The program in physical therapy (PTH) is a full-time day program of entry-level professional education leading to a doctor of physical therapy (DPT) degree. The DPT program is a post-baccalaureate program, which requires completion of a bachelor’s degree and program specific prerequisites prior to matriculation. Students accepted into and enrolled in the professional program take only physical therapy courses. The first year begins in July and continues through the next July. The second year begins in August and continues through June. The third year consists of internships beginning in July and terminating in the following spring semester with an on-campus capstone course required prior to graduation from the program in May. The program is designed to provide the students with learning opportunities that develop the intellectual, affective, and psychomotor skills required for physical therapy practice. Content is progressed from simple, single system impairments/limitations to complex, multi-system impairments. Throughout the program, students are increasingly held responsible for independent learning and are expected to assume responsibility for their professional development.

1. **Eligibility**
   a) **CSS Applicants:** In order to apply as a CSS applicant, the student must be registered as a full-time student at St. Scholastica for two consecutive semesters immediately preceding the application, not including the semester in which they are applying.
   b) **Transfer applicants:** Transfer applicants are those who meet the physical therapy admissions criteria but have attended classes and completed a bachelor’s degree elsewhere.
   c) **Credits:** All CSS and transfer students must complete a bachelor’s degree from an accredited institution prior to enrollment in the professional program.
   d) **Grade Point Average:** All applicants must have a cumulative grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 or above based on all coursework and a prerequisite grade point average of 3.0 or above. A grade of C or better in all physical therapy prerequisite courses is required in order to apply to and be admitted into the CSS DPT program.
   e) **Prerequisite completion:** All applicants must have completed the Anatomy, Physiology, and Chemistry prerequisites before applying to the program. If accepted, students must complete all remaining prerequisites prior to beginning the DPT program in late June or early July. Prerequisites are:
      - Full-year, full sequence of chemistry with labs
      - Full-year, full sequence of human/vertebrate anatomy-physiology with labs
      - Full-year, full sequence of college physics with labs
   f) **Graduate Record Examination:** All applicants must have completed the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). GRE scores are highly correlated with success in physical therapy programs and passing the national licensure examination. Based on the evidence, the CSS physical therapy program established the following for application to the program:
(1) Absolute minimum of 3.5 on the writing analytical section.
(2) Absolute minimum combined score of 870 for the verbal and quantitative sections.
(3) Preferred minimum scores of:
   (a) 1000 for the combined verbal and quantitative sections.
   (b) 400 on the verbal section.
   (c) 500 on the quantitative section.

g) Professional exploration: Applicants must explore the profession and observe physical therapy in a variety of practice settings. At least two different clinical settings that address the needs of distinct patient/client populations are required along with a minimum of 100 combined hours.

h) Letters of recommendation: A minimum of two and maximum of four letters of recommendation must be submitted. One letter must be from a currently licensed physical therapist in a United States jurisdiction.

i) Waivers: Waivers for admissions requirements are considered on an individual basis. To request a waiver, the student must submit a written request to the Chair of the Physical Therapy Admissions Committee prior to the first meeting of the committee in late October. The student will be notified in writing by the Chair of the committee if the waiver was granted or not.

2. **Technical Standards For Admission To And Progression In The Physical Therapy Program**
   Success in the physical therapy program is dependent on a number of functions deemed essential for the practice of physical therapy. Applicants must meet these essential functions and students must continue to demonstrate compliance with these essential functions throughout the program.

a) Essential Functions: Critical thinking, problems solving capabilities, sound judgment, emotional stability and maturity, and ability to learn and function in a wide variety of didactic and clinical settings to be able to:
   - Develop, monitor and manage individual patient/client plan of care.
   - Perform and interpret physical examinations.
   - Perform physical therapy procedures.
   - Communicate effectively in oral and written formats.
   - Direct and supervise support personnel.
   - Maintain professional demeanor
   - Demonstrate problem solving, critical thinking and sound judgment.
   - Learn in a wide variety of didactic and clinical settings.
   - Demonstrate empathy, integrity, flexibility, responsibility and effective stress management.

b) Critical Demands: Physical demands are listed in the table below and are based on the following time percentages of an eight (8) hour work day: 0-33% = occasionally; 34-66% = frequently; 67-100% = continuously based on an 8 hour work day

- Firm grip strength – occasionally
- Gross hand coordination – continuously
- Fine hand coordination – continuously
- Sit – occasionally
- Stand – frequently
- Walk – frequently
- Stoop/squat – frequently
- Push/pull – occasionally
- Kneel – occasionally
- Reach – frequently
- Lift up to 50# - occasionally
- Carry – frequently
- Vision – corrected or non corrected.
- Work with variety of therapeutic and adaptive devices including but not limited to wheelchairs, crutches, canes, electric stimulation, etc. – continuously

Communication:
- Listen /hear
- Read English
- Speak English
- Write legibly in English
Students needing reasonable accommodations to meet the essential functions and critical demands should notify the College’s Coordinator for Students with Disabilities and the chair of the physical therapy program of their request.

