

Essential Functions of Physical Therapy Education at the University of Montana

In order to protect the integrity of the professional degree in Physical Therapy at the University of Montana and to protect the public safety and interest, the essential functions of a student within the physical therapy program at the University of Montana must be described. The Physical Therapy Program is committed to equal opportunity to qualified students, and, in accordance with University policy, does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, creed, religion, national origin, gender, age, marital or family status, physical or mental disability, national origin or ancestry, or sexual orientation. When requested, the University will provide reasonable accommodation to otherwise qualified students with disabilities.

The goal of the Physical Therapy Program is to produce persons educated to become generalist entry-level physical therapists. The focus is not on physical therapists who will function in narrower or more restricted environments. Therefore, graduates need to be able to perform the broad range of activities expected of an entry-level physical therapist.

Students must possess the physical, cognitive, and behavioral abilities necessary to complete all aspects of the curriculum with reasonable accommodation. These skills include the ability to comprehend, memorize, analyze, and synthesize material and to discern and comprehend dimensional and spatial relationships. The student must possess the cognitive abilities to master course material, synthesize from multiple courses, and problem-solve. The student must demonstrate the ability to efficiently take a history, perform tests and measurements, develop the patient evaluation, determine diagnosis, prognosis, and intervention plan, and implement a clinical intervention in the variety of settings expected of the entry-level physical therapist. They must be able to communicate effectively in both an oral and written manner with patients, families, peers, and other members of the health care team.

Students must have functional use of the somatic senses and the special senses of vision and hearing. Although some compensation through technology for deficiencies in any of these areas is acceptable, such compensation should not preclude the candidate's ability to act reasonably independently.

The student must possess abilities that provide reasonable assurance that the student can participate in all aspects of the physical therapy education. Patient safety and high quality of patient care is of paramount importance both within the program and after graduation. Therefore, the student must have the physical ability, within reasonable limits, to assist the patient in movement and therapeutic procedures. If an applicant has a contagious disease, the program's primary responsibility is to protect the patient and other persons involved with the program.

These essential functions of physical therapy education identify the requirements for admission, retention, and graduation of applicants and students in the University of Montana Physical Therapy Program. Graduates are expected to be qualified to enter the field of physical therapy. It is the responsibility of the student with disabilities to request those accommodations that he/she believes are reasonable and are needed to execute the essential requirements described.

I, _____ certify I have read and understand the essential functions and that I am able to perform the functions listed above.

Signature: _____

Date: _____