

**California State University, Long Beach
Department of Physical Therapy**

**Essential Functions, Abilities, and Technical Standards for
Physical Therapy Education and Practice**

Background Requirements

The CSULB Department of Physical Therapy does not conduct a background check but please be aware that you must meet the background requirements for Physical Therapist licensure required by California Laws and Regulations Related to the Practice of Physical Therapy (Section 2635, <https://www.ptbc.ca.gov/>) and understand that background checks may be required by selected clinical internship agreements as well as by future employers.

Physical therapy education requires that accumulation of scientific knowledge be accompanied by the simultaneous acquisition of skills, behaviors, and professional attitudes. In order to acquire the knowledge and skills for function in a broad variety of clinical situations, and to render a wide spectrum of patient care, students entering in the Physical Therapy Program must have abilities and skills, in the following five areas: observation; communication; kinesthetic/motor; cognitive/conceptual; and behavioral/social. Technological compensation can be made for some disabilities in some of these areas, but a candidate must be able to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

If you have a disability that will require special accommodations it is your responsibility to contact The Bob Murphy Access Center at bmac@csulb.edu or (562) 985-5401 upon receipt of this document.

The Physical Therapy Program requires that students entering the program and returning from a medical leave of absence possess these essential functions, abilities and technical standards. Students entering the program must attest that they meet the aforementioned standards and students returning from a medical leave of absence from the program must undergo an evaluation from the physician treating the condition responsible for the medical leave for the purpose of determining whether the student is able to continue performing the abilities and skills aforementioned and described below.

Requirements for practical examinations prepare students for clinical practice and include but are not limited to the ability to take practical examinations within uniform standard time requirements that would be expected for the delivery of safe and effective health care in a clinical setting.

Observation

Observation requirements for evaluative and treatment procedures in classroom and clinic include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Observe demonstrations and experiments in the didactic and applied physical therapy curriculum.
- Observe a patient accurately at a distance and close at hand. Observation requires the use of common sense, as well as the functional use of the senses of vision, audition, olfaction, and palpation.

Communication

Communication requirements for evaluative and treatment procedures in classroom and clinic include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Elicit information from patients, describe changes in mood, activity and posture, and perceive and accurately report nonverbal communications.
- Communicate effectively and sensitively with patients, their families and other health professionals.

*Adapted with permission from Mount St. Mary's College and the University Of Miami School Of Medicine

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- Communicate effectively and efficiently, and in a timely manner with all members of the health care team in both immediate and recorded modes.
- Receive and give feedback and criticism, effectively handling conflict.
- Effectively communicate with socially and culturally diverse individuals and groups.

Kinesthetic/Motor

Physical requirements for evaluative and treatment procedures in the classroom and clinic include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Demonstrate functional range of motion of the spine, upper and lower extremities.
- Apply and receive adequate force to test all major muscle groups and to apply resistance for progressive exercise.
- Assist patients with physical activities including but not limited to bed mobility, transfers, fall prevention and recovery and ambulation from supervised to maximum assistance.
- Sit, stand, walk, bend and squat consistently and repetitively in order to safely administer manual therapy, therapeutic exercise and other treatment modalities.
- Push, pull, lift or carry 0-50 pounds on an intermittent basis.
- Perform tasks requiring fine and gross manual dexterity for activities such as wound debridement, compression wrapping, wound dressing, and taping.
- Physically position oneself in a classroom for multiple 50 minute class sessions daily.

Cognitive:

Cognitive requirements for evaluative and treatment procedures in the classroom and clinic include but are not limited to the ability to:

- Ask and answer questions in a directed and focused manner.
- Discuss technically complex information in an open and constructive manner, accepting the possibility of multiple answers to a single question.
- Focus and maintain a 100% arousal state for 50 minute classroom or laboratory sessions.
- Cognitively participate in all classroom and clinic activities.
- Recognize and determine how to remedy an unsafe environment or event.

Behavioral/Social Attitudes

Participation in the classroom and clinic setting require appropriate and professional interactions with others to include (but are not limited to the ability to):

- Communicate and interact appropriately with all patients, students and teachers.
- Function effectively under physical and emotional stress.
- Effectively self-assess and adapt to changing environments.
- Display flexibility and learn to function in the face of uncertainties inherent in the clinical environment and problems of many patients.
- Display compassion, integrity, concern for others, interpersonal skills, interest and motivation are all personal qualities that are assessed during the admission and education process.

_____ I attest that I can perform all of the essential functions required of physical therapy education and clinical practice outlined in this document. **I understand that falsification of my abilities is grounds for dismissal from the Physical Therapy program.**

_____ Do you have a disability that will require special accommodations? Yes___ No___
If "Yes", what are the accommodations you require?

_____ I request accommodations based on my disability. Accommodation request and MD certification of disability are attached.

Student Name (print) _____

Student Signature_____ Date_____