In addition, once enrolled in the program, students are required to complete a physical examination and a criminal background check on an annual basis.

3. **Reapplicants**
   
a) Applicants who were not accepted, including students placed on the alternate list but not enrolled in the program in previous years, are eligible to reapply as long as all admissions criteria are met:
   1) All applicants who have previously applied must complete a new application form.
   2) Reapplicants may forward previous letters of recommendation.
   3) The GRE may be retaken at the applicant's option.
   4) The interviews will be repeated.
   5) Reapplicants must meet all application requirements in effect the year in which they apply.

b) CSS reapplicants: Only those applicants who have attended St. Scholastica as a full-time student for six quarters or four semesters over the past ten years or who hold a bachelor’s degree from St. Scholastica are eligible to reapply as a St. Scholastica student.

c) Transfer reapplicants: Applicants who do not meet these eligibility requirements to be a CSS reapplicant must reapply as a transfer student.

4. **Application Deadline**
   
a) Applicants must submit all application materials to Graduate Studies by November 15. If the situation arises where application numbers are low and the class is not filled, the application period will remain open until March 1 or the class is filled, whichever comes first.

5. **Advising Information/Suggestions**
   
a) The program is competitive due to limited enrollment (up to 36 students per class).
   
b) Students must explore the profession and observe physical therapy in a variety of practice settings. At least two different clinical settings that address the needs of distinct patient/client populations are required with a minimum of 100 combined hours.
   
c) Applicants enrolled in the College must make adequate progress toward an undergraduate major while completing physical therapy prerequisites and application/admission requirements.
   
d) The PTH faculty members consider good written and verbal communication skills essential for success in the program and the profession. CSS students should seek help with these skills through the Student Development Center and/or the Writing Center.

6. **Applying to the PTH Program**
   
The PTH Admissions Committee recognizes that entrance of under-represented ethnic minorities to the profession of PTH is a priority. Therefore, the Committee, while ensuring that all applicants possess the qualifications necessary for success in the program and the profession, will carefully consider the admissions application materials of ethnic minority applicants.

   a) **Criteria for Selection.**

   The following are the major criteria used by the PTH Admissions Committee members in determining a candidate’s suitability for admission. Applicants are evaluated on the basis of their academic record, performance in individual interviews with two committee members,
GRE scores, letters of recommendation, and evidence of their exposure to the profession. Admission files are property of The College of St. Scholastica. Once materials are submitted, applicants are not granted access to the file unless admitted to the program. Questions regarding the admission process may be directed to the Chair of the PTH Admissions Committee, the Graduate Studies Office, or the Chair of the Physical Therapy Department. Factors considered during the admissions process include

1) **Academic record.**
   (1) Cumulative GPA - minimum of 3.0.
   (2) Prerequisite GPA – minimum of 3.0
   (3) Grades from the year of application are included in the calculations.
   (4) Grade of C or better in all physical therapy prerequisite courses.

2) **Interviews.** Applicants will have two individual interviews with members of the PTH Admissions Committee. The interview will provide the applicant an opportunity to demonstrate interpersonal skills, knowledge of the profession, and global awareness. In person interviews are preferred; however in cases where a phone interview is necessary the applicant must place the call to each interviewer at his/her own cost.

3) **GRE Scores.**
   (1) Absolute minimum of 3.5 on the writing analytical section.
   (2) Absolute minimum combined score of 870 for verbal and quantitative sections.
   (3) Preferred minimum scores of:
      (a) 1000 for the combined verbal and quantitative sections.
      (b) 400 for the verbal section.
      (c) 500 for the quantitative section.

4) **Recommendations/References:** The applicant is responsible to solicit a minimum of two and maximum of four recommendations/references for the file, one of which must be from a currently licensed physical therapist in a United States jurisdiction. Only materials received by the application deadline will be included in the file. The recommendation/reference form found in the application material must be completed by each person the student asks. A letter may accompany this completed form if the reference so chooses. Applicants should use this method to demonstrate their exposure to the profession, academic promise, character, and maturity. CSS applicants are encouraged to have their advisor or an instructor complete a recommendation/reference form.

5) **Professional exploration.** Applicants are required to demonstrate an awareness of the diversity and specificity of the profession by performing volunteer hours, by conducting observations, or by working in physical therapy settings. Exposure to physical therapy in a variety of settings is required: at least two different clinical settings that address the needs of distinct patient/client populations. A minimum of 100 combined hours is required for professional exploration. Applicants will be asked to verify the amount of professional exploration hours completed.

b) **Steps in the Selection Process.**

1) **Apply:** The applicant must turn in a completed application along with all supporting materials (i.e., transcripts, application fee) on or before the November 15 deadline. Applicants must have made arrangements to have recommendation/reference forms and GRE scores sent to the CSS Office of Graduate Studies by the November 15 deadline. Late applications or files with incomplete application materials (for example, missing information such as GRE scores or letters of reference) will not be considered. If the class is not filled, applicant files received or completed after the deadline will be reviewed. Application materials and supporting documents are available from the Office of Graduate
Studies or on the web at www.css.edu/depts/grad/gradpt.htm. There is a $50 nonrefundable application fee.

