion of the instructor. However, there is a strong probability that the make-up exam will be all discussion and scheduled during the week of finals.
2. No distracting behavior should be exhibited during testing.
3. When Scantron is used, the Scantron **ONLY** will be used to determine your grade for the exam.
4. Students have 5 days after taking a test to review the results. The last test (before finals) must be reviewed within 72 hours of taking the test.
5. Any test or exam is subject to have material covered previously in the current class or another class on that exam or test.
6. All finals are Comprehensive.

Students should notify the instructor in advance if unable to take a scheduled examination. If the student fails to notify the instructor prior to testing, a grade of "0" will be awarded. A make-up exam will not be given in this circumstance.

The type of make-up exam given is at the discretion of the faculty and may be essay, short answer, open book, multiple-choice, oral or any combination of test formats. Exams not made up within one week of the scheduled date will be awarded a grade of "0" at the discretion of the instructor.

Professional Behaviors

Professional behavior by students is expected at all times. Students are expected to follow professional standards when in the classroom, laboratory and clinical settings. Guidelines for these standards are as follows:

Students must comply with the Student Behavior Code as stated in the current Meridian Community College Catalog. Other specific conduct or acts that are prohibited include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Disclosing confidential information to unauthorized sources
2. Theft of property
3. Insubordination to academic or clinical faculty
4. Falsifying student or clinical faculty records
5. Behavior which violates the rights of an instructor, fellow student, or others to privacy and/or dignity
6. Refer to Appendix B for Criteria for Responsible Behavior

If abhorrent behavior is identified, faculty will provide both oral and written feedback in the form of a behavioral contract regarding professional behavior. Copies of this feedback will be placed in the student's file. Students are expected to change unsatisfactory behaviors after receiving feedback from faculty, and faculty will discuss any concerns about professionalism as soon as concerns arise. If a student is not demonstrating professional behaviors at an appropriate level at the end of each semester, students will be placed on probation or dismissed from the program.

Professional Appearance

In the interest of safety and professionalism, students are expected to adopt the following professional appearance behaviors during lab, skill checks, practical exams, and field trips:

1. No hats
2. Trimmed, clean nails
3. No excessive jewelry
4. No excessive makeup
5. No visible face or mouth jewelry/piercings other than small earrings located in ears
6. No offensive body odor
7. Neat, clean, appropriate clothing
8. Hair neatly groomed and out of face
9. Facial hair neatly groomed

Required clinical dress must consist of royal blue scrubs unless specified otherwise by the clinical site/facility. Closed toe shoes are required in the clinical setting. Tennis shoes may be worn if approved by clinical site/facility, but MUST be clean and appropriate.

During clinicals, all students will conform to the dress code of the MCC PTA program and/or the dress code of the clinical facility. Exceptions to the PTA dress code may be made for religious, cultural, or medical reasons. Please refer to the PTA Program Clinical Education Handbook for information professional appearance behaviors expected during clinical education.

Confidentiality

Meridian Community College has designated that certain data is considered public or private data in accordance with the Family Educational Right and Privacy Act (FERPA). Please see the MCC Course Catalog for details on this policy.

PTA Program will maintain privacy/confidentiality in the following manner:

1. Grades will be posted using Canvas software, which requires students to sign in using an individual password.
2. All exams, quizzes, and assignments will be returned in a manner that does not expose the grade.
3. Feedback is provided after skill checks and practical exams with only the student and instructor(s) present. When necessary or helpful, instructors will obtain permission if they would like to provide feedback in front of other students
4. Clinical faculty must follow the data privacy policies of MCC and the PTA Program
5. Requests for student information from any government agency will be referred to the Registrar's office
6. Students will sign a confidentiality agreement which applies to maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of patients during all clinical experiences.
7. During the first semester of the PTA program, students are instructed in basic HIPPA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) policies and procedures for proper use and handling of confidential patient/client information. They are also required to pass an online instructional module/knowledge test prior to their first clinical education course.

Maintain Records

The PTA Program maintains files that include department/student forms, consent forms, waivers of liability, contracts or correspondence. These files are maintained for all students and are stored in a locked file cabinet in the CEC's office for clinical education information and the PTA Program Chair's office for all other information. Records in relation to transcripts and clinical education will be retained by the college permanently. Students may review the contents of their file during the CEC or PTA Program Chair's respective posted office hours. Information will be maintained for two years after graduation to assist faculty in providing employment references for students. After two years the files will be destroyed following MCC's guidelines for discarding confidential information.

Copies of completed midterm and final exams will be kept in locked file cabinets in faculty offices. Students will not be allowed to keep copies of completed midterm or final exams. Prior to final exams, faculty will schedule a review session for students during which student test files will be available for review. This review will be proctored by a faculty member and students will not be allowed to leave the room with their test file. All exams will be maintained for 2 years and destroyed per MCC guidelines.

Applications of students who were not accepted into the program will be shredded two years from the application time period.

Attendance

Meridian Community College believes strongly that the single greatest predictor of student success is attendance in class. **Students are expected to attend class regularly.** Instructors are required to keep accurate attendance records. Specific attendance requirements for each course are determined and enforced by the instructor and vary from instructor to instructor. The complete attendance policy may be found in the current *MCC Catalog*. "Excessive absenteeism" in this course is defined below. Appointments should **not** be scheduled during class time. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the appropriate instructor(s) **prior** to the beginning of class/clinical if they must be absent. An absence in lab and lecture during the same day will count as 2 absences. A tardy is less than **ONE** hour; greater than **ONE** hour is an absence; and three tardies are considered to be equal to one absence. **A student will be allowed three (3) absences per class.** Unusual circumstances will be considered on an individual basis by program faculty.

The student is responsible for all class work missed while absent. If the absence involves a clinical day, the student is responsible for contacting the Academic Coordinator of Clinical Education (ACCE), the Center Coordinator of Clinical Education (CCCE), and/or the Clinical Instructor (CI). All clinical/practicum absences **MUST** be made up. If working extended hours during the day and/or weekends cannot make up the absence, the student must complete an assignment designated by ACCE and/or the CCCE.

NOTE: The only absence that will be excused is pre-approved participation in a school-sponsored activity. However, the student is still responsible for any material covered in class during the time missed. **IT IS THE STUDENT'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CONTACT THE INSTRUCTOR PRIOR TO THE ABSENCE ABOUT MAKING UP ANY WORK MISSED.**

Student Code of Conduct

MCC strives to preserve a learning environment on the campus which is free from disturbances and disruptions. Students are expected to exhibit self-reliant, acceptable and desirable behavior. The guiding principles to meet these expectations include respecting the rights of others, being truthful, not participating in unacceptable behavior, or violating federal, state and local laws and ordinances. The following code is applicable to any facility owned or operated by MCC. All students are expected to read and understand the College's statement on student rights and responsibilities, discipline, drug use, and classroom behavior found in the *MCC Catalog*.

