

MISERICORDIA UNIVERSITY
Physical Therapy Department

Essential Functions for the Physical Therapy Student

These essential functions are the activities that a student physical therapist must be able to perform, with or without accommodations, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for successful completion of the professional curriculum. They are applicable in the classroom, laboratories, simulated clinical settings, and while on clinical education assignments. The University uses independent clinical education sites that may or may not be willing or able to offer the same reasonable accommodations that are made available by the University.

The physical therapy student must have the mental and physical capacity to:

Safety

- Maintain a safe environment for students, faculty, patients, and colleagues.
- Recognize and respond appropriately and in a timely manner to a medical emergency.

Communication

- Communicate effectively using appropriate verbal, nonverbal, and written communication skills with faculty, peers, patients and others, in a timely manner.
- Read and interpret written and nonverbal communication in a timely manner at a competency level that allows one to safely function in the academic or clinical setting.

Behavior

- Work with multiple patients/families and colleagues at the same time.
- Work with lab partners, patients, families, and others under stressful conditions, including but not limited to medically or emotionally unstable individuals, situations requiring rapid adaptations, the provision of CPR, or other emergency interventions.
- Organize and Prioritize multiple tasks, integrate information, and make decisions.
- Displays moral, ethical, and professional behavior at all times in all settings.

Cognitive

- Receive, remember, analyze, interpret, and synthesize information from multiple sources.
- Attend to multiple tasks throughout the day of scheduled classes and clinical education experiences.
- Organize and prioritize information to make safe, appropriate, and timely decisions regarding patients for the purpose of further examination, intervention, or referral.

Motor Ability

- Perform gross and fine motor movements with coordination sufficient to perform complete physical examinations.
- Perform gross and fine motor movements with coordination sufficient to perform physical therapy interventions.
- Have sufficient levels of postural control, neuromuscular control, and eye-hand coordination for satisfactory performance in patient care and classroom or laboratory settings.
- Possess sufficient mental and physical stamina to meet the demands associated with extended periods of sitting, standing, moving, lifting, and physical exertion required for satisfactory performance in patient care, clinical education, and classroom or laboratory settings.