2) **Receipt Letter**: After the application deadline, applicants will receive communication from the Office of Graduate Studies. This communication will either inform students of ineligibility to continue the application process due to an incomplete application or failure to meet the admissions requirements or it will inform them of the procedures to schedule the interviews.

3) **Interviews**: Applicants are responsible to schedule and attend both interviews using information provided in the communication.

4) **Portfolios Reviewed**: Members of the admissions committee individually review each applicant’s portfolio. This review is a component of the final committee decision.

5) **Decision**: Acceptance decisions are made by the committee based on the applicant’s overall ranking, which is determined by the individual portfolio review. If necessary, the committee will meet to make the final acceptance decisions and to develop an alternate wait list. Depending upon the number of applicants and qualifications, up to 24 CSS students and up to 6 transfer students will be accepted on the first review. (A minimum of 6 and a maximum of 12 transfer students will be accepted.) The next six students will be accepted based on the overall score and strength of the application file regardless if a CSS or transfer applicant. A maximum of fifteen students will be placed on an alternate list with the first five positions ranked.

7. **Notification of Decision**.
   a) **Timeline.** Applicants are notified of the decision of the Committee by mail in late January or early February.
   b) **Conditions of acceptance.** To reserve a position in the program, accepted candidates must make payment of a $250 nonrefundable deposit by the date stated in the letter of acceptance. All accepted students who enroll in the program must complete the following by June 15 of the year of entry:
      (1) completion of all remaining prerequisite courses with at least a C grade while maintaining at least a 3.0 cumulative GPA prior to entering the DPT program.
      (2) completion of a bachelor’s degree.
      (3) conversion of any incomplete (I) or in progress (IP) courses to an A-D, F letter grade or P/NP. Please note: All prerequisites must have a letter grade; P/NP is not accepted for prerequisites courses. This information must be submitted to the Graduate Studies Office by June 15 of the year of entry.
   c) **Invalidation of acceptance.** Enrollment in a physical therapy program other than that at The College of St. Scholastica invalidates acceptance into the program at The College of St. Scholastica.
   d) **Deferment.** Deferment requests for enrollment into the program after acceptance will be considered on a case by case basis.

8. **Appeals of the Physical Therapy Admissions Committee Decisions.**
   a) Any and all appeals (regardless of level, items b)-e) below) must be submitted within 20 calendar days of the dated letter indicating the decision to be appealed.
   b) Appeals of the Admissions Committee decisions shall first be made to the Admissions Committee.
      1) A written letter must be submitted and addressed to the Chair of the Physical Therapy Admissions Committee indicating the reasons for the appeal.
2) The Chair will convene a quorum of the Committee within 15 calendar days to consider the appeal and make a decision.
   (1) The applicant may attend this meeting; however, attendance is not mandatory.
   (2) If the applicant attends the meeting, s/he will have an opportunity to give voice to his/her appeal and respond to questions posed by the committee members and will then be dismissed.
   (3) The committee will meet in closed session to decide upon the appeal.

3) The Chair will inform the applicant making the appeal of the committee’s decision.
   (1) If the applicant attended the meeting, the applicant may be verbally informed of the committee’s decision.
   (2) A formal written letter will serve as official notification of the committee’s decision.
   The letter shall be postmarked within 24 hours of the decision.

c) Appeal of the Admissions Committee’s decision may be made to the Dean, School of Health Sciences.
   1) A written letter must be submitted and addressed to the Dean, School of Health Sciences indicating the reasons for appeal.
   2) The Dean will act on the appeal within 15 days from receipt.
   3) The Dean will inform the applicant making the appeal of his/her decision. A formal written letter to the applicant will serve as official notification of the Dean’s decision.

d) Appeal of the Dean’s Decision may be made to the Vice President for Academic Affairs (VPAA).
   1) A written letter must be submitted and addressed to the VPAA indicating the reasons for the appeal.
   2) The Vice President will act on the appeal.
   3) The Vice President will inform the applicant making the appeal of his/her decision. A formal written letter to the applicant will serve as official notification of the Vice President’s decision.

e) Appeal of the Vice President’s decision may be made to the Graduate Council.
   1) A written letter must be submitted and addressed to the Chair of the Graduate Council.
   2) The Council Chair will convene an Appeal Panel to hear the appeal.
      (1) The applicant may attend this meeting; however, attendance is not mandatory.
      (2) If the applicant attends the meeting, s/he will have an opportunity to give voice to his/her appeal and respond to questions posed by the panel members and will then be dismissed.
      (3) The committee will meet in closed session to decide upon the appeal.
   3) The Council Chair will inform the applicant making the appeal of the Appeal Panels decision.
      (1) If the applicant attended the meeting, the applicant may be verbally informed of the Panel’s decision.
      (2) A formal written letter to the applicant will serve as official notification of the Panel’s decision. The letter shall be postmarked within 24 hours of the decision.
      (3) The Decision of the Appeal Panel is final and binding.

Approved PTH Dept faculty 2/20/2009
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