Students must display a current MCC ID card on his/her person at all times while on campus. ID cards are provided and validated by the Campus Police office, located on the first floor of Ivy Hall. The ID card must be worn on the person above the waist, which means it cannot be on a purse, book bag, etc. Individuals without an ID card in plain view will be stopped to verify their status as a student, staff, or authorized visitor. Displaying of the ID is also required for use of the MCC library and most other services and activities. Individuals who fail to display the identification card may be subject to sanctions and penalties including charges of trespassing and/or suspension from school.

The student is expected to act in a responsible mature manner that reflects the qualities, reliability, and responsible interpersonal skills. These skills include, but are not limited to: using critical thinking skills in determining one's actions in the clinical and classroom setting; accepting responsibility for one's own actions, including preparing sufficiently for class and clinical; taking exams as scheduled and completing assignments on time, including patient/client care; responding appropriately and in a timely fashion to constructive criticism and feedback from faculty, clinical site, staff and peers; giving prior notification in writing or voicemail to faculty if unable to meet commitments and following up with faculty regarding potential make up requirements; dealing with others (peers, faculty, staff, patients/clients and their families) in an honest, respectful, sensitive and non-judgmental manner that communicates respect for individual differences; respecting others' space and time through the demonstration of such actions as turning off cell phones, avoiding disruptive sidebar conversations, and refraining from texting in class and clinical settings.

Profanity, derogatory comments, and emotional responses which inhibit learning will not be permitted. Unacceptable behaviors include, but are not limited to: willful or intentional physical and/or mental harm to a patient/client, fellow student or staff; refusing to assume the assigned and necessary care of a client or failure to inform the instructor with immediacy when changes to clinical assignments are necessary; discussing confidential information in inappropriate areas, such as elevators or the cafeteria; discussing confidential information about a client with third parties who do not have a clear and legitimate need to know; or inattentiveness to classroom work.

Social Media Policy

Social media constitutes the use of, but is not limited to Facebook, Twitter, email and blogging. Use of social media is permitted, but only in a professional manner that adheres to the *Physical Therapy Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice for the Physical Therapist Assistant*. All students must be aware that there is no such thing as "private social media" and must be cognizant of an unintended audience viewing any postings. Any of the following will be considered a violation of this policy: names, identifiers or any information leading to the identification of any patient may be referenced; no photos may be taken (including electronic devices) at the clinical site; the use of social media during class, lab or clinical is prohibited; derogatory statements toward other students, faculty or employees of clinical sites are prohibited; professional boundaries with patients or previous patients in the online environment must be adhered to; confidential information regarding an exam, assignment, or quiz may not be shared; any other evidence of unprofessional behavior using media; clinical experiences are not to be discussed on ANY social network. Due to the sensitive nature of patient information and federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), offending students could also be subjected to fines or incarceration.

Student Fines

The purpose of this section is to outline different situations and types of unacceptable behavior where a fine will be imposed. The following will be subject to a fine of \$25 for the first offense, \$50 for the second offense, \$100 for the third offense and disciplinary action including, but not limited to, probation or suspension.

1. Public profanity, cursing or vulgarity
2. Smoking cigarettes (including electronic) and/or using tobacco products near any building entrance or smoking outside of designated smoking areas
3. Failure, refusal or inability to present a current MCC ID card upon request (must wear on visible location of one's person at all times when on College property)
4. Unauthorized entry to or use of College facilities
5. Unusually loud noise which creates a public disturbance including, but not limited to, shouting, use of portable radios, use of automobile radios, use of laptops or musical instruments

Drug, Prescribed Medications, & Tobacco

MCC prohibits the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol on college property or as any part of its activities. **Any Workforce/Career Technical student who exhibits behavior, in the opinion of the instructor, consistent with the use of drugs and/or alcohol, will be required to submit to a urine or blood analysis test.**

Students using any legally prescribed medication which may alter the student's ability to cognitively or physically care for patients or clients must disclose to the Program Director medication(s) used. Disclosure includes long-term and short-term use of medications, as well as any new prescription the student may acquire. The Program Director will monitor the student's performance and if safety becomes an issue, a review of the medication or student's performance will be initiated to insure safety and best interests of the patient or client.

Tobacco Policy

Meridian Community College is a tobacco free campus and prohibits smoking and/or using tobacco products on any facility owned or operated by MCC or on MCC grounds. Smoking includes the use of any product that is smoked and produces smoke or vapor including but not limited to cigarettes, hookahs, and electronic cigarettes. Smoking and using tobacco products is limited to designated areas.

Academic Progress

Standards of academic progress are established to require students to progress satisfactorily and timely towards the completion of their degree. Students are responsible for their academic progress and for seeking assistance when experiencing academic difficulty.

All PTA Program general education and technical courses must be completed with a grade of "C" or higher. If students do not obtain a minimum grade of "C" in any course within the PTA Program curriculum, the student will be dismissed from the program. For each PTA technical course, students must average a minimum of 80% for all lecture examinations to successfully pass the course, regardless of non-examination grades. In order to progress in this program, you must maintain a "C" in all PTA courses, a passing grade in all course work and a cumulative GPA of 2.00 on the 4.0 scale. **To progress from third semester to fourth semester, students must demonstrate mastery of a comprehensive exam of material from the first three semesters of the PTA Program with a grade of 80% or better with NO MORE THAN THREE (3) ATTEMPTS. During the last week of Seminar PTA 2523, you must obtain a grade of 75% on ONE of the Mock Licensure Exams on the first attempt to exit course.**

Students must pass all skill checks prior to participating in associated lab practical. Students must achieve a minimum of 80% competency on each lab practical examination within a course in order to achieve a passing grade in that course.

Probation and Dismissal

A student enrolled in the PTA Program who does not meet the following criteria will be placed on program probation and subject to dismissal:

1. The instructor may place a student on probation if the student attendance has not met the program attendance guideline.
2. The student disciplinary procedure will be initiated due to substandard, unethical, or inappropriate conduct at the discretion of the PTA Program Chair in consultation with the PTA Program faculty. Program probation or dismissal may result for any of the following reasons:
 - a. Possession or use of alcohol or any mood altering chemical on the premises of MCC or clinical education sites. This includes attending class or clinical education while intoxicated.
 - b. Unexcused and/or excessive absenteeism and/or falsification of sick time. Please refer to the attendance guideline on page 20 of this manual.
 - c. Grossly unethical or unprofessional behavior
 - d. Gross carelessness in regard to safety of patients or colleagues
 - e. **Release of confidential information regarding patients, and/or clinical education site personnel or activities**
3. Because the Professional Behaviors reflect behaviors necessary for success as a physical therapist assistant in the clinical environment, failure to demonstrate progress in the Professional Behaviors, or failure to meet the specific behavior levels by the defined target dates.

Clinical Education Dismissal Procedure

A student may be dismissed from the assigned clinical education experience when clinical performance is unsatisfactory or behavior is disruptive or detrimental to the clinical site and/or patients. Each clinical rotation must be passed for completion of the semester/program. The student may be given the opportunity to attempt the clinical rotation again. Each case will be evaluated individually to determine whether the student will be granted a second attempt. This decision will be based on previous clinical performance if applicable, reason for dismissal from clinical site and other relevant facts. The highest grade that can be attained is a "B" on the second attempt of a clinical rotation. If the student fails the second attempt, s/he must appeal to the PTA faculty for a third attempt. If a third attempt is granted, the PTA faculty will determine the conditions that the student must meet. If the student passes the third attempt, the highest grade that can be attained is a "C". However, the student is not assured that s/he will receive the opportunity for the third attempt. Program faculty will make the decision to grant the third attempt based on context of previous performance and behavior. A grade of a "C" or higher must be attained in order to successfully complete each clinical education course.

Disciplinary Procedure – Sequence for Behavioral Reasons

1. Upon determination of a student's inappropriate conduct, the faculty member who was involved will meet with the student to discuss the matter and inform the student of the specific conduct that is deemed inappropriate. A verbal warning concerning the inappropriate behavior will be given to the student and a written record of the behavior will be placed in the student's program file.
2. If the student's conduct and behavior does not improve, the instructor involved will meet or speak a second time with the student, at which time a written warning in the form of a behavioral contract is given with documentation of specific actions needed to improve performance. A copy of the documentation will be placed in the student file with a copy sent to the Dean of Academic Affairs. There will be a deadline given for definite measurable improvement to be demonstrated by the student.
3. If satisfactory improvement is not demonstrated before the deadline, the PTA Program Chair may place the student on PTA Program probation or dismiss the student from the program.

Academic Integrity

Academic dishonesty or cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- Copying from another student's test paper and/or collaboration during a test with any other person by giving or receiving information without authority; using materials during a test not authorized by the instructor
- Stealing, buying, or otherwise obtaining all or part of an un-administered test or information about said test.
- Selling, giving, or otherwise supplying to another student for use in fulfilling an academic requirement, any theme, report, term paper; or submitting as one's own, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any theme, report, term paper, essay, or other work prepared totally or in part by another.
- Submitting nearly identical work that one has previously offered for credit in another course, without prior approval of the instructor

Plagiarism and cheating in any form is subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to a failing grade for the test or assignment, a failing grade for the course, and/or probation and dismissal from the PTA Program.

Re-Entry Petition Process

Students who have been dismissed from the program due to failure of any PTA curriculum or a requested leave of absence based on a documented medical leave or personal reasons will be allowed to petition for re-entry into the program. The student may petition to repeat the course the next time the course is offered for a time not exceeding one calendar year. The student must complete an exit interview and petition for readmission form as well as an action plan for remediating behavior that could potentially lead to success if readmitted. Students who do not follow through on the petition and action plan will not be allowed to re-enter the program. The following criteria must be met to re-enter the program:

1. Students must meet all college and program admission requirements.
2. The student must request readmission to the program in writing.
3. The student must follow the policies and procedures of the program which are consistent with the academic year he/she is readmitted.
4. All courses in the PTA curriculum must be completed within a three-year period from date of entry into the program.
6. If the content of any course is different from when the student initially took the course prior to withdrawal from the program, the student will be required to complete all course syllabi objectives and goals, pass all skill checks, quizzes, and exams for the new information. PTA faculty will develop appropriate materials to meet the new or revised objectives.

7. The student is responsible for maintaining the ability to satisfactorily perform all previously-learned skills. Demonstration of satisfactory performance will be required prior to readmission into the program through (1) passing of a competency exam with a score of 80 percent and (2) passing a laboratory/directed practice skill competencies with 90 percent. Assignments will be randomly selected by the faculty.

8. A student is eligible for readmission into the PTA program only once.

The Health Education Admission Committee permits readmission on a space-available basis. Students applying for readmission will be considered after all other qualified applicants. Applicants are considered individually on the following basis: Reasons for non-progression, justification for readmission, and potential for success. Readmission is not automatic.

Re-entry will only be considered for the year immediately following the student's dismissal/leave. If a readmission opportunity does not present, the student's application will be placed into potential program candidates file for the following year and considered with new program applicants.

Only one testing will be allowed for each competency and challenge examination.

*Exceptions may be made for **extreme** cases such as military leave, major health issues, etc.

"A student, who has been dismissed for a positive drug or alcohol screen from any Workforce/Career and Technical Education (WF/CTE) program at MCC or any other institution, must provide documentation of satisfying the *Drug and Alcohol Readmission Process* to the Program Coordinator prior to enrollment. Failure to provide this documentation renders the student ineligible for admission and subject to immediate dismissal if enrolled."

Course Transfer

General education and support courses taken at another institution will be evaluated by the office of Admissions to determine if they can be accepted by Meridian Community College for credit. All PTA courses must be taken at MCC. Physical therapist (MPT or DPT) students or physical therapist assistant students may transfer into the program from other developing or accredited programs.

Length of Program

If a student takes a leave of absence due to documented medical or personal reasons, the student will have to apply for readmission and is not guaranteed space in the program during that semester. A leave of absence may only be requested one time during the duration of the PTA program.

Withdrawal Process

It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw from all courses. The student should contact the instructor (in person, by phone or via email) to discuss the decision to withdraw. A student can request to be withdrawn from courses by completing the following steps:

1. Log on to Eaglenet and click on the "My Student Services" tab
2. Select the "Registration" tab
3. Select the "Request to be Dropped from a Class" link
4. Select the course or courses to be dropped
5. Select "Update Drop Request"

The request must be submitted by the withdrawal deadline. Refer to the Academic Calendar in the MCC catalog for withdrawal deadlines. The student should review the attendance policy for each course; each class attendance policy still applies. **The calculation of any refund of tuition and fees will be based on the last date of class attendance as determined by the office of admissions.**

Graduation Criteria

Upon successful completion of the following criteria, Meridian Community College will grant an Associate of Applied Science Degree with a major in Physical Therapist Assistant.

1. Credit Courses: Students are required to complete all program general education and technical coursework with a minimum grade of "C" for each course.
2. Clinical Education: Students are required to pass all clinical education courses.

The graduation date will be defined as the month of graduation commencement or the end of clinical experiences, whichever comes later. In order to qualify to participate in commencement, a student must have met all program requirements and be in good academic standing.

Graduates of accredited PTA programs are eligible to sit for the licensure examination according to the guidelines set forth by the Mississippi State Board of Physical Therapy. However, no person who has been convicted of a felony offense is eligible for licensure in Mississippi as mandated in the Mississippi Physical Therapy Practice Act.

Program Costs

The following is the estimated cost of the program using the 2020-2021 tuition/fee schedule for in-state students:

Tuition:	\$8,500
Textbooks:	\$3,000
Background Check:	\$55
Drug Test	\$100
Registration fee:	\$125
APTA dues:	\$190
Other fees	\$3,000
<u>Misc. fees:</u>	<u>\$500</u>
Program total:	\$15,570

Please note that out-of-state tuition has increased for fall 2019 semester.

Please note these costs are subject to change.

Clinical Travel & Expenses

Students will be responsible for their own transportation to and from clinicals, Health Care Experience, and field trips while enrolled in the program. Many of our clinical site affiliates are based out-of-town. Students can anticipate completing a **minimum** of one (1) clinical experience out-of-town. All costs incurred during the clinical education experience (i.e. gas, lodging, meals, etc.) are the student's responsibility.

PTA Program Safety Guidelines and Procedures

Additional Requirements: Health, Legal & CPR

To participate in classroom and clinical education activities, students must have on file at MCC Department of Physical Therapist Assistant Program documentation of all the following health requirements. You must also have a copy of evidence of current Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation Certification (Healthcare Provider CPR includes CPR training for the adult, child and infant as well as training in the use of an Automatic External Defibrillator), Blood Borne Pathogens, and HIPAA compliance. Students will complete Blood Borne Pathogens and HIPAA compliance as part of the program prior to going on any clinical experience. All students are encouraged to keep copies of all legal and health information. The college may not release any of this information except to the student specifically.

Proof of the Immunization

Documentation of immunization or record of disease for Rubella (Measles), Rubella (German Measles), Mumps, Tetanus and Diphtheria, varicella (chicken pox) and Polio. Documentation of immunization for influenza is also required before completion of first semester of first year. Declination forms must exist until immunizations are fulfilled. If not complete by appointed time, students will not be allowed to progress in the program.

Documentation of Evidence of Hepatitis B Vaccination series

Because the Hepatitis B vaccination is a series of three inoculations over a six-month period, we recommend that you begin the Hepatitis series as soon as possible. You must have the first two vaccinations of the series complete by the end of the first semester, and the final by the end of the second semester. Students DO NOT have the option of declining. Students found to be non-compliant will not be allowed to progress.

Documentation of Evidence of yearly Tuberculosis (TB) testing

The Department requires all students to have results of a Mantoux skin test for tuberculosis (TB) completed within the last twelve months on file with the Physical Therapy Assistant Program at all times. A student who was immunized against TB or received treatment for TB and has a positive Mantoux needs to have a chest x-ray done to demonstrate that there is no evidence of active TB. The Physical Therapy Assistant Program and the clinical site, when appropriate, must be given documentation that the radiograph was clear of evidence of active TB. According to guidelines, a chest radiograph should be repeated every four years or sooner if required by a clinical facility. In addition to the Department's guideline for TB testing, some clinical education facilities may require a more recent test, such as within 30 days before the first day at the clinical education site, or a "two-step" TB test.

Physical exam

Documentation of current physical examination required for all clinical education to be on file with the Physical Therapy Assistant Program. The form must be completed by a licensed physician or nurse practitioner at the student's expense.

Drug Testing and Criminal Background Checks

Mississippi Law now requires healthcare professionals or occupational education students enrolled in programs whose primary purpose is to prepare professionals to render patient care services submit to criminal background checks and fingerprinting prior to beginning any clinical rotation in a licensed healthcare entity. If such fingerprinting or criminal background checks of the student discloses a felony conviction, guilty plea or plea of nolo contendere to a felony of possession or sale of drugs, murder, manslaughter, armed robbery, rape, sexual battery, sex offense listed in Section 45-31-3 (l), child abuse, arson, grand larceny, burglary, gratification of lust, aggravated assault or felonious abuse and/or battery of a vulnerable adult which has not been reversed on appeal or for which a pardon has not been granted, the student shall not be eligible to be admitted to such health program of study or will not be eligible to participate in clinical training in a licensed entity. The student's eligibility to participate in the clinical training phase of their healthcare program shall be voided if the student receives a disqualifying criminal record check.

In addition to the disqualifying events listed in Section 37-29-232 of the Mississippi Code of 1972 annotated, clinical affiliates may, at their discretion, refuse to provide clinical experiences to any student whom the clinical affiliate feels are not suitable for employment or for the clinical experience setting.

Any drug conviction; bodily harm, neglect or abuse, or felony DUI conviction within a year of starting date of class is cause for denial of the clinical experience setting. Any convictions more than a year beyond the starting date of class will be examined by the "Review Standards Committee" with a decision rendered if the student is allowed to participate in the clinical experience setting. Any charges pending a resolution will require documentation of disposition from the student.

Even though the student may be allowed to progress in the chosen Health Education or Nursing program, local licensure agencies and state boards may not permit or accept an individual for registration, permit or licensure. **Employability is not guaranteed in the chosen health education program.**

Impaired Students

If, in the judgment of the instructor, the student's ability to function safely in the clinical area is impaired, the student will be immediately removed. The instructor will document the incident and report it to the Program Chair. A copy of the Report of Student Update will be incorporated into the student's file. A student conduct code violation will also be submitted to the college.

- Once this is documented, the student will be placed on an action plan by department to determine reasonable actions to be taken.
- This includes but is not limited to falling asleep in the classroom or clinical location.

Health Insurance

Students are required to maintain liability insurance while in the program and this is included in registration fees. Students are strongly encouraged to secure and maintain medical insurance. If a student has an injury or becomes ill while in clinical, the clinical site personnel will assist in securing medical attention, but financial responsibility for treatment remains on the student. Neither Meridian Community College, PTA program faculty, or clinical training sites are responsible for the financial burden when a student is injured or illness is incurred while the student is at or en route to or from a PTA clinical site or on site during clinical education. This policy takes precedence over any agreements made between the college, the program and clinical facilities.

Meridian Community College carries a supplemental (secondary) policy as it relates to accidents or immediate treatment from problems related to bloodborne pathogens. The policy is **not** intended to replace the need for a student to have health insurance.

