KSPT Doctor of Physical Therapy Program Performance Essentials

Becoming a physical therapist requires the completion of a professional education program that is both intellectually and physically challenging. The purpose of this document is to articulate the demands of this program in a way that will allow current students to compare their own capabilities against these demands.

Applicants are asked about their ability to complete these tasks, with or without reasonable accommodation. Reasonable accommodation refers to ways in which the University can assist students with disabilities to accomplish these tasks (for example, providing extra time to complete an examination or enhancing the sound system in a classroom). Reasonable accommodation does not mean that students with disabilities will be exempt from certain tasks; it does mean that the faculty will work with students with disabilities to determine whether there are ways that we can assist the student toward completion of the task.

If admitted, a student with a disability who wishes reasonable accommodation must request it through the DPT Program Director. An offer of admission may be withdrawn if it becomes apparent that the student cannot complete essential tasks even with accommodation, that the accommodations needed are not reasonable and would cause undue hardship to the institution, or that fulfilling the functions would create a significant risk of harm to the health or safety of others.

Due to a demanding schedule, frequent acquisition of new knowledge, skills, and behaviors, and a high academic load, student typically experience high levels of stress.

Essential Tasks

Students must meet class standards as described in each individual course syllabus for course completion throughout the curriculum.

Students must be able to read, write, speak and understand English at a level consistent with successful course completion and development of positive patient-physical therapist relationships.

Students must complete readings, assignments, and other activities outside of class hours.

Students must gather decision-making pieces of information during patient assessment activities in class or in the clinical setting without the use of an intermediary such as a classmate, a physical therapist assistant, or an aide.

Students must apply critical thinking processes to their work in the classroom and the clinic, must exercise sound judgment in class and in the clinic, and must follow safety procedures established for each class and clinic.
Students must demonstrate interpersonal skills as needed for productive classroom discussion, respectful interaction with classmates and faculty, and development of appropriate therapist-patient relationships.

Students must maintain personal appearance and hygiene conducive to classroom and clinical settings.

Students must complete a Basic Cardiac Life Support course at the health professional level annually.

Students must demonstrate appropriate health status prior to enrollment, with annual updates on some items: no active tuberculosis, rubella (German measles) and rubeola (measles) immunity, tetanus-diphtheria booster within 10 years of anticipated graduation, and hepatitis B vaccine series or written declination.

Students must complete OSHA-regulated Bloodborne Pathogen Exposure Training annually.

Students must follow standards and policies specified in the Student Handbook, any contract between the University and clinical sites, and the Clinical Education Handbook. The most recent copies of these documents are available for review.

Typical Skills Needed to Complete These Essential Tasks

Students typically attend classes 30 or more hours per week during each academic semester. Classes consist of a combination of lecture, discussion, laboratory, and clinical activities. When on clinical rotation, students are typically present at the clinic 40 or more hours per week on a schedule that corresponds to the operating house of the clinic.

Students typically sit for two to 10 hours daily, stand for one or more hours daily, and walk or travel to and from a variety of locations.

Students typically relocate outside of the Indianapolis area to complete one or more clinical rotations of eight to 15 weeks’ duration each.

Students frequently perform the following activities:

- Lift 10 pounds and occasionally lift weights between one and 100 pounds
- Exert 75 pounds of push/pull forces to objects up to 50 feet and occasionally exert 150 pounds of push/pull forces for this distance
- Twist, bend, and stoop
- Move from place to place and position to position at a speed that permits safe handling of classmates and patients
- Use their hands repetitively with a simple grasp and frequently use a firm grasp and manual dexterity skills
- Coordinate verbal and manual activities with gross motor activities
- Use auditory, tactile, and visual senses to receive classroom instruction and to evaluate and treat patients.

Students occasionally perform the following activities:

- Carry up to 25 pounds while walking up to 50 feet
- Squat, crawl, climb, reach above shoulder level, and kneel
- Stand and walk while providing support to a classmate simulating a disability or while supporting a patient with a disability
- Climb stairs or negotiate uneven terrain

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the Program Director of changes in mental or physical health that result in an inability to meet the essential tasks noted in this document. Changes in mental or physical health status that impair the competency of these essential tasks may necessitate examination from a medical professional as deemed appropriate.