A first-aid station for minor injuries is located in the Dental Hygiene area, room (H-115) on first floor of the Health Center. For more serious injuries and other emergencies, follow the guidelines in the *MCC Catalog*.

Informed Consent

Students within the PTA program are expected to perform a variety of physical therapy procedures on each other in the classroom and laboratory for educational purposes. This participation is very important to the learning process. Students must sign a consent form and a General Waiver of Liability prior to practicing laboratory skills. Students will sign a consent form at the start of the program that will remain in effect during the student's tenure in the PTA Program. Students will sign a General Waiver at the beginning of each semester of the PTA Program. Consent forms will be kept on file in the PTA Program Chair's office.

Equipment

Students are responsible for thoughtful care of all equipment utilized in lab instruction. Any student willfully damaging equipment will be financially responsible for repair or replacement. If equipment is accidentally damaged and a student causes &/or discovers it, and reports it to the instructor, the student will not be financially responsible. The PTA program is responsible for maintaining a safe environment for students in the lab and during completion of other educational activities. Before the start of each semester, PTA Program Faculty will perform a visual inspection and operate any electrical equipment that will be used during the semester. Inspection by a qualified bio-medical engineer and/or repairs will be made or arranged by the program as needed. Students will receive instruction in proper use of equipment prior to utilizing it in a learning activity with peers.

Toxic and/or aerosol materials will be used only in open, well-ventilated spaces. Protective coverings will be used on all surfaces. The Safety Data Sheets (SDS) book is kept in the lab room for chemical information on specific chemicals.

Annual Preventative Maintenance

All laboratory electrical equipment will be inspected annually by a biomedical company and a sticker will be placed on the item indicating the date.

Infection Control

The program is responsible for maintaining a safe and healthy environment for students and faculty while in the classroom setting and during any relevant learning activities. General cleaning and maintenance procedures, performed on a regular basis, include the following:

- The classroom area will be cleaned and maintained in accordance with the guidelines developed by Meridian Community College.
- Program equipment should be cleaned with an antiseptic solution available in the classroom; this includes all treatment tables, wheelchairs, canes, walkers, therapy balls, etc.
- Linens used in class are to be washed at the completion of each session of use.

Exposure Evaluation and Follow-up

1. Wash area of exposure with soap and water. If exposure is in a mucus membrane, eyes, or mouth, wash with generous amounts of water.
2. Report incident immediately to a MCC Instructor or Clinical Supervisor regardless of circumstances or known medical status of exposure source. Fill out "MCC Security Office Incident Report" found on MCC's Eagle Net website. Students should contact the MCC Business Office for an insurance form to be filled out and mailed after the report is filed.
3. Notify MCC's Dean of Nursing, Health Education Division Chairperson, or any MCC Health or Nursing Faculty or immediate supervisor.
4. If the incident occurred at a clinical site, complete appropriate clinical agency's incident forms and MCC "Exposure Form" within 24 hours. Complete insurance forms from MCC's Business Office.
5. If incident occurs at a clinical agency that has written guidelines for management of exposure to blood/body fluids, agency guidelines must be followed. The CDC guidelines recommend that prophylactic treatment begin within 2 hours of exposure to HIV positive sources.
6. If the clinical agency has no written guidelines or if incident occurs at MCC, then the MCC employee or student will obtain a copy of MCC's "Exposure Control Plan" and report to the emergency room of choice, Rush Hospital Workforce Wellness (8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.), or Rush Emergency Room (after- hours) for treatment. The student will be responsible for all fees incurred.
7. The student may be advised to have his or her blood as well as the source individual tested for HIV and/ or HBV. These tests are to be done as soon as possible.
8. Follow-up testing may be requested at 6-weeks, 12-weeks, and 6-month intervals. The exposed individual's physician may indicate a Tetanus booster.
9. Report back to immediate supervisor with progress report and completed "MCC Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Medical Follow-up Form".

After the initial evaluation, the healthcare professional for the exposed person will be his/her private physician or the attending physician at the time of the treatment of the initial exposure.

Meridian Community College will voluntarily comply with the OSHA Standard by maintaining an accurate record for each employee or student with occupational exposure. Such records will contain the information detailed in the OSHA Standard, will be kept confidential, and will be maintained for at least the duration of employment or student enrollment plus 30 years. Post Exposure Records will be kept in the vault located in MCC Records Office with copies in the program specific areas. Rush Hospital will keep the records on students treated at Rush Workforce Wellness or Rush Emergency Room with copies kept in the MCC Records Office and program specific areas.

Forms are required to be submitted to the Program Coordinator, Health Education Department Chair, Associate Vice President for Workforce Education and MCC Campus Police on the next working day after incident:

- Incident Report MCC Nursing Division/Health Education Division—submit original;
- MCC Security Office Incident Report—submit original;
- MCC Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Medical Follow-up—submit copy;
- Any forms required at clinical site—submit copy.

Implemented: 2000; Revised: Fall 2009; September 21, 2012; March 18, 2014; June 19, 2014; April 27, 2015 Board Approved—March 18, 2014; April 28, 2015

Lab Policy

Laboratory activities require PTA students to work closely with lab partners of the same or opposite gender for practice sessions and/or lab practicals. Close contact between students will be required during practice of data collection skills and therapy interventions (i.e. massage, palpation of anatomy, etc.) in preparation for clinical practice. Instructors will ensure students take the appropriate measures to promote privacy. Students displaying inappropriate behavior during situations where contact is close will not be tolerated and are at risk for dismissal from the program. Each student is responsible for reporting inappropriate behavior to the lab instructor and/or PTA Program Director.

Part of the laboratory experience requires students to serve as mock patients for instructors and fellow students. Students are required to adhere to safe behavior while using equipment during laboratory activities. Report frayed or worn electrical cords, defective equipment or other hazards to the instructor immediately.

No machine or other electrical equipment may be operated or used unless an Instructor is present. PTA faculty are available to be present in the lab outside of normal class times so that students can practice.

Visitors and Food

No guests (including children) or food items are allowed in room H423 or H424 during class or during open lab time, except for travel mugs and beverage bottles with closeable lids.

Employment

Balancing employment with the demands of the PTA program is very difficult. The student is expected to be alert in both class and in clinical for academic success and client safety. Clinical and classroom expectations and schedules will not be altered to accommodate student employment.

Photography/Videotaping

PTA students, on occasion in classroom and laboratory settings will be simulating a work environment and will practice on one another. During this time, you may be videotaped or have digital pictures taken of you, both of which will be used only for educational or assessment purposes. You will be asked to sign a permission form to allow videotaping and digital photography at the start of the first semester of the PTA Program. This form will remain in effect for the duration of the student's tenure in the PTA Program. If a student wishes to photograph or videotape a patient for educational purposes, they must follow the policies and procedures of the clinical education site for confidentiality and for obtaining consent.

Field Trip Guideline

At times during the course of the PTA Program, students and faculty may travel off campus for departmental related field trips. These field trips may be scheduled in the evenings or on Saturdays. The following procedures apply for field trips:

- Travel Request Forms must be filled out by faculty prior to traveling.
- All MCC Policies are applicable during the trip.
- Students participating in field trips are required to sign the "Waiver of Liability Assumption of Risk and Indemnity Agreement– on /off Campus Activities" form prior to the activity.

Academic Policies

Clinical Disqualification & Non Progression

Meridian Community College (MCC) and clinical affiliates are mutual partners and associates in education of MCC's students. Therefore Nursing, Health Education, and Emergency Medical Services-Paramedic (EMS-Paramedic) program students must adhere to college rules and regulations as well as clinical rules, regulations, and expectations. MCC's health programs operate in a true symbiotic relationship with clinical affiliates providing a platform of learning and healthcare experiences for students.

Clinical practicums and experiences are fundamental courses that must be completed in Nursing Health Education, and EMS-Paramedic programs of study. These clinical classes, and their satisfactory completion, are of utmost importance to graduate a competent healthcare provider or practitioner.

Disqualification

If an applicant to Nursing, Health Education, or EMS-Paramedic programs is prohibited from participating in clinical experiences by a clinical affiliate of Meridian Community College (e.g., a disqualifying event as defined in a Criminal Background Check or other identified exclusions, etc.), then the applicant will be ineligible for admission. If a student currently enrolled in Nursing, Health Education, or EMS-Paramedic programs is prohibited from participating in clinical experiences by any clinical affiliate of Meridian Community College (e.g., positive drug screen, egregious behavior, violation of patient safety, non-compliance with the college's "Student Behavior Code", etc.), then the student will be dismissed from the program of study. The student is not eligible for program readmission unless the clinical restriction is removed.

Non-Progression

Students enrolled in Nursing, Health Education, and EMS-Paramedic programs must complete the course of study, or program courses/modules, in an orderly sequence at a minimal competency level established by the program director/instructor based on program accreditation standards and good practice. Patient safety is always of paramount importance and is of the utmost concern. If a student does not satisfactorily complete the "defined sequence of progression through assigned tasks, program courses, or modules" then the student will not be able to progress and to interact and to care for clinical patients. Therefore, the student will not be able to earn a passing grade in this particular course of study and will be dismissed from the program of study. The student may re-apply for program re-admission [re-admission is competitively based and not guaranteed.]

Submitted 11-11-2013; Board Approved: 11-11-2013; Revised 7/2017

Student Grievance Procedure

The “Student Grievance Process” provides students with a procedure to resolve grievances, complaints or concerns in an equitable, orderly and timely manner. The policy and process for filing a grievance can be found in the MCC Catalog.

For any issue a student encounters that he/she wishes to appeal, including but not limited to clinical failure, course grade, or behavioral issues, the student must attempt to resolve this issue first informally in a professional manner and then, if the issue is not resolved the student should initiate a formal complaint.

College Safety Guidelines

Upon entry into the program, during student orientation, students will receive instruction of all published Meridian Community College safety guidelines and procedures addressing medical emergency procedures, reporting of incidents, fire procedures, building evacuations, tornadoes, bomb threats, etc. Copies of all these materials are maintained in the PTA classroom/lab for reference. Program faculty will assume responsibility for assisting or directing assistance for any person with a disability who needs to relocate due to a safety issue.

Student Services

MCC supports the development of the whole person. In keeping with this philosophy, the college offers a wide range of services and promotes responsible participation in student life activities. All of these services are available to all MCC students.

Eagle Alerts

Emergency notification system can be set up by going to the following:

<http://www.meridiancc.edu/academic-affairs/campus-police/eagle-alerts/index>

This notification system will notify student via email, phone call or text message when the college is closed. It is highly recommended for every student to sign up.

Crisis Assistance and Emergencies

We have a contractual agreement with WEEMS and PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATES for the academic year. They will provide up to four free visits of professional counseling services for our students. Students who seek this avenue must be a full-time student of MCC. The following documents are required for students to provide to WEEMS and/or Psychology Associates: Current class schedule and present a current MCC student ID card.

WEEMS: 601-483-4821

PSYCHOLOGY ASSOCIATES: 601-693-8307

Emergency

Campus Police is located in Ivy Room 123. See the current *MCC Catalog* for further information.

**MCC PTA STUDENT
HANDBOOK
APPENDIX**

American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant

Preamble

The Standards of Ethical Conduct for the Physical Therapist Assistant (Standards of Ethical Conduct) delineate the ethical obligations of all physical therapist assistants as determined by the House of Delegates of the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA). The Standards of Ethical Conduct provide a foundation for conduct to which all physical therapist assistants shall adhere. Fundamental to the Standards of Ethical Conduct is the special obligation of physical therapist assistants to enable patients/clients to achieve greater independence, health and wellness, and enhanced quality of life. No document that delineates ethical standards can address every situation. Physical therapist assistants are encouraged to seek additional advice or consultation in instances where the guidance of the Standards of Ethical Conduct may not be definitive.

Standards

Standard #1: Physical therapist assistants shall respect the inherent dignity, and rights, of all individuals.

- 1A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in a respectful manner toward each person regardless of age, gender, race, nationality, religion, ethnicity, social or economic status, sexual orientation, health condition, or disability.
- 1B. Physical therapist assistants shall recognize their personal biases and shall not discriminate against others in the provision of physical therapy services.

Standard #2: Physical therapist assistants shall be trustworthy and compassionate in addressing the rights and needs of patients/clients.

- 2A. Physical therapist assistants shall act in the best interests of patients/clients over the interests of the physical therapist assistant.
- 2B. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapy interventions with compassionate and caring behaviors that incorporate the individual and cultural differences of patients/clients.
- 2C. Physical therapist assistants shall provide patients/clients with information regarding the interventions they provide.
- 2D. Physical therapist assistants shall protect confidential patient/client information and, in collaboration with the physical therapist, may disclose confidential information to appropriate authorities only when allowed or as required by law.

Standard #3: Physical therapist assistants shall make sound decisions in collaboration with the physical therapist and within the boundaries established by laws and regulations.

- 3A. Physical therapist assistants shall make objective decisions in the patient's/clients best interest in all practice settings.
- 3B. Physical therapist assistants shall be guided by information about best practice regarding physical therapy interventions.
- 3C. Physical therapist assistants shall make decisions based upon their level of competence and consistent with patient/client values.
- 3D. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in conflicts of interest that interfere with making sound decisions.

3E. Physical therapist assistants shall provide physical therapy services under the direction and supervision of a physical therapist and shall communicate with the physical therapist when patient/client status requires modifications to the established plan of care.

Standard #4: Physical therapist assistants shall demonstrate integrity in their relationships with patients/clients, families, colleagues, students, other health care providers, employers, payers, and the public.

4A. Physical therapist assistants shall provide truthful, accurate, and relevant information and shall not make misleading representations.

4B. Physical therapist assistants shall not exploit persons over whom they have supervisory, evaluative or other authority (e.g., patients/clients, students, supervisees, research participants, or employees).

4C. Physical therapist assistants shall discourage misconduct by health care professionals and report illegal or unethical acts to the relevant authority, when appropriate.

4D. Physical therapist assistants shall report suspected cases of abuse involving children or vulnerable adults to the supervising physical therapist and the appropriate authority, subject to law.

4E. Physical therapist assistants shall not engage in any sexual relationship with any of their patients/clients, supervisees, or students.

4F. Physical therapist assistants shall not harass anyone verbally, physically, emotionally, or sexually.

Standard #5: Physical therapist assistants shall fulfill their legal and ethical obligations.

5A. Physical therapist assistants shall comply with applicable local, state, and federal laws and regulations.

5B. Physical therapist assistants shall support the supervisory role of the physical therapist to ensure quality care and promote patient/client safety.

5C. Physical therapist assistants involved in research shall abide by accepted standards governing protection of research participants.

5D. Physical therapist assistants shall encourage colleagues with physical, psychological, or substance-related impairments that may adversely impact their professional responsibilities to seek assistance or counsel.

5E. Physical therapist assistants who have knowledge that a colleague is unable to perform their professional responsibilities with reasonable skill and safety shall report this information to the appropriate authority.

Standard #6: Physical therapist assistants shall enhance their competence through the lifelong acquisition and refinement of knowledge, skills, and abilities.

6A. Physical therapist assistants shall achieve and maintain clinical competence.

6B. Physical therapist assistants shall engage in lifelong learning consistent with changes in their roles and responsibilities and advances in the practice of physical therapy.

6C. Physical therapist assistants shall support practice environments that support career development and lifelong learning.

Standard #7: Physical therapist assistants shall support organizational behaviors and business practices that benefit patients/clients and society.

7A. Physical therapist assistants shall promote work environments that support ethical and accountable decision-making.

7B. Physical therapist assistants shall not accept gifts or other considerations that influence or give an appearance of influencing their decisions.

- 7C. Physical therapist assistants shall fully disclose any financial interest they have in products or services that they recommend to patients/clients.
- 7D. Physical therapist assistants shall ensure that documentation for their interventions accurately reflects the nature and extent of the services provided.

- 7E. Physical therapist assistants shall refrain from employment arrangements, or other arrangements, that prevent physical therapist assistants from fulfilling ethical obligations to Patients/clients

Standard #8: Physical therapist assistants shall participate in efforts to meet the health needs of people locally, nationally, or globally.

- 8A. Physical therapist assistants shall support organizations that meet the health needs of people who are economically disadvantaged, uninsured, and underinsured.
- 8B. Physical therapist assistants shall advocate for people with impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions, and disabilities in order to promote their participation in community and society.
- 8C. Physical therapist assistants shall be responsible stewards of health care resources by collaborating with physical therapists in order to avoid overutilization or underutilization of physical therapy services.
- 8D. Physical therapist assistants shall educate members of the public about the benefits of physical therapy

Meridian Community College Physical Therapist Assistant Program Essential Functions for Physical Therapist Assistant Students

There are several important factors for you to consider when you are determining your future career directions. To be successful in the PTA classroom, at a PTA clinical education site and in your job following graduation, you should be able to meet all of the following expectations:

1. Attend class approximately 12-24 contact hours a week or perform 40 hours a week of clinical education, depending on the stage of the program curriculum.
2. Complete all assignments on time.
3. Participate in classroom discussions.
4. Perform or instruct others in the following procedures (learned in class) in a timely manner: transfers, gait training, physical agents, activities of daily living, therapeutic exercises or activities, and data collection procedures.
5. Use sound judgment and safety precautions (exposure to blood-borne pathogens and/or infectious disease may occur as part of the educational experience). Students are trained in safety/infection control and are expected to follow these guidelines to avoid contracting or transmitting disease.
6. Meet class standards for successful course completion.
7. Use critical thinking when making decisions.
8. Follow standards stated in PTA Program Guideline and Procedure Manual and the PTA Program Clinical Education Handbook.
9. Address problems or questions to the appropriate person at the appropriate time.
10. Maintain classroom, work area, equipment, supplies, personal appearance and hygiene conducive to a professional setting as appropriate.
11. Behave in a competent, professional manner.

Physical requirements for the PTA Program include the need to occasionally, frequently, or continually:

1. Sit 2-5 hours per day with lecture blocks up to 3 hours.
2. Stand 1-6 hours with lab time blocks up to 6 hours.
3. Lift up to 60 pounds.
4. Push/pull up to 50 pounds of force exerted at waist level.
5. Squat or stoop.
6. Use auditory, tactile, and visual senses to assess physiological status of an individual.
7. Demonstrate good standing and unsupported sitting balance.
8. Demonstrate good finger dexterity.
9. Coordinate verbal and manual instructions.
10. Communicate effectively with a variety of people through written verbal, and nonverbal methods.
11. Use hands repetitively.
12. Shift weight in sitting or standing.
13. Demonstrate the ability to use a firm grasp while using physical therapy equipment and while performing physical therapy interventions.
14. Reach above shoulder level.
15. Kneel, kneel-stand, and half kneel.

16. Use equipment that emits electrical, ultrasonic, and thermal energy.
17. Physically move and transfer patients

Students who have concerns about the ability to perform any of these functions should contact the PTA Program Chair at (601) 484-8613. Individuals with disabilities may request reasonable accommodations or information by contacting the MCC Access and Disability Services:

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/NONDISCRIMINATION

MCC promotes and adheres to a policy of equal opportunity. The College, therefore, does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, religion, age, disability, marital status, national origin, sexual orientation, gender-related identity, veteran status, or any other unlawful bases, in its admissions, employment, educational programs, or activities.

Federal legislation, such as Executive Order 11246, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act, prohibits such discrimination.

Division of Health Education Physical Therapist Assistant Technical Standards

Standard	Examples of Activities (not inclusive)	Tasks
Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	<p>Recognizes physiological changes in patient status and acts appropriately.</p> <p>Modifies treatment within the plan of care.</p>	Utilize patient assessment techniques to alter physical therapy treatments within the plan of care.
Interpersonal skills sufficient to interact with co-workers, members of the rehab team as well as patients and their families from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, educational, religious, and ethnic backgrounds.	<p>Establishes rapport with colleagues, other health care providers, patients and families.</p> <p>Practice therapeutic (non-harmful) communication using speech, hearing, and judgment of appropriate responses.</p>	Communicate in a meaningful manner with patients, families, and health care colleagues.
Communication skills sufficient for interaction with others verbally, non-verbally and by writing.	<p>Explains treatment procedures, implements effective patient education, documents assessment, treatment and patient response.</p> <p>Speak English in such manner to be understood by general public.</p> <p>Hear communications other than face-to-face (intercom systems, cries for help, answer telephones).</p> <p>Function in a noisy, chaotic environment.</p>	Demonstrate documentation procedures and verbal staff communications concerning patients
Physical ability to move from one area of the facility to another and maneuver in small space.	<p>Moves from one patient room to another and administer treatments in small areas.</p> <p>Perform physical activities necessary to perform basic PTA skills.</p> <p>Perform physical activities necessary to do health assessments such as bending over patient, kneeling, lifting an extremity while applying brace.</p> <p>Travels from one area of the facility such as the PT Department to ICU or transitional care unit.</p> <p>Lift at least 25 lbs. of weight.</p>	<p>Demonstrate proper procedure for mobilizing patient in a safe manner.</p> <p>Maintain sterile technique.</p> <p>Gather equipment (3-4 pieces) and carry to patient's or treatment room.</p>

<p>Gross and fine motor skills sufficient to administer physical therapy treatments safely and effectively.</p>	<p>Performs and teaches dependent and assistive patient transfers.</p> <p>Positions patient appropriately for treatment, etc.</p> <p>Performs active assistive, passive and resistive exercises.</p> <p>Applies physical therapy modalities such as heat, ultrasound, cryotherapy and hydrotherapy for patient treatment.</p> <p>Guards patients during gait training with or without assistive devices.</p> <p>Develop technological/computer skills</p>	<p>Utilizes equipment necessary for treatment.</p> <p>Move self and equipment/supplies for treatment from PT Dept. to patient room, ICU, etc.</p>
<p>Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess patient needs.</p>	<p>Listens to heart and lung sounds with a stethoscope.</p> <p>Be able to hear without communicating face-to-face such as hearing alarms, emergency signals, cries for help, answering telephones.</p> <p>Able to hear and interpret communication in stressful situations</p> <p>Monitors blood pressure with a stethoscope and sphygmomanometer.</p> <p>Hears patient calls for assistance.</p>	<p>Demonstrate proper method for blood pressure monitoring.</p>
<p>Visual ability sufficient for observation and assessment essential to physical therapy.</p>	<p>Observes patient responses to treatment.</p> <p>Provide eye contact when communicating.</p> <p>Distinguish changes in color, size, and continuity of body parts.</p> <p>Distinguish alterations in normal body activities such as breathing patterns, level of consciousness.</p> <p>Observe safety features in environment such as water on the floor, obstacles in the path of a patient.</p> <p>Observe non-verbal responses of patients, families or co-workers.</p> <p>Visualize written word or data in chart and on computer screen.</p> <p>Observes patient exercise and gait to detect abnormal patterns.</p>	<p>Identification of patient, verification of ultrasound and temperature calibration.</p>

<p>Tactile ability sufficient for patient assessment</p>	<p>Palpates muscles and other anatomical structures to define abnormal.</p> <p>Use therapeutic touch such as laying hand on patient or family, gently stroking, patting, or putting arm around patient or family, shaking hands.</p> <p>Handle equipment.</p> <p>Perform skills requiring the use of hands.</p>	<p>Demonstrate method for palpating radial artery, muscle and joint normals and deviations.</p>
<p>Accountability and responsibility</p>	<p>Able to distinguish right from wrong, legal from illegal, and act accordingly.</p> <p>Accept responsibility for own actions.</p> <p>Consider the needs of patients in deference to one's own needs.</p>	<p>Able to comprehend ethical standards and agree to abide by them</p>

VALUES-BASED BEHAVIORS FOR THE PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT HOD P06-18-26-34 [Position]

The values-based behaviors for the physical therapist assistant are altruism, compassion and caring, continuing competence, duty, integrity, physical therapist-physical therapist assistant collaboration, responsibility, and social responsibility. The values-based behaviors are defined as follows:

- **Altruism**
Altruism is the primary regard for or devotion to the interest of patients and clients, thus assuming responsibility of placing the needs of patients and clients ahead of the physical therapist assistant's self-interest.
- **Compassion and Caring**
Compassion is the desire to identify with or sense something of another's experience; a precursor of caring.

Caring is the concern, empathy, and consideration for the needs and values of others.
- **Continuing Competence**
Continuing competence is the lifelong process of maintaining and documenting competence through ongoing self-assessment, development, and implementation of a personal learning plan, and subsequent reassessment.¹
- **Duty**
Duty is the commitment to meeting one's obligations to provide effective physical therapist services to individual patients and clients, to serve the profession, and to positively influence the health of society.
- **Integrity**
Integrity is the steadfast adherence to high ethical principles or standards; truthfulness, fairness, doing what you say you will do, and "speaking forth" about why you do what you do.
- **Physical Therapist-Physical Therapist Assistant Collaboration**
The physical therapist-physical therapist assistant team works together, within each partner's respective role, to achieve optimal patient and client care and to enhance the overall delivery of physical therapist services.
- **Responsibility**
Responsibility is the active acceptance of the roles, obligations, and actions of the physical therapist assistant, including behaviors that positively influence patient and client outcomes, the profession, and the health needs of society.
- **Social Responsibility**
Social responsibility is the promotion of a mutual trust between the physical therapist assistant, as a member of the profession, and the larger public that necessitates responding to societal needs for health and wellness.

REFERENCES:

- 1 Federation of State Boards of Physical Therapy. Continuing Competence Model.
<https://www.fsbpt.org/ForCandidatesAndLicensees/ContinuingCompetence/Model/>. Accessed July 2, 2010.

Explanation of Reference Numbers:

HOD P00-00-00-00 stands for House of Delegates/**month**/**year**/**page**/**vote** in the House of Delegates minutes; the "P"

indicates that it is a position (see below). For example, HOD P06-17-05-04 means that this position can be found in the June 2017 House of Delegates minutes on Page 5 and that it was Vote 4.

P: Position | S: Standard | G: Guideline | Y: Policy | R: